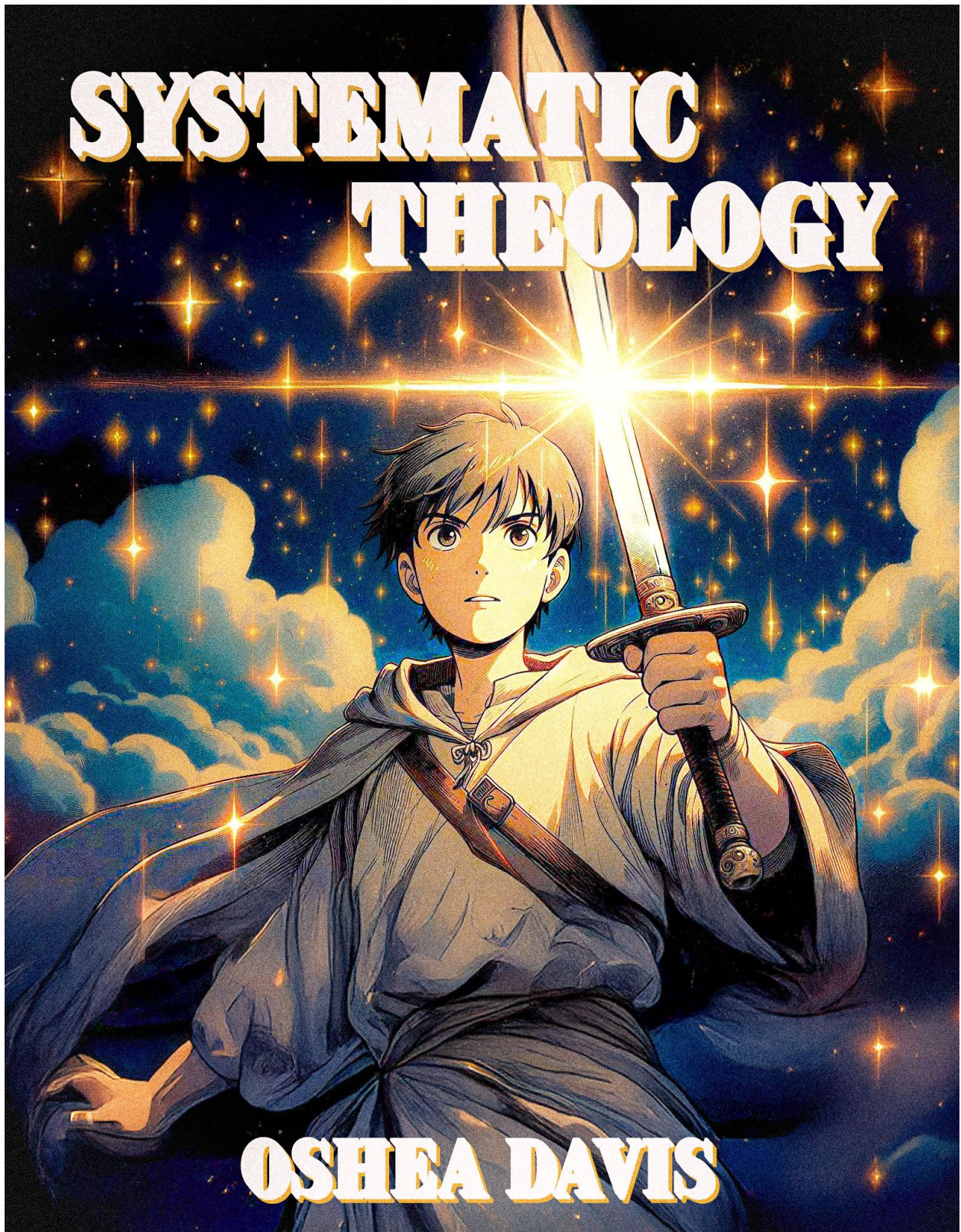




Systematic Theology: 2025

Oshea Davis

I *dedicate* this book to my identical twin brother, Joshua Davis. Sometimes I can't help but think that if I had been more productive, gained the knowledge and faith I have now, and we benefited from it sooner, that you would still be here. I have not reached a perfect faith; yet, with the knowledge, faith, and growth I have gained and poured into these pages, may no one else have to leave before their time. For those who taught you bad doctrine and didn't repent or back off, may their hands stay stained with your blood—along with all who peddle unbelief—on judgment day, before the Son who sits at the right hand of Power. Those faith-fumblers? They'll be trying to wash blood off their hands when the Big Guy's gavel drops.

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The Structure or Thesis for this Systematic Theology Book:

B.1. IF (A) a self-authenticating first principle with substantial truth for all of life, (B) and if this truth has a necessary connection to reality, (C) and if you are able to apply deduction to yourself from this, (D) and if God has defined what man is to do, including faith to move mountains, (E) THEN all things are possible for "you" when "you" believe.

B.2. A & B & C & D.

B.3. Thus, E.

If these premises are true, then the conclusion logically follows. In other words, if God has revealed a self-authenticating first principle with substantial truth for all of life exists, and if this truth has a necessary connection to reality, and if one is able to apply deduction to oneself from this, and if God has defined what man is to do, including faith to move mountains, then all things are possible for the one who believes.

0. Definitions.

Below are some quick definitions I will use in this book.

Human Speculation. The unjustifiable premises that come from man's inner self, usually from one's own sensations, observations, feelings, and experiences. These are the premises of a syllogism that are not justified.

Human Superstition. I define this as John Robinson described: superstition is the logical void or abyss between premise and conclusion. After human-made premises, one adds human invalidity. This is the invalidity from premise to conclusion. It is inductive or anti-logic.

Deductive Logic. Deductive conclusions apply the laws of logic. Therefore, the conclusion is a necessary inference; it is rational and logical. The conclusion does not contain more information than what the premises provide. If the premises are true, then the conclusion is necessarily true. Deduction is the way God thinks because it applies the laws of logic (contradiction, identity, and excluded middle). We can call this God's logic, in the sense that this is how God thinks. It is logical.

Inductive Logic. The conclusion contains more information than what the premises provide—a guess. Even if the premises are true, the conclusion is not certain and could still be false. When man starts with human starting points of sensation and observation, inductive logic is the necessary application. We call this human-based logic. In essence, induction is irrational and anti-logic.

Basic Hermeneutics to Be Followed:

- Scripture interprets itself.
- Scripture uses an originalist interpretation of itself.
- Scripture applies the law of first mention to itself (not first terms, but first doctrine).
- Scripture moralizes itself for the context of Christians.

Additional Principles:

- Read the words in question.
- Define them by context.

Further Principles:

- Apply the law of non-contradiction.
- Apply the law of identity.

- Apply the law of excluded middle.

Law of First Mention. This law is neither so vague as to be useless nor so narrow as to refer only to a term (e.g., “day,” which can have multiple meanings). Rather, it concerns the first time a doctrine is taught or deduced in context. After this first doctrinal mention, it is neither contradicted nor changed unless clear evidence is provided. Examples include:

- Jesus and resurrection (deduced doctrine).
- Paul and circumcision, showing faith came first.
- Paul and the covenant of Abraham, which preceded the Mosaic covenant.
- Jesus’ doctrine of marriage.
- Paul’s doctrine of man’s authority.
- Paul’s doctrine of election (Romans 9, using the example of the twins, where Old Testament passages establish election and reprobation as doctrines of first mention).

If one pays attention, they will see that passages demonstrating how Scripture interprets itself and employs originalist interpretation also reveal doctrinal first mentions.

Philosophy Verbiage:

Epistemology. The ultimate question about the first principle of knowledge for a system of thinking. The starting point of knowledge for a worldview. And to a lesser extent, how we know what we know—again which is, by the starting point of our worldview’s knowledge. I sometimes refer to this as the “presuppositional level.” If your worldview does not start, then it does not begin. If there is no start for knowledge, then there is no knowledge for any other ultimate question of life.

Metaphysics. The ultimate question about existence or reality, or how you define existence. Or that is, what type of existence is x or y. Sometimes I use this word for both metaphysics and ontology(causality), but I try to mainly use it for existence. The reason for the umbrellaing of ontology beneath metaphysics is that there needs to be a definition of the type of existence we are dealing with, so that we might understand a definition for how different existences work in cause and effect to each other.

Ontology. The ultimate question of Casualty: both of cause and effect, and of mere correlation.

Ultimate level Ontology. Causality “relative” to God. Or that is, relative from God’s viewpoint. This is the *only real cause*.

Relative Level Ontology. Causality “relative” to a creation viewpoint or human viewpoint. Relative from one created object to another created object.¹

Anthropology. The ultimate question of man. Where does man come from? What is man? Where is man going? What is the end designed for man?

Logic. The ultimate question about the structure of thought, or thinking. Propositions are the content of thought. Logic is the structure of thought. Deduction vs Induction. Valid vs invalid. Good thinking vs defective thinking. What is logic? Where did it come from? Why is it self-authenticating? Why does man use it? How is logic self-authenticating, and yet, does not give knowledge of itself?

Axiology. Ethics and morality.

Systematic Theology. Systematic theology is the process of using the context of the entire Bible on a topic to formulate a doctrine that is clear, non-contradictory to other parts, and suitable for teaching and improvement.

An example is Romans 3, where Paul formulates the doctrinal statement: “All have fallen short of the glory of God.” More precisely: All humans are those who have sinned. Before this statement, Paul asserts that Scripture has confined all as having failed God’s standard. Paul uses multiple Old Testament examples to demonstrate that both Jews and non-Jews are sinful and do not obey God as they ought. In the context of the Bible, no humans exist outside these two groups. If this is true—and it is—then by showing both groups are sinful, the doctrinal conclusion is that “all humans have sinned,” not just some. This is further reinforced in Romans 5, where Paul shows all have sinned, starting with the first human. From this starting point in humanity, God has caused all people to be unmeritedly credited with sin and to be sinful.

Thus, we learn to use the Bible as the starting point for our premises, and we see that a doctrine can be formulated by combining relevant passages on a subject. As shown, some passages Paul uses do not directly state “all humans have sinned,” yet he

¹ The ultimate and relative level ontology can be likened to a chess game.

I got this initial idea of a chess game from *Vincent Cheung*. See, “[*There is No Real Synergism*](#).” Found in *Sermonettes* Vol. 1. 2010. Ch.32

Ultimate level. God caused Oshea to believe and confess Jesus Christ. (Oshea moves white pawn to H3 to take black knight.)

Relative Level. Oshea confessed and made Jesus Lord of his life. (White pawn takes black knight).

Just because the announcer at the Chess tournament says, “white pawn takes black knight,” then should I rebuke the announcer and tell him he should know better because the pawn did not move itself?

Ultimate level causality is God moving everything directly. However, the Bible often speaks of relative level causality, “Oshea buys some gum at the store from Johnny.”

employs them to formulate this doctrine. This is similar to the doctrine of the Trinity. Mistakes can occur by inferring too much (invalid conclusions), making category errors, committing non-sequitur fallacies, or misinterpreting tenses (e.g., inferring present or past tense from a different tense). However, Paul demonstrates how to do it correctly, so that with maturity and faith, we may follow his pattern and formulate doctrine accurately. If you make a mistake, be humble, correct yourself, knowing all your sins are forgiven in Christ, and then proceed accurately.

Introduction:

For nearly twenty years, I have read Pastor Vincent Cheung, and for the past decade, his materials have been my primary theological diet. I have no affiliation with him and do not represent him. I believe I can restate his positions accurately, but you should judge this by reading his own publications. When I quote him, assume I agree only on that specific point, not necessarily on the broader topic. Even when quoting him, what I write reflects my thoughts, not his. Vincent has not instructed me, and I can make mistakes, so always refer to his materials for an official representation of his views.

The point is this: because I have read him for so long, his teaching has permeated my thoughts (even some of his grammar and rhythm), often without my realizing it. I do not mind this personally, as I agree with his teaching and prefer it for my spiritual life. However, for public writing and publishing, this can sometimes be a hindrance. To avoid plagiarism, I will take the safe route and openly quote him on certain points.

Some may ask why I am writing my own Systematic Theology book. First, this book will not be “just like his,” as I have organized it differently. Second, I am writing for a different audience. Third, I emphasize some points more or less or express them differently. Fourth, I want a single, comprehensive book to share my beliefs with others in the future. Finally, I believe this book will spiritually bless those who read it. Also, I like writing things down, even if it is only for me, because it helps me organize my thoughts. Thus, even if this was only for me, yet, I have it finished and it blesses me. And so, I would still publish it wanting it to help others as it has me.

Vincent has explained that his website is written for a mixed audience, so his publications include not only positive exposition but also apologetic arguments and rebukes. In contrast, a Sunday sermon for a regular audience typically leans more toward positive, expository, and devotional content.

This Systematic Theology book is written as if I were an old man, nearing death, taking on an apprentice who needs the most essential basics before I leave this world. Thus it is firstly positive, for truth is a positive declaration, and secondly it is frank and rebuking, to remind my insider apprentice what dangers to avoid. For anyone who finds such a focus helpful, this book is for you.

Lastly, I used Grok, created by xAI, for some proofreading and to add witty summaries, particularly in the ethics section. I wanted a franker style in the ethics section, and this book’s layout and theme allow me to do so.

I have completed only one thorough proofread and edit of this book and intended to do one or two more before finalization. However, I need to move on to other projects. Keep in mind that while you may quote this book, I may make mild updates in the future. Please indicate the book's publication year when quoting.

Systematic Theology Maxims:

Like with Wing Chung, there will be a few systematic theology maxims that will be in constant application here.

Maxim 1: God is the foundation for Theology, not man.²

Maxim 2: God is absolutely and directly sovereign over all things, including knowledge, man and salvation.

Maxim 3: God is really, really, intelligent.

Maxim 4: All things are possible for God.

Maxim 5: All things are possible for people with faith.

Maxim 6: *Sinful* man is plus ultra-stupid, and limited.

Maxim 7: God's Word is our theology, our doxology and our apologetic.

Maxim 8: God's Word, as it is used to defend against an opponent, is the same Word used to attack the central weakness of its opponent.

Maxim 9: When an opponent moves you attack: if they move forward to attack God's Word, you stand and attack with God's Word; and if they move back in retreat, you move forward and attack them with God's Word at their central presuppositional weakness.³

Maxim 10: For those trying to believe, we help and love them with longsuffering, but for those willfully resisting, attack them like the prophets, apostles and Jesus.

Maxim 11: The Christian is a superior species in Christ, and the reprobate is an inferior animal.

Maxim 12: God's gospel is a total salvation. God saves. His chosen ones are clean, righteous, co-heirs with Christ and have the Mind of Christ. They will judge the world and angels; they inherit the world. All things are theirs. They can boldly approach the throne of Almighty God as a son, a prince of heaven, to ask and receive. They are empowered with the same Spirit of power and

² I first heard this phrase from Vincent Cheung, *The Axiom of Gabriel*. Sermonettes Vol 1.; although, I do not know who truly first coined the phrase.

³ The basic structure of the specific type of presuppositionalism I am use in this book was influenced by Vincent Cheung. This combative style is reminiscent of Wing Chung maxims, but I was also influenced by Vincent's style, for example found in his book, *Apologetics In Conversation*

ministry that Jesus had, through the baptism of the Spirit. They financially prosper and are healed by faith in the gospel of Jesus. Etc.

Maxim 13: God's unmerited favor supplies man, man does not supply God.

Maxim 14: Reprobates focus on men. Christians focus on God.

Maxim 15: The same love that the Father has for Jesus, He gives to His elect.

Maxim 16: Reprobates who resist faith on demand for healing and blessings have sided with demons to trample the blood of Christ.

Maxim 17: Faith will always move mountains, real ones. By faith reality will obey you. By faith you will save yourself. By faith you will be healed. By faith you will please God and be a hero of faith, whom the world was not worthy to know. By faith God will publicly boast about you, and show you off to the world as glorious and precious.

Maxim 18: Jesus is the most God-centered man who ever lived. He is more God-centered than you. He is more God-centered than any of your pet theologians. Jesus said things like "your faith saved you," both in-regards to healing and forgiveness of sins.

Maxim 19: God's Word is His will.

1. Epistemology.

Epistemology is the starting point of knowledge for your worldview. When considering your system of thinking about the world, where does knowledge originate? If there's no starting point for knowledge, then there's no knowledge to speak about any aspect of your worldview, because using knowledge to talk about ethics requires knowledge. If you have no knowledge, then you have no knowledge to speak about government or anything else.

Flowing from this is the next logical question: How does one know what they really know? If your knowledge starts with 'X' as its starting point, does it make knowledge possible or not?

Before defining epistemology in more specific ways, it's important to understand why, in the broader context of all the ultimate questions, we start with the question of knowledge (or perhaps metaphysics) rather than, for example, ethics. The reason we don't start with ethics is that ethics "presuppose" all the other ultimate questions; otherwise, such a discussion would be unintelligible and meaningless. It's possible to talk about knowledge without ethics, but without knowledge, how do you talk about the "knowledge/doctrine" of ethics? What about metaphysics? Without reality, how can ethics exist? If ethics are for man, how can you intelligently talk about ethics applied to man without anthropology? If man is perfect, why even talk about ethics? What a waste of time that would be. If man isn't perfect, then you can't discuss this without some sort of soteriology and theology. If ethics are applied to man, then man is accountable—but without an authority over man, how is man accountable? Accountability presupposes you're not free but under authority.

Without harping on this for long, this is why most discussions in the public realm that talk about ethics devoid of establishing the other ultimate questions are intellectually stupid and malfunctioned. Yet this is the typical intellectual height of all non-Christians. They don't discover truth; rather, they're lost in a revolving horror of delusional superstitions. I almost feel sorry for them, but then I'm reminded that their delusions exalt themselves to steal and suppress the value of my Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, because you can't talk about the knowledge of metaphysics, the knowledge of God, the knowledge of man, the knowledge of salvation, the knowledge of logic, or the knowledge of ethics without establishing a theory of knowledge that makes knowledge possible, epistemology is often the first to be laid down. Epistemology comes first so that all others must "presuppose this level," and because of this, it's referred to as the "presuppositional level." Thus, this definition phrase means exactly what it directly says.

Epistemology is the bouncer at the knowledge club—if it doesn't check your ID, you're not getting in to debate ethics or anything else. Non-Christians skipping the line just twirl in a clown show of delusions, while Jesus holds the VIP list. No knowledge, no worldview party—simple as that.

[Author's Note:

This section is influenced by Vincent Cheung's presuppositional approach,

particularly his rejection of empiricism and his emphasis on divine revelation as the sole epistemology, the self-authenticating nature of scripture.

I remember back in 2002 when a family member gave me what was touted as the “best Christian philosophy book.” After reading it, I found myself asking, “Where is God, and where is the Bible?” Soon after, I discovered Vincent’s materials and realized he wasn’t just paying lip service to the Bible as his sole authority for philosophy and epistemology—he was masterful at putting it into practice. His dauntless tenacity in using only the Bible as his source of knowledge for apologetics won me over. There are other, inferior forms of the “presuppositional” method, but they fail to apply its number one principle: presupposing the Bible as the only starting point for knowledge. Vincent isn’t reinventing the wheel or crafting a new doctrine outside the Bible; rather, he’s consistently applying a basic yet crucial principle that shapes an entire worldview. When I read that first Christian philosophy book, I could tell that, despite quoting the Bible, it didn’t solely rely on it for knowledge. So, when I found Vincent, it wasn’t as if he needed to convince me his doctrine was correct—it was obvious from the start. I allowed his teaching to instruct me with clarity, precision, and structure.

Thus, my overall framework here is influenced by him, and I want to credit the basic structure of my presuppositional approach to Vincent. With that being said, I do not represent him, or claim my thoughts here are the same as his.]

Consider the order below. The table will show common Christian terms contrasted with their philosophy verbiage counterparts. Notice how ethics is at the very bottom and epistemology and metaphysics is at the very top (some consider these as twins.)

Systematic <i>Doctrine</i>	Systematic <i>Philosophy</i>
<u><i>Ultimate Questions</i></u>	<u><i>Ultimate Questions</i></u>
1. <i>Scripture</i> / God’ self-Revelation.	1. <i>Epistemology</i> First Principle of knowledge.
2. God’s absolute and direct <i>Sovereignty</i> over all things.	2. <i>Ontology</i> / Metaphysics. (i.e. Causality & Existence)
3. <i>Creation</i> of man. The story of the two groups of mankind as <i>God’s elect</i> children and of <i>reprobation</i> .	3. <i>Anthropology</i>

4. Jesus as <i>the Logos</i>, and man created in the Logos' image. 5. The command to subdue the earth, for <i>pragmatic helpfulness</i>, and not for finding truth. 6. Man's sin, and then salvation by Jesus. (i.e. <i>Soteriology, Theology</i>) This is essentially a SUB-category of Metaphysics. Conclusion: 7. Undeified <i>Religion</i> is <i>faith</i> in God, <i>loving</i> your neighbor as oneself and taking care of widows.	4. Logic (Deductive). Intelligibility. Innate knowledge. Language. 5. Logic (Inductive). Scientific method. 6. Theology / IF or How man needs salvation or improvement Conclusion: 7. Axiology. Ethics. Morals.

Back to defining Epistemology.

Because epistemology is a "starting point," by definition it cannot be deduced. Consider this from a three-premise syllogism or chain syllogism. Where does the major premise come from, the one that begins the argument? Or if we start with a syllogism and ask where the major premise originates, one might say, "Well, it comes from this previous syllogism or premise." We can do this for a while, and we'll have a few options. The first is to say it's an infinite regress. This ends up in skepticism and thus denies the law of contradiction.⁴ The second is to say, "I do not know." This seemingly authentic answer hides the fact that you're really saying, "I know that I do not know." This option is stupid and a self-contradiction, and thus, it has no existence. To know that we don't know is a contradiction. To be true, it must be false at the same time. It

⁴ This impossibility of infinite regress will rear its ugly head when dealing with other ontological issues, such as if matter always existed. It is not impossible to progress forwards in time for infinity; however, if matter was eternal, then today would have never reached. You cannot say 'matter has existed for an **unreachable** amount of time,' to then say, 'it has now **reached** today'. As said before, a contradiction has no existence. How stupid men become when suppressing God's truth.

ends up in an infinite regress of affirming and denying the same thing.⁵ This problem isn't limited to thinking; rather, it has ontological implications. For example, try saying, "I do not exist." "You" cannot do it without using "your" existence. This shows the ontological impossibility. That is, reality stops me from doing this contradiction. It does not—and cannot—exist. A square circle doesn't exist in my mind or in reality. The law of contradiction isn't only a law of thinking; it's a law of reality. If you have a contradiction, you have something that has no existence. Such stupid non-existence is to be dismissed and tossed into the recycle bins of our minds.

Epistemology is the launch pad—meaning you won't deduce the rocket's origin mid-flight. Infinite regress crashes into skepticism, and "I don't know" is just a smug contradiction doing cartwheels. Reality is not your personal LEGO set; you cannot deny your own existence without using it.

Now though these are called laws of thought, and in fact, we cannot think except in accordance with them, yet they are really statements which we cannot but hold true about things. We cannot think contradictory propositions, because we see that a thing cannot have at once and not have the same character; and the so-called necessity of thought is really the apprehension of a necessity in the being of things. This we may see if we ask what would follow, were it a necessity of thought only; for then, while e.g. I could not think at once that this page is and is not white, the page itself might at once be white and not be white. But to admit this is to admit that I can think the page to have and not have the same character, in the very act of saying that I cannot think it; and this is self-contradictory. The Law of Contradiction then is metaphysical or Ontological.⁶

Since the first and second options are a thinking and ontological impossibility, consider the other. In this third option, if we keep going back, we must eventually hit the starting point or origin of knowledge. This starting point cannot be deduced because it is a starting premise, not a conclusion.

There are some irrational comments about this floating around, for some anti-Christian commentaries say that a first principle is not "provable" in any sense. However, "provable," in the context of philosophy, logic, and doctrine, has a strict meaning: it refers to a deduction. This is true, as far as it goes. However, just because something isn't deducible doesn't mean it isn't provable in the sense of giving a logical justification or warrant for why one should pick this first principle over all others. For

⁵ To affirm the proposition, "Adam is a man" (X), is to deny the contradictory proposition, "Adam is not a man" (Y, or not-X). Likewise, to affirm the proposition, "Adam is not a man" (Y), is to deny the contradictory proposition, "Adam is a man" (X). Now, to affirm both "Adam is a man" (X) and "Adam is not a man" (Y) is only to deny both propositions in reverse order. That is, it is equivalent to denying "Adam is not a man" (Y) and "Adam is a man" (X). But then we are back to affirming the two propositions in reverse order again. When we affirm both, we deny both; when we deny both, we affirm both.

Therefore, there is no intelligible meaning in affirming two contradictory propositions. It is to say nothing and to believe nothing.

-Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg. 21

⁶ H.W.B. Joseph. 1906. An introduction to LOGIC. Pg.13

example, consider the self-authenticating principle of the law of noncontradiction. It isn't a deduction. It isn't circular, because we never depart from applying the law of noncontradiction.⁷ Yet, it's justified as true because of its necessary and self-authenticating nature.

For a quick comment about this self-authentication of the Law of Contradiction (LoC): it only works because we're considering it on this narrow slice of reality, ignoring some of the presuppositions needed to discuss it in the first place. For example, logic doesn't even give us knowledge about itself, because it deals with the structure of thought, not the content (terms and premises) of thought. But more on this later.

And so, a worldview or system of thinking about the world must start somewhere. The option of not knowing is implausible with reality. Thus, the next question is whether your epistemology is a good one or a bad one. That is, does the starting point of your worldview make knowledge possible or not?

Some try to make this point vague or blur it by saying a worldview might be an interconnection of several starting points, like a bridge with many supports. This appeal is a red herring or sleight-of-hand fallacy, diverting attention from the fact that their epistemology is in ruins. It's irrelevant because, even if true, some points would be more foundational than others; thus, if we discovered one of these foundations was compromised, the whole structure would fail.

For example, if one attempted to make a dual epistemology with Scripture and something else, "X," and this "X" was shown to be faulty, it would falsify Scripture, which was said to have taught this hybrid epistemology.

Additionally, if one wishes to claim more than one starting point for knowledge, then if one of the epistemologies (K) makes a judgment about one of the other epistemologies (B, Bible), then in fact this (K) is a higher or more foundational starting point. It's the true starting point that judges the others. If empiricism (or my observations, emotions, skin color, etc.) gives me additional knowledge that I use to judge the Bible (whether the Bible is correct on this point or that point), then empiricism is a higher starting point over the Bible. Empiricism would be my major premise in a syllogism.

In the quote below, Vincent is using the term "worldview," but the context relates more directly to the first principles or the presuppositional level of worldviews. His context is about "how a starting point is completely true versus only partly," but the overall point addresses our present topic.

Pick a shaky starting point, and your worldview is a house of cards—it is Scripture or bust, no hybrid hacks allowed in the biblical system.

⁷ "Think about this. If the law of contradiction is the "ultimate" or foundational law of logic, then how can we prove the law of contradiction? Can you prove it without using it? If you can, then the law of contradiction would necessarily be a secondary law. But if you must use it to prove it, then are you being circular? Where is the circle? For something to circle back, you need to move away from it first, but how can you depart from the law of contradiction, so that you can circle back to it to make the fallacy happen? If you can understand this, then you can apply it to biblical apologetics. The only difference is that the law of contradiction has no content, so it is less likely to confuse you. But the principle is the same."

Suppose a given system of thought includes the following propositions: (1) X is a man, and (2) X is an accountant. If, in reality, (1) is true but (2) is false, how will a person know to affirm (1) and deny (2), unless he is already acquainted with X? Unless the system is completely true (or false), there is no way to tell which proposition is true (or false) without importing knowledge from outside of the system, and if one imports knowledge from outside of the system, then he would be evaluating the system in question by the second system from which he has gained the knowledge to evaluate the first.

That is, if worldview A is not complete true or false, then there is nothing within worldview A by which we can accurately judge a particular proposition within worldview A as true or false. If we bring in something that we know from worldview B by which we judge something within worldview A, then we are making worldview B to stand in judgment over worldview A. But if one has already obtained knowledge that is accurate, relevant, and extensive enough from worldview B by which to evaluate worldview A, then he cannot meaningfully learn anything from worldview A. He is judging it, not learning from it.⁸

To summarize, even in a so-called multi-structure of starting points, there will be one that is more foundational, and that stands first above the others to judge and evaluate them. The question is, if the starting point of your philosophy makes knowledge possible? If not, you do not have a worldview to discuss; in fact, you do not even have the knowledge to discern “if cats are planets” and “if rocks are clouds.” You have nothing.

1.2. First Principle, God’s Revelation

Summary: Definition

The Christian starting point for knowledge is God’s revelation. The emphasis might seem obvious, but since most mistakes happen at the rudimentary level, it’s best to go over them and even repeat them. If the Christian epistemology is “God’s revelation,” then it is by GOD; it is GOD (not something else) REVEALING. This is like saying, if my epistemology is empiricism (knowledge comes by sensation), then empiricism, and not something else, is revealing the knowledge. Or, if my starting point is the Easter Bunny, then it’s the Easter Bunny, and not Roger Rabbit, that gives me knowledge.

Earlier, it was said that you must have a starting point because the alternatives—skepticism and not having one—are impossible with reality. It was also said that if you use the contents of a starting point “B” to evaluate starting point “N,” then “B” is in fact judging “N,” and “N” is not actually a “starting” point. If you’re judging God’s word with something else, you’ve already swapped the captain for a cabin boy. Starting points aren’t mix-and-match; it’s scripture or bust.

⁸ Vincent Cheung. The Light of Our Minds. 2004. Pg 36 (www.vincentcheung.com)

And now, applying the law of identity, if “B” is your starting point, then it is not something else like “N.”

So, before we even get to the specific contents of Scripture’s teaching on epistemology, we already know some “general” and “necessary” aspects of a starting point.

What it is & What it is not.

Quick note: in this following discussion, it will presuppose some basic understanding of Christian metaphysics, which is, God’s absolute and direct sovereignty. This will be mentioned here, but expounded in a following chapter.

This leads to how Scripture defines what epistemology is and how it defines what it is not. A good definition tells us what something is, but for extra clarity, it also specifies what it is not (categories that might be confused as part of the definition but aren’t). The doctrines of Scripture are so easy to understand that what most call deep theology can be taught to 6-year-old children. If a child has been taught just the very basics of logic, then a 10-year-old can do advanced theology.

The doctrine of this is rather simple. Christian epistemology (A) is God’s revelation (B). Draw a circle diagram to see this with more clarity if you need to. All of category (A) is inside category (B). Thus, if you’re saying something is a starting point of knowledge that isn’t God’s revelation, then you’ve left the realm of reality for fantasy.

Scripture teaches that man’s knowledge starts by the direct force or sovereign work of God. This work is directly by God’s power, separate from any consideration of the relative level—separate from anything that has been created and controlled by God.

“They demonstrate that God’s law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.”
(Romans 2:15)

&

“They know the truth about God because He has made it obvious to them. For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.”
(Romans 1:19-20)

Romans 2:15 makes what is being said more precise compared to Romans 1:20, which is often abused to support empiricism; this is the opposite of what it is saying. God has written His laws on our hearts. Romans 2:15 refers to the doctrine of God’s innate knowledge in us. The doctrine of God creating something out of nothing is easier to perceive in this doctrine of knowledge. In the beginning, God created everything out of nothing. By the sheer unstoppable force of His decision, God made reality come into being. Adam and Eve were made as fully formed adults who could immediately communicate intelligently with God (Genesis 1-2). Knowledge, understanding of that knowledge, and wisdom to apply it were all put into man directly by God’s power. School and the learning process were supernaturally bypassed. Also, a proposition is

invisible. It isn't made up of matter. Thus, creation has nothing to do with putting knowledge in man. To suggest otherwise would be to commit a category fallacy and make an invalid inference. It would be like saying, "All trees are organic. All cats are organic; thus, all rocks are clouds."

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:21, "Since God in His wisdom saw to it that the world would never know Him through human wisdom, He has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe." God personally saw to it that by human effort and through human intelligence, man cannot discover or know Him. This "human wisdom" will be discussed more later, but it refers to a human starting point of knowledge and inductive reasoning. Empiricism and observation are human starting points, and induction is man's irrational reasoning. God designed it so that man cannot know Him when man starts with himself and reasons from this point. In addition to God sovereignly making it impossible to know Him by human speculation and superstition, it's illogical by its very nature. There was never any hope, under any reality, for man to know God by starting with himself.

Whether or not so-called DNA is a physically organized code, or whether the brain is a physically organized code, it is not an invisible proposition. But we understand by propositions. To say one leads to the other would be like saying, "All trees are organic. All cats are organic; thus, all rocks are clouds." Bottom-of-the-barrel stupid! People play with terms and categories like they're God. However, there's only one God, and this creation is by His power and His definition, not yours.

A point to consider on innate knowledge is how substantial it must be. For someone born with preloaded propositions about "God's Law," there are many presuppositions about other things for "God's laws" to be intelligible to such a person. For example, the laws of logic must be preloaded, or else "God's laws" could mean "no laws of God" or "dung beetles." Mathematics must also be preloaded by God, because law isn't singular; rather, it's plural—"laws." Also, basic propositions about God must be included in "God's laws," for God holds unevangelized pagans accountable for not worshiping "Him," and not some other so-called god. Thus, included in this innate knowledge are some propositions about God's divinity and attributes (i.e., those mentioned in Romans 1:20). Also, there must be some basic preinstalled knowledge about metaphysics—knowledge about the world we live in. God's laws apply to this reality, not to some fantasy world that might exist. This innate knowledge must also include some basic propositions about anthropology, because God's laws apply to "man," not to non-man. I could go on about this for much longer, but the point should be made that innate knowledge includes a large body of knowledge about many things. Thus, we don't learn new knowledge as much as some tend to think; rather, we stimulate the knowledge God has already put into us back to our immediate attention. And any new proposition we do gather is directly put into us by God, on the occasion of—but separate from—anything we do.⁹

Your epistemology is God's revelation, not your DIY brain kit—think divine download, and less cosmic Google. Empiricism is a category flunkie, and human wisdom

⁹ This understanding of God's sovereignty over knowledge and how I phrase it here was influenced by Vincent. Although I did formulate my own basic version of occasionalism as a teenager after reading Romans 9, despite growing up in a Pentecostal church. Vincent helped to understand it better and say it more concisely.

(induction) is a dead-end alley. God preloaded us with the good stuff; and scripture lets us know the good stuff from the flunkie's propaganda.

Vincent has been helpful to me on this, saying it this way:

Nevertheless, this knowledge is indestructible and undeniable, so that it surfaces in distorted forms in non-Christian religions, philosophies, and ethical principles.

Thus God has revealed his existence, attributes, and some of his moral demands to every person by including this information in the human mind. This knowledge is innate and is not derived by reasoning from sensation. Man does not infer from what he observes in nature that there must be a God; rather, he knows the God of the Bible before he has any access to empirical data. Interaction with creation, including the act of observation, stimulates the mind of man to recall this innate knowledge, which has been suppressed by sin.

Every person has an innate knowledge of God, and everywhere he looks nature reminds him of it. His every thought and every experience testifies to God's existence and attributes; the evidence is inescapable. Therefore, those who deny the existence of God are suppressing the truth because of their wickedness and rebellion. Although they claim to be wise, they have become fools (Romans 1:22).¹⁰

Knowledge was placed into man's mind in infancy, directly by God, separate from any other created thing or power. No senses, no observations, no empirical data, no reasoning from the person. Empirical data has no necessary connection to knowledge. From this, we can make sense of passages like Romans 1:20. Below, it will be shown that empiricism is contradicted by Scripture and thus is not an option for obtaining knowledge. I sometimes refer to empiricism as the "kingdom of self" and God's word as the "Kingdom of God." Romans 2:15 shows that a significant amount of knowledge is preloaded into the mind, directly by God. When we read that creation reveals God's attributes, we know by contradiction that it cannot be through the observation of the senses. God's attributes are already in the mind as innate knowledge. Therefore, Romans 1:20 is stated on the relative level between created objects, not the real level of causality, which is what Romans 2:15 teaches. When seeing the world God created, the knowledge already preinstalled in the mind is stirred to the surface. The unbeliever is then forced to rethink God's laws again. He hates this. Thus, the non-Christian tries to suppress these truths until creation stimulates this buried innate knowledge back to the surface of his thinking. For the non-Christian, this repeating horror story goes on and on, which is why they try to sear their conscience with a hot iron—so that even if God's innate knowledge resurfaces again by viewing creation, they just brush it off.

From this, we can begin to formulate a doctrine. All knowledge comes through God directly putting it into man, separate from anything in creation. To further flesh this out, we will go over passages relevant to the topic. But next, we will head off some

¹⁰ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Page 6. (www.vincentcheung.com)

irrational and anti-Christian doctrines about knowledge. We are asking how Scripture defines what knowledge is not, for extra clarity.

Just by the simple calculation of logic, empiricism is demonstrated as irrational. And so, as a starting point for knowledge, it is ontologically impossible.¹¹

God hotwired knowledge into us—no senses required, just divine upload. Empiricism is a busted myth, and Romans proves it is God's preloaded playlist, not creation's remix, stirring the pot. Non-Christians keep hitting mute on God's knowledge, but the truth's too loud to snooze.

Since Scripture is my starting point, what does this infallible epistemology say about empiricism? Vincent Cheung, first brought these verses to my attention.

Commenting on 2 Kings 3:16-24¹² he says,

“What did the Moabites see – blood or water? The Moabites thought they saw blood, but their senses deceived them. We know that they saw water that looked like blood because this is what the infallible testimony of Scripture says. Thus the passage points out that the senses are unreliable, and shows that we depend on divine inspiration to tell us about particular instances of sensations.”¹³

Vincent also lists John 12:28-29, Matthew 14:25-27, and Matthew 28:16-17.¹⁴

Even though these are only a few instances of a Divine testimony of empiricism (knowledge starts with sensation) being wrong, it is enough to trash the whole thing into skepticism.

To show the importance of this, then consider if I were able to show just one instance where the Scripture was false. For example, what if it were false that Jesus was born

¹¹ Even the secular philosopher David Hume admitted as much about his starting point of empiricism leading to skepticism.

¹² While the harp was being played, the power of the Lord came upon Elisha, 16 and he said, “This is what the Lord says: This dry valley will be filled with pools of water! 17 You will see neither wind nor rain, says the Lord, but this valley will be filled with water. You will have plenty for yourselves and your cattle and other animals. 18 But this is only a simple thing for the Lord, for he will make you victorious over the army of Moab! 19 You will conquer the best of their towns, even the fortified ones. You will cut down all their good trees, stop up all their springs, and ruin all their good land with stones.”

20 The next day at about the time when the morning sacrifice was offered, water suddenly appeared! It was flowing from the direction of Edom, and soon there was water everywhere. 21 Meanwhile, when the people of Moab heard about the three armies marching against them, they mobilized every man who was old enough to strap on a sword, and they stationed themselves along their border. 22 But when they got up the next morning, the sun was shining across the water, making it appear red to the Moabites—like blood. 23 “It's blood!” the Moabites exclaimed. “The three armies must have attacked and killed each other! Let's go, men of Moab, and collect the plunder!”

¹³ Vincent Cheung. *Presuppositional Confrontations*. 2010. Pg 70. www.vincentcheung.com

¹⁴ Others would be Matthew 14:22-33. Another interesting one is in John 9:1-41. Even though they saw with their own eyes, the blind man seeing, he did not believe it.

in Israel, but rather born in South Asia? The issue is that it would cast doubt on the rest of the premises in the Scripture. The problem is not that any premise would definitely be wrong; rather, there would be no infallible mechanism to demonstrate how any given premise of Scripture is true. It would trash the whole bible (as a starting point for knowledge) into skepticism. The issue here, is that skepticism denies the law of non-contradiction; and thus, ontologically impossible.

When Jesus asked Peter who He was, and Peter responded with the right answer Jesus said that *“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father who is in heaven, (Matt. 6:17 LEB).”* Since we already know the Scripture rejects empiricism, there is no surprise to find this verse teaching the same doctrine we learned from Romans 2:15. God, separate from the senses, by His direct force puts the knowledge into man. Jesus said that God Himself revealed the invisible proposition that Jesus is the Son of God. Even though Peter saw, heard, touched and observed God in the most direct and personal way, Jesus said the proposition of Jesus being the Son of God was not revealed by these observations. This proposition was revealed by God Himself to Peter.

Consider Paul’s teaching that all knowledge, regarding the value of Yahweh, displayed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, is revealed by God. Not observation, but by God. For God who said, *“Light will shine out of darkness,”* is the one who has shined in our hearts for the enlightenment of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ,” (2 Corinthians 4:6 LEB). Paul alludes to Genesis 1:3, *“And God said, “Let there be light!” And there was light, (LEB).* In Genesis, we have the teaching about God creating out of nothing. There is no secondary anything, for only God existed¹⁵. It is easy to see what it means that God, directly by His power, created it. Yet, Paul picks this passage to talk about the creation of the knowledge of Christ, in the mind. God created the worlds out of nothing; likewise, God created the propositions about His Glory in His Son’s gospel, into our hearts. God said, and then water and earth formed into the void of empty space (we will overlook that God would need to create a void). God said, and then propositions (and mental assent) about His glory formed into the void of the mind.

Emotions are just as defective as an epistemology as the 5 senses. To go from any of the five senses to invisible propositions is a category error, and would make the senses as an epistemology impossible. Emotions are the same. Grace is not works, and works is not grace. Likewise, emotions are not propositions and propositions are not emotions. To go from one to the other is invalid. Emotions cannot therefore be an epistemology. Furthermore, you need propositions to understand that you are experiencing an emotion, not the other way around. This will be more important in the ethics section, when we are commanded to live by faith. Emotions are not faith. Faith is only a mental assent to God’s word. When we live by emotions it is at the same time being disobedient and irrational. To conclude God will not heal me because of all these bad emotions is to use emotions as a starting point of knowledge (over the scripture), when it is impossible for emotions to produce any knowledge. And yet, people will either deny or make up doctrine based on emotions. They will reject God’s good promises based on their emotions. They act like dumb animals.

¹⁵ There was point when not even angels or other spiritual things existed. All started out of nothing by God’s creating force.

Consider dreams? The Scripture already denies empiricism; however, dreams also show that God directly puts propositions in the mind. There are many occurrences in the old and new testaments about God's elect having dreams, from Joseph in Genesis to Joseph in the book of Matthew. They were asleep. There is no observation. There is no sight, or hearing, or touch. There is only the invisible mind, with invisible propositions. God directly imparts knowledge about the future to these people separate from any sensation.

What about knowledge for practical skills such as various workman skills? Exodus 35:30-35 LEB, "And Moses said to the Israelites, "See, Yahweh has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri the son of Hur, from the tribe of Judah. And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom and with skill and with knowledge and with every kind of craftsmanship, and to devise designs, to work with the gold and with the silver and with the bronze, and in stonecutting for setting and in cutting wood, for doing every kind of design craftsmanship. And he has put it in his heart to teach—he and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, from the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill of heart to do every work of a craftsman and a designer and an embroiderer with the blue and with the purple, with the crimson yarns and with the fine linen and a weaver; they are doers of every kind of craftsmanship and devisers of designs."

Some people might feel some resistance to this doctrine, but since the Scripture is filled with passages that address this doctrine, then the problem is with men's little faith and not God's abundant revelation. As this section is wrapped up it is important to address it in the broad scope. And this broad foundation is, "God". God is the foundation of theology. Without Him, there is no point in doing theology. God's foundation as taught in Scripture, is that of absolute and direct control over all reality. This foundation takes away all the problems that non-Christians have with their fruitless attempts to find knowledge. God's power and absolute sovereignty makes revealing His knowledge a trifle and without contradiction.

God decreed what He would create. God then created all things. God now actively controls all things. It is telling how important this foundation is, when the Bible starts off with this foundation in Genesis 1. We learn in Genesis 1 that God creates, designs and controls by His power alone; this is done without any form of dualism. There is no other power, control, standard or intellect involved. This sets the interpretation doctrine for the rest of scripture as it concerns God's power and control. It is absolute, direct and without any other dual source. Thus, when we read in Isaiah 45:7-11 that God creates light and darkness, poverty and prosperity, and creates good and evil, it means God creates good and evil as God created in Genesis chapter 1, otherwise we have a contradiction about God's definition. Both Isaiah 45 and Romans 9 says it is like man molding a pot. The lump of clay is neutral, and God formed it to be a vase of good or evil by His own choice, just like God designed and formed the pear tree in Genesis 1.

Also note important moments of the gospel coming in contact with the world starts off with this foundation of God's sovereignty over all things, consider Paul in Acts 17 24-28,

God who made the world and all the things in it. This one, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands as if he needed anything, because he himself gives to everyone life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of

humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining their fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, to search for God, if perhaps indeed they might feel around for him and find him. And indeed he is not far away from each one of us, for in him we live and move and exist.” (LEB)

It is not only important for theology and apologetics, but this Sovereign God foundation is important for worship and doxology, (Rev. 4:11 LEB)

“You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
because you have created all things,
and because of your will they existed and were created.”

The Apostle Paul in one of his exchanges mentions the act of resurrection in this way,

“Why should any of you consider it incredible
that God raises the dead?” (Acts 26:8 NIV).

Paul considers it the height of ignorance and stupidity that a person would even have the slightest resistance to know that God raises the dead. What moron told them otherwise? It should never enter the mind that God raising the dead is anything less than normal and a mere trifle. As Jeremiah said, “Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you” (Jeremiah 32:17 NIV).

All of this was said to point out one simple deduction. If God sovereignly created all things and by this sovereign power continues to uphold all things in Himself, then God created knowledge and continues to uphold all knowledge. We will go over logic and deduction later but for now consider a syllogism from Romans 3. We are told that all have sinned. The “all” refers to mankind. Thus, the major premise would be, “All [mankind] are [those who have sinned].” Thus, if Oshea is a man, then Oshea has sinned. This conclusion did not add additional knowledge from a different source. This is an application of knowledge. It is not 50/50 or that Oshea might have sinned. It is a true statement about reality, that Oshea is he who has sinned. “If all men have sinned, then human r, y, or z has sinned.” There is no exception. Do a bullseye circle diagram if you need to see a visual.

Thus, if God is directly sovereign over all things, then God is directly sovereign over t, r and k (knowledge). Some lazy students of God’s word appear to overlook in applying God’s sovereignty over the reality of knowledge. God created knowledge (not referring to Himself) out of nothing, and now directly upholds it in existence and controls it directly.

This section started off with passages addressing aspects of knowledge; however, this foundation of the absolute sovereign God already falsifies many possibilities about what any doctrine can be. No specific proposition about any doctrine can contradict “God”. God does not contradict Himself. His nature is immutable.

To summarize. The foundational doctrine of the Sovereign God, means from the start God directly created all knowledge and controls it. There is no dualism with the existence and control of knowledge. It is only God. Knowledge is part of reality, and so, it falls under the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, as everything else does. Even if there are so-called secondary created objects, they all exist by God’s power and move in

Him, as He controls them. All things are created by God and moved by God. So, even if a secondary¹⁶ object (the senses or an angel) appears to give a person knowledge, it is only a relational description between objects, and not a statement about real causation.

Thus, although we went over specific Scriptures that falsify empiricism as a starting point for knowledge, the doctrine of God would have already ruled such a thing out. For empiricism to be true, it would have to involve a dual ontology with God, so that apart from God's causality, it would use its own power and sovereignly create knowledge in the mind of man. Scripture denies any sort of dualism.

Also, someone might say, "Doesn't Psalm 19 teach that creation gives you knowledge?" Psalm 19's term for revealed knowledge needs to be addressed. Is it said on the ultimate level of ontology or the relative level of ontology? (More will be said about this common category error later.) Making a category error on a term and then equivocating it into the meaning someone wants for their conclusion is a common fallacy among theologians. Sometimes the easiest way to gain clarity is to consider the law of noncontradiction. If "creation revealing" is taken in this Psalm as ultimate, then it would have to assume empiricism. However, the Bible already has passages showing that empiricism can't reliably give knowledge. Psalm 19 and Romans 1:20 say mankind "certainly" knows these things; however, the Bible also shows that knowledge by sensation "cannot give knowledge with certainty." The Bible, in clear passages, shows man does indeed know God's knowledge with certainty. These demonstrate that God Himself puts the knowledge into man directly. Thus, Psalm 19 is speaking on relative ontology, or else there would be a true contradiction.

Theological abuse occurs when a passage isn't obviously clear about whether something is said on the relative level of ontology or the ultimate level, and then it's forced to say what the theological pervert wants it to say. Jesus says things like, "The mountain will obey you," and "Your faith saved you." Did Jesus say this on the relative or ultimate level of causality? You answer this question by going to passages whose terms and context make it clear they're addressing one of those types of causality and finding out what they say. Jesus has clear statements saying (John 10) that you don't believe because you're not a sheep, and only by the Father dragging someone can they believe (John 6). Jesus says even the falling of insignificant birds to the ground is by God's will (Matt. 10:29). Jesus says He does the works of the Father by the power of the Spirit (Matt. 12:28). Are we to conclude that when we heal the sick or cast out demons, on the ultimate level, it's by our power, when even Jesus did the miracles by the Spirit? Of course not. Every time there's a pulling away of the curtain to see how real causality works, Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles always answer with God doing it directly and absolutely.

Empiricism is a wannabe god, and Scripture has no room for dualism—God's the sole knowledge dealer.

The doctrine of occasionalism will be dealt with more later, but here is Vincent Cheung to put it into the context of knowledge, which few seem to take the time to consider:

All the problems with empiricism remain for you. Even if you begin from biblical presuppositions, there is no way to show in any instance whether your

¹⁶ (secondary on the relative level, (or human, or creation point-of-view))

sensation is correct. Even if you begin from biblical presuppositions, you still cannot rescue what is inherently irrational and logically impossible.

With occasionalism, there is no problem. The ears at best provide the occasion upon which God communicates directly to my mind – on the occasion of the sensation but independent of the sensation. In addition, he is the one who controls everything about both the occasion and the communication.¹⁷

And so, creation stimulates the innate knowledge that God has already put into all mankind. If additional knowledge is given, then on the occasion of a person seeing a beautiful sky or reading a book, God—distinct from the seeing—creates the new propositions in the mind.

Consider this doctrine from a chronological viewpoint of the Bible. It was shown that from the beginning in Genesis, knowledge started out by God creating it out of nothing into the minds of Adam and Eve. Thus, the first instance of knowledge is by an out-of-nothing creation by God. For someone to think differently, they would need blatantly obvious passage(s) of Scripture showing it has changed. My question is: where are these? It would need to be a deduction so there's no equivocation of terms from the passage to the conclusion you want. However, as we travel along the history of Scripture, it reveals the same doctrine about knowledge—from practical skills, dreams, innate knowledge, and gospel knowledge. Scripture shows it's precisely by God's power, and not something else.

God is the knowledge architect—no blueprints from creation were needed, just divine fiat from Genesis to now. Anything less is a logic flop, fit for the fantasy bin, not reality's throne room.

As this section wraps up, two additional points will be made about how Scripture defines epistemology. As an example, the Christian definition of the Trinity, because Christianity is true, is the only possible and correct definition of what monotheism is. To suggest monotheism is anything less than what the Trinity is would be delusional, defective, and stupid. A definition of monotheism that's less than the Trinity has never existed and never will; it's pure childish fantasy. The same applies to how the Bible defines epistemology. Any definition that is less (or more) than how the Bible defines it is stupid and logically defective; it's a definition of epistemology that has no possibility of existing—it's pure fantasy.

Non-contradictory

The Bible is non-contradictory. More will be said in a later chapter about Scripture's teaching on logic; however, some will be said here due to the importance of the topic at hand.

¹⁷ Vincent Cheung. *Captive To Reason*. Chapter: Occasionalism and Empiricism. 2009. Pg.13 I want to give credit to Vincent for helping understand this doctrine better with this statement, "on the occasion of... by separate from...." So, when I use this phrase, I am using Vincent's usage of it. I first developed my own basic idea or doctrine of occasionalism myself by reading the bible (Roman 9 and Heb. 1:3), but Vincent helped me to clarify and make it more precise.

Jesus is called the LOGOS in John 1:1. For brevity's sake, this means Jesus is not less than the "Laws of Logic." He is not less than the law of non-contradiction. Therefore, the law of non-contradiction was God. Without the law of non-contradiction, nothing was made. Also, Jesus in Mark 12:37 appeals to the law of non-contradiction when He publicly humiliated the Jewish leaders: "David himself calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?" (NLT). Jesus doesn't appeal to another Scripture to have "Scripture interpret Scripture"; rather, against the advice of many theologians, the point of this Scripture hinged on the laws of logic. The first appearance of this is in the Genesis account with Adam, Eve, and Satan. God says, "Eat this one thing, and die." Satan says, "Did God really say? But I say, you will not." It's shown that God's word is indeed true and that lies both contradict, and are not part of the truth. This story is repeated over and over in Scripture. Then in Hebrews, it says, "Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better" (Heb. 7, NKJV). Scripture here is making a theological point. It then assumes the position that a contradiction is to be avoided in doctrines. So, Jesus appeals to the law of non-contradiction, Scripture assumes a contradiction is to be avoided when making a theological point, and lastly, Jesus is the law of non-contradiction itself.

John writes in his letter, "I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because every lie is not of the truth" (1 John 2:21 LEB). John is appealing to the law of non-contradiction to help define a painfully obvious point about truth. Truth is not non-truth—or, that is, no lie is in the category of truth. God, throughout Scripture, defines Himself and what He reveals as truth. Jesus is the way, the life, and the truth. Jesus said He spoke the truth, and later the Spirit would arrive and help them receive the truth. John, in his letter, simply reaffirms the basic laws of logic about what truth is. Truth means truth; truth is not non-truth; so, either you have truth, or you don't. John's point is that we do have it in Christ. Thus, if you have something that contradicts the truth, then you have something that isn't part reality or "in Christ."

The Bible, as a starting point for all knowledge, defines itself as non-contradictory. So, any so-called starting point of knowledge that is contradictory is intellectually bankrupt by logical demonstration; but also, it's false because it doesn't fit how the Bible defines what an epistemology is to be—this is the important factor. It wasn't Plato or some philosopher, but Scripture that defines epistemology as being without contradiction. To appeal to mysteries and paradoxes won't save you when you state a contradiction, because Scripture teaches there cannot even be a hint of a contradiction.

Substantial knowledge for all of reality, life and ethics.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16-17 LEB).

"[Christ] in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col. 2:3)

"God, having spoken long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days spoke to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds, who is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His

power; who, having accomplished cleansing for sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.” (Heb. 1:1-4 LSB)

The Scripture is profitable for “all” teachings and doctrines about reality. Hebrews 1:1-4 is a short passage; however, it touches on all sorts of ultimate questions, starting with epistemology. On this foundation of God’s revelation, we learn about existence, God’s decrees, causality, sin, salvation, and the implications for man and ethics. The Scripture, as a starting point for knowledge, has substantial information in it for all sorts of ultimate and subsidiary questions.

It is irrelevant if every verse in the Bible says, “Attention! This is about metaphysics, epistemology, anthropology, logic, or ethics.” What is relevant is understanding what it does address. Whether we call Genesis 1 by Greek terms such as “metaphysics” and “ontology” or more biblical names like “existence” and “causality” isn’t the point. What’s important is being able to distinguish these categories and define them as the passages do.

Paul says in Romans 4 that God calls things that “do not exist” as though they “do exist,” referring to the promise He gave Abraham. The big Greek word for this is metaphysics. Scripture talks about this world in ways that describe things that don’t exist but then start to exist. Scripture says this is by God’s power alone. Genesis chapter one is all about this question. Both the starting point of existence being addressed at the very beginning, and how the whole Bible keeps quoting from this chapter about God making things exist, help to define this “question” of existence as an “ultimate question” about life. Thus, when we read in Isaiah 45:7 that God creates “good and evil,” in the context of God being the creator of light and darkness (Gen. 1:3-4, Col. 1:16, Rev. 4:11), we know it means God is the metaphysical author of good and evil,¹⁸ as much and in the same way, as He is the author of stars and empty space.

Any definition that contradicts how the Bible defines metaphysics is, by definition, wrong and intellectually defective. The same goes for the ultimate questions about knowledge, causality, mankind, and ethics. Aristotle—who is he? So what if some Greek guy named Plato happened to get a few things about logic right? Scripture says even a fool gets a few things right here and there. But if he did get a few things right about logic, then he agrees with and borrowed them from Scripture, not the other way around. If he borrowed without giving credit to the Christian God, then he conspired to steal God’s fame for himself. He will give an account for this one day in judgment.

The Bible, as an epistemology, has extensive content about all the big questions of life.

Scripture is the ultimate cheat sheet—loaded with God’s answers to life’s biggies, from “how do I know?” to “why’s there evil?”

Public Starting Point:

The Scripture is the public portion of God’s mind that He revealed to mankind on earth; it is not the only portion of God’s mind that has been, is, or will be revealed. The

¹⁸ I got this phrase, “metaphysical author of sin or evil” from Vincent Cheung.

Scripture is substantial so that it can teach, rebuke, and correct all things about life and godliness (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The last point about Christian epistemology is that we are talking about a “public” revelation. God’s revelation in any aspect is a Christian epistemology; however, with the Scripture, we are dealing with a particular “public” aspect of God’s revelation. It’s for this reason that I don’t say “only” the Bible is the word of God. Innate knowledge, even if suppressed and only able to condemn a non-Christian, is still God’s word written on the heart. In heaven, God will “reveal more” about Himself, but it will be more immediate and intuitive. This is no less the “revealed” word of God than the Bible. John, in the book of Revelation, talks about an infallible revelation given in the thunders he heard, but he was commanded not to share them. These “private revelations” to John were no less the infallible revealed word of God than the Scripture.

The point about the Scripture is that it’s an “infallible,” “once and for all,” “public” revelation of God to the world. Jude says it this way: “I must write... urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to His holy people” (NLT, Jude 1:3).

This Scripture is a “once and for all” public revelation for the world.

Paul says, “*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*” (2 Timothy 3:16-17 LEB).

Paul says this to Timothy, when the New Testament was not finished being written. Moreover, Paul is most likely referring to the Old Testament that it is “sufficient,” for all teaching and correction (3:15). This is important because the bible being “sufficient” has no logical connection to its completion.¹⁹ If it did, then the entire New Testament, or at least parts of it, is by definition not scripture, because it was already sufficient even when Timothy was a child.²⁰ Thus, any argument that uses the sufficiency of Scripture to negate present-day prophecy would at the same time negate the New Testament. This is why knowing the doctrine of the infallibility and sufficiency of Scripture is so important—because morons will use the sufficiency of Scripture to invalidate it. In their haste to attack the charismatics, some have negated Scripture itself. Thus, even if we assume the charismatics are wrong about prophecy, those critics are 100 times more rebellious and stupid.

Because it was Satan who started lying and invalidating God’s revelation, those who teach doctrines that invalidate Scripture teach a doctrine of demons.

Scripture is sufficient for teaching (i.e., doctrine or dogmatics), correction, and knowing how to live righteously. Righteousness is understood in the context of other bigger presuppositions, such as epistemology, metaphysics, and anthropology. We aren’t instructing people to make a category fallacy (or equivocation) by going from ontology in the premise to ethics in the conclusion; rather, ethics is intelligible in the context of other presuppositions being laid down. For example, take Jesus Christ quoting the creation account for “teaching” and “training in righteousness” about

¹⁹ This shows the goodness and abundance of God. Even when the bible was already sufficient He kept loving us by revealing more and more of Himself to us.

²⁰ I want to give credit to Vincent Cheung for making me aware of this argument. See Vincent Cheung, “*Scripture: Sufficient Against Cessationism.*”

marriage and divorce: “They are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6). The assumed premise is that God hasn’t changed His definition of this aspect of the world He created. At one point, because of the ceremonial part of the temporary Law (Gal. 3:15-25), certain foods were forbidden, but now, in the New Covenant (with man already reconciled to God), all food is good to eat. However, Jesus quotes the Genesis account on the basis that it has always been God’s definition. The creation account about one-flesh is a revealed *definition of man* and thus an *ethic*. How God defines us is an ethic we’re to obey and conform to. God hasn’t reversed the one-flesh He created, nor has He given man permission or a commandment to change it. It is God’s world and His definitions.

Peter says, “Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet’s own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God” (NLT, 2 Peter 1:20-21).

Thus, this public revelation of God, the Scripture, is infallible. It’s not merely that Scripture could err but doesn’t. No. There isn’t even a possibility for it to err. It’s a category fallacy to suggest otherwise. It would be like saying squares could be circles but aren’t. No, it is not even a possibility for a square to be attributed as a circle. Hebrews 6 says it’s impossible for God to lie. It’s not that God has the possibility to lie but simply doesn’t; rather, it’s not even a possibility for God to lie, because His Nature is Logic and truth. However, since Scripture is attributed as not being the private interpretation of man but the very words of God, and Scripture claims to reveal truths, we know it’s not even possible for Scripture to err or give a falsehood.

As said before, Scripture, as a starting point for knowledge, does not contradict. Thus, if there are private revelations, we’re to check them against this infallible public revelation: if there’s a contradiction, then the error is with the private revelation (the man who gave it), not the public Scripture.

Scripture is God’s public megaphone—rock-solid and once-for-all, but not His only whisper. It is sufficient to school us straight, yet fools twist it to trash the New Testament in their anti-prophecy tantrums, when they do so they are just playing Satan’s mixtape.

Private knowledge cannot be examined.

To make deductions about yourself, you will need premises about yourself. The Bible also covers this. Paul wrote, “For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11). We derive two points from this. First, this means that a man can know his own thoughts. Thus he can supply premises into biblical deductions about himself. At this point, it is sufficient to note that this is possible. How one evaluates his own thoughts is a separate issue. Second, a man knows only his own thoughts, and not other people’s thoughts...

... We have a public first principle, and to others we make public deductions with public conclusions. But when we make deductions about ourselves on the

basis of this same first principle, we supply premises that are private, that we cannot show to the public or prove to the public, even if we know that they are true. But this is irrelevant in most debates, since most debates concern public issues.²¹

...Both our private knowledge and our public knowledge in the life to come rest on the same basis as the public knowledge that we now possess – all knowledge comes from God’s mind and becomes ours by his action. In the study of philosophy and apologetics, we establish that there is no knowledge apart from what we derive from the Bible. The context is the kind of public knowledge available to us in this life. In effect, this means that our public knowledge in this life is limited to what God has revealed in the Bible, and our private knowledge is limited to what God would cause us to know as stated in the Bible, including the knowledge of adoption. Thus this distinction between private and public knowledge does not leave room for the non-Christian to derive even private knowledge, since their sensations and speculations remain unreliable. And the Christian’s private knowledge of his place in Christ is not derived from his sensations and speculations, but it is caused by an action of the Holy Spirit that the man can neither initiate nor prevent.²²

Even something like “my testimony” is private, not public knowledge. The premises of “my experience with God’s truth,” are invisible premises that I think about myself. For me to say, “I (oshea) was baptized in the Spirit on this day,” is a premise only I can assent to. Or, “I (oshea) experienced the Holy Spirit causing my mind to say, “abba Father.”” Another person could say, “He (oshea) was...,” but not “I (oshea)...” My private revelations of God’s truth in my life, are private and “I” give them as a testimony. They are not public revelations from God to the world. For a person to apply “my” private testimony about God to “themselves” would be a category fallacy. The invisible premises I apply to myself cannot be examined by any other person. Instead, my private testimony(revelation) is a pointer to God’s public revelation for the world. From the public Scripture another person, “by God’s action in their mind,” can do deduction and apply themselves to its major premises and then affirm God’s truths in their life.

1.3. Nature of God’s Revelation

This section will discuss some basics of God’s divine nature (attributes) that particularly deal with the nature of God’s revelation.

²¹ Vincent Cheung. *The Gospel Guarantee of Self-Knowledge*. Found in Fulcrum. 2017. Pg. 52.

²² Vincent Cheung. *The Witness of the Spirit*. Found in Sermonettes Vol 5. 2011. pg 58.

God's existence is Spiritual, Intellectual, and Power

First God is Spirit:

“But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth,” (John 4:23-24 LEB).

Jesus isn’t saying, “God is one spirit among many”; rather, He intended to underscore the truth that God’s essence is of the nature of spirit.

What does Jesus teach about the essential nature of God when He describes God as “spirit”? The first point is that God is personal—that is, self-conscious and self-determining, living and active.²³

“[God is the] blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords. [He] alone possesses immortality, who lives in unapproachable light, whom no human being has seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and eternal power. Amen.” (1 Timothy 6:16 LEB).

“No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us,” (1 John 4:12 NTL).

“The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words,” (1 Corinthians 2: 10-13).

“And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately, and he ordered something to be given to her to eat,” Luke 8:55 (LEB)

God is not material. God is not creation, because all creation is that which has been created by God, not the other way around. God is NOT what He creates. God is NOT what He causes. If God creates a north-flowing river, God Himself is not a north-flowing river. God is not “north,” “flowing,” or a “river.” If God causes a tree to not bear fruit, then God Himself is not a non-bearing fruit tree. God is not a “tree”; He is not “non-bearing.” Likewise, if God causes a man to commit sin, God is not a man who commits sin. God is not “man”; He is not “commits sin.” God upholds and controls creation by His power, but He is also dissimilar from and independent of what He creates.

²³ Reymond, R. L. (1998). [*A new systematic theology of the Christian faith*](#) (p. 167). Nashville: T. Nelson.

We learn that God is a Spirit and that, as a Spirit being, no man has ever seen God—that is, seen by sensation. If considering it from an epistemological standpoint, then not by empiricism. We are like God in that He has made human beings with a spirit.

Paul says that only the invisible spirit (or soul) of a person knows a person, and it's the same with God. Thus, God knows Himself spiritually, intellectually, and intuitively. He doesn't understand Himself by observation and sensation, which would be a category fallacy. God knows all things—or, put another way, God understands all true propositions. Thus, the foundation of all knowledge is not empiricism but spiritual, intellectual, and intuitive. Man's image-bearing of God also mirrors God in the same way. Man's knowledge is not by empiricism but spiritual and intellectual. The one difference is that, rather than intuitive by divine nature, man's knowledge is by being divinely revealed.

This spirit aspect is the chief foundation of man and how man is the image of God. After death, the body is dead, but the spirit lives on. When Jesus resurrected the little girl, it is said her spirit returned to her body. Thus, the body is important but secondary in order. The spirit is primary—or, that is, even when the body dies and the spirit is separated, the person still lives on as themselves; they still have the foundational aspect of self-awareness and that which makes them chiefly made in God's image. The physical body is referred to as being "clothed." The redeemed spirits will be given a new, created heavenly body. This shows that God desires for man's spirit to be clothed in a body. Yet, this doesn't change the order: the spirit is foundational, and the body is then added to it. Adam's body was lifeless—or it was without the image of God. Once God breathed into Adam, the spirit was created, and Adam became an image-bearer of God.

Paul tells us that the invisible Spirit of God alone knows the mind of the invisible God. Paul says God has put His Spirit into the spirit of His children so they will truly know God. In this, we truly become the image of God. We know this because Paul then says, based on this reality, *"You have the mind of Christ."* It's not merely that you can imitate Christ's mind by copying, but that categorically you have the mind of Christ because God's Spirit is in you. It's not that you think God's thoughts after Him; it's more than that. With God's Spirit in you, *you think God's thoughts with Him.*

Since God's thoughts are eternal and not linear, we don't think God's thoughts with Him in that sense, but rather, we know God in the same way God knows Himself, which is by His Spirit. The Spirit knows God's mind perfectly, and it's this same Spirit that operates on the minds of His elect to think His thoughts. The same Power that knows God and thinks God's thoughts perfectly with God is the same Power that acts on the mind of man to think God's thoughts.

God's a Spirit, not a cosmic handyman—His essence isn't stuff you can stub your toe on. He knows Himself before binoculars were made, and we're wired the same, minus a few of the God-only deity stuff.

This leads to a mental blunder that unbelievers commit. When some non-Christians ask for God to prove He exists, they'll ask for a type of supernatural miracle. They might say, *"If God were to cause my car to fly off the ground one mile and then fly back down in perfect safety, then I'd know the laws of physics have been suspended, and I'd believe in God."* Or, *"If God were to show Himself as an obtuse triangle of burning light and speak to me,"* or, *"If God would transform my shoes into gold,"* *"then I'd believe."* All

of these, and those like them, commit the fallacy of a category error. God is Spirit, and so, even if He manifested as a burning obtuse triangle of light or made a car fly up, these things are not spirit but material creation. To start your logical argument or syllogism with material creation and then conclude with God (who is Spirit) would be invalid. In formal logic, it's a four-term fallacy; in informal fallacies, it's a category error. You went from material creation in the premises to spiritual reality in the conclusion. You might as well just say, "Rocks are clouds, and grass is rocks; therefore, all cats are 15 blue gravities."

The same applies when delusional minds pose the query, "Can God make a rock so heavy that He cannot lift it?" Again, God is Spirit; thus, He doesn't categorically "lift" anything. Why are non-Christians so stupid that their proofs for God would be invalid? The more educated aren't better in their sub-human, animalistic thinking, with the exception that they're "better" at deceiving themselves.

Unbelievers begging for flying cars or golden kicks to "prove" Him? That's a logic flop—the Spirit is not material, but their brains are stuck in the material stupid gear.

Second, God is intellectual:

"In Him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3 NLT).

"He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit" (Psalm 147:4-5 NIV).

"The whole of Your word is truth, and Your every righteous judgment endures forever" (Psalm 119:160 LEB).

"Now this is eternal life: that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" (John 17:3 LEB).

"And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind, for Yahweh searches all hearts and understands every plan and all thoughts" (1 Chronicles 28:9 LEB).

"In the beginning was the [LOGOS], and the [LOGOS] was with God, and the [LOGOS] was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it" (John 1:1-5 NKJV).

God's nature is not physical but spiritual. We first learned in 1 Corinthians 2 that the "spirit" aspect of both God and man is attributed with knowing oneself. And so, the second point is that God is intellectual. At this point, it can be said that since it's the Spirit that knows or understands God, to be spiritual is also to be intellectual. Thus, there's some overlap between the two. However, when I refer to understanding, I'm not focusing on the distinction between the physical and the invisible spirit, even though this is presupposed.

God's knowledge has "no limit," meaning it's infinite. We are told that all knowledge and wisdom (reason) are hidden in God. For example, as a category premise, it's not that "all mammals are dogs" (which is false), but that "all dogs are mammals." Draw a circle diagram to see this if you need to. Thus, if you go outside of God, there is no knowledge or reasoning. No knowledge and reason would mean no thinking: nothing.

A summarized way to say Colossians 2:3 would be, "God knows all things." God knows all propositions. To think a true proposition, one would have to think a proposition God knows.

Also, because God knows all things, He knows X, Y, and Z. God knows all the unmeasurable names of the stars. God knows the thoughts and intents of all the humans He created. God knows all these things because He predestined and decreed them to happen. Whether it's the thoughts of man (Proverbs 21:1), a random eagle that leaps off a cliff to fly²⁴, or anthropology and salvation (Acts 2:23), God has decreed them and so He knows about them.

God's mind doesn't merely know every proposition; the structure of God's propositions is in perfect order, or logic. Jesus is the LOGOS—or, Jesus is the Logic or Reason. God's propositions are in perfect logical order and structure. Man images God not only when our propositions come from God's mind but also when our structure or ordering of these propositions is patterned after God's way of doing it, which is rational and deductive. More on this topic in a later section.

Jesus even sums up "life" as simply "knowing God." This is because, before creation, God the Trinity already existed in the perfection of life and joy. This was before any created thing. Jesus even says He wanted to have this "valuable life" back—the kind before the world existed. Those following what's been said should see why. God is Spirit and intellectual. The fellowship of the Trinity and the valuable life therein were without empiricism or material things. Thus, man—and those who have been remade in closer alignment to God's image through Christ Jesus—will image this life of God. The Christian's valuable, abundant life is in knowing God: through spirit, intellect, and power.

To recap the two points together of God being a spirit and intellectual, consider Vincent as he says,

God introduced himself as ME. He identified himself by himself, and in relation to himself. I AM is I AM. Of course God can be known in his actions and relations, and he often reveals himself through his actions and relations, but his basic identity is I AM. He just IS, and this is meaningful even before we consider his actions and relations. No one else is like this. No creature can possess intrinsic definition and meaning, because the fact that it is a created thing means that it is conceived and defined by the creator, so that it can find meaning only in relation to one who created it. A creature-centered definition of a creature is also a mis-definition of the creature. The definition of the essence of a created thing will always be a creator-centered definition, a God-centered

²⁴ In Job 39 God makes the point against Job, who does not have knowledge and power, that He does. Whether it is why an ostrich lacks wisdom in caring for its young, or when a random eagle decides its time to fly, it was by God's causality and command that all such things happen. God knows it because he created, caused and commanded it to happen.

definition. In other words, to truly know a created thing, we must know how it is related to the creator, or God. A self-centered definition of a created thing is different from a God-centered definition of that thing, and on its own this self-centered definition is insufficient and misleading. When a created being insists on defining himself by himself, we call that sin, because by this the created being pretends to be God, and thus blasphemes the true God.

On the other hand, God is eternal and uncreated. He is relative only to himself, and therefore he is absolute. It is necessary that he defines himself by himself, because he is the one that defines everything, and there is nothing other or higher than himself by which he is defined. Therefore, with him God-centeredness and self-centeredness are the same. This is his unique characteristic. A creature who is self-centered in the sense that he considers himself the center of everything, and defines himself and everything else by himself, is out of touch with reality.²⁵

God with perfect knowledge of all things, knows Himself perfectly. He has a perfect self-knowledge. God does not forget; He does not get tired. God is immutable. And so God's perfect self-knowledge is always constant and vivid about Himself. As Reymond says about God being a Spirit means: He is, "self-conscious and self-determining, living and active."²⁶

This gives some insight into the foundation of the doctrine of the Trinity. They all share the same divine power and divine nature, but the Father, with perfect self-understanding, doesn't assent, 'I am the Holy Spirit,' for that would be false. The same applies to the Son and the Spirit. The difference in the Trinity is their personhoods that assent to different propositions about themselves.

The Christian images this about God, as they have a clear and vivid self-awareness of themselves in relation to God. For a person to talk about themselves having good self-knowledge or centeredness without their relation to God is like playing a game of horseshoes with no stake in the ground. It's nonsense, mentally unhealthy, and delusional. Paul said that God has given us a sound and powerful mind, or state of mind. God doesn't forgive 'God.' Rather, the Christian grows a strong and correct self-centeredness by applying God's truths to themselves. 'I (Oshea) am forgiven by God.' The Father isn't a child of God; rather, He's the Father. Thus, the truth of 'I am a child of God' isn't a truth the Father thinks about 'Himself.' It is meant to be meditated on and affirmed in the minds of the elect. This is who 'they' are. God, with His perfect self-awareness, thinks, 'Oshea is My child.' And Oshea, with correct and sound self-centeredness, thinks, 'I (Oshea) am a child of God,' or 'I (Oshea) will approach boldly to the throne of grace today.'

Vincent also pointed out in his essay how Paul said a very similar phrase to what Yahweh said about Himself being, 'I AM, who I AM.' 'But by the grace of God, I am what I am' (1 Corinthians 15:10 LEB). Paul affirms his own self-centeredness or awareness with the same divine way Yahweh did, 'I AM what I AM,' but with one

²⁵ Vincent Cheung. The Christian and the Self. Web July 2020. (www.vincentcheung.com).

²⁶ Reymond, R. L. (1998). A new systematic theology of the Christian faith (p. 167). Nashville: T. Nelson.

exception. Paul has a healthy, powerful, and sound understanding of himself, and this is in relation to God and to God's unmerited favor bestowed—not on God, but on Paul.

We will do the same.

Third, God is Unstoppable Power:

“Jesus said to him, “You have said it. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the **POWER** and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Matthew 26:64 LEB) ²⁷

“[God is the] blessed and only Sovereign, the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords. [He] alone possesses immortality, who lives in unapproachable light, whom no human being has seen nor is able to see, to whom be honor and eternal POWER. Amen,” (1 Timothy 6:16 LEB).

“Then he said to me, “This is what the Lord says to Zerubbabel: It is not by FORCE nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies,” (Zechariah 4:6 NLT).

“But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8 LEB)

“..Enabled with all POWER, according to his glorious might, for all steadfastness and patience with joy,” (Colossians 1:11 LEB)

“And the whole crowd was seeking to touch him, because POWER was going out from him and healing them all.” (Luke 6:19 LEB)

“For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of POWER and love and self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 1:7 LEB)

“But Jesus said, “Someone touched me, because I know POWER has gone out from me.” (Luke 8:46 LEB)

“...that he may grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with POWER through his Spirit in the inner person,” (Ephesians 3:16 LEB).

“And amazement came upon them all, and they began to talk with one another, saying, “What word is this? For he commands the unclean spirits with authority and POWER, and they come out!” (Luke 4:36 LEB)

“And behold, I am sending out what was promised by my Father upon you, but you stay in the city until you are clothed with POWER from on high.” (Luke 24:49 LEB)

“Israelite men, listen to these words! Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with deeds of POWER and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—.” (Acts 2:22 LEB)

²⁷ Emphasis, which is added in verse and the rest in this section are added by author.

“Jesus of Nazareth—how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with POWER, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him.” (Acts 10:38 LEB)

This is what the Lord says—
the Holy One of Israel and your Creator:
Do you question what I do for my children?
Do you give me orders about the work of my hands?
I am the one who made the earth
and created people to live on it.
With my hands I stretched out the heavens.
All the stars are at my command.
I will raise up Cyrus to fulfill my righteous purpose,
and I will guide his actions.
He will restore my city and free my captive people—
without seeking a reward!
I, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, have spoken!...
...Consult together, argue your case.
Get together and decide what to say.
Who made these things known so long ago?
What idol ever told you they would happen?
Was it not I, the Lord?,” (Isaiah 45:12-13, 21).

This doctrine of the POWER of God can be overlooked. There is often a focus, and rightfully so, on God’s “sovereignty,” and “authority”; however, the word for power, as used often in the New Testament simply means force, strength, or ability. Our English word for dynamic comes from this. In physics, dynamic refers to the study of “force” interchanged between objects. When applied to metaphysics He says in Isaiah that He planned something for the future, and then will cause (power/force) this something to happen (Cyrus to help His people). Then God makes the point that He is able to tell what the future is. In a painfully obvious observation, God states that He predicts the future, which He Himself planned and will cause by His power. The scripture repeats this point often, because people have conspired to reduce the truth of God’s power. Yet, this God of power, is the true God of the Scripture. Anything less is superstition.

“Jesus said to him, “...Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the **POWER...**”
(Matthew 26:64 LEB)

It is interesting for theological reflection and doxology, to note Jesus in Matthew 26 referred to His Father as just “Power,” or “Force.” Yahweh, would be God’s proper name, or “Father,” would be the direct name in relation to Jesus being the “son.” And Yet Jesus overlooks all of these. John is famous for saying “God is Love,” in his letter; however, the Son of God does not call His Father on the throne, “love,” or “kindness,” or even “Father” which He commonly used.²⁸ The context is Jesus being commanded

²⁸ I want to give credit to Vincent Cheung for helping me understand this doctrine of God’s power better from his essay, On Spiritual Attacks.

by the high priest to answer if He was the Christ. Jesus offers a straightforward and official response to this interrogation. What is Jesus' official response to who He is and who sent Him? FORCE! Jesus perceives Yahweh so foundationally as "force" that Jesus calls His Father, "Power," in place of His title of Father or His proper name as Yahweh. That is, rather than Jesus saying He is the Messiah sent from ... "the Father," ...or... "Love"... or... "the Lord of angel armies"... , Jesus says He is the messiah sent from the "Power." When God gave a direct answer to Job (Job 39), about who this God is, He gave a long list of things describing Him creating reality, and His absolute causality and control over it. Why are some animals more dumb than other animals, like an ostrich? Because God decreed and causes it to be so. Why does a random eagle fly off a cliff, because God commanded it. God is the absolute and total "Power."

Luke records that the woman, with the flow of blood issue, when she touched Jesus, that Jesus felt "FORCE, or POWER" flow out of Him. This word for "force," is the same word Jesus referred to the Father in Matthew 26. The Father is power, and the Son of man on earth, who is the perfect image of the Father, is having "power" flow out of Him²⁹. When this force of Jesus came into contact with the "force" of a defective body, Jesus' force was greater. Jesus' force won. Jesus' force did not compete, it dominated. The woman was healed. Seeing how Peter says all the people Jesus healed were "*oppressed by the Devil*," in Acts 10:38, then we can say, Jesus' force, came into contact with demonic force, yet because Jesus was stronger, His force overcame and defeated the weaker satanic force. Therefore, John says in his letter that with "faith," we also overcome and "defeat the world," because with faith, Christians have access to wield God's power as their own. We are not commanded to compete with this evil kingdom; no, we are commanded to dominate it. We are to tear down the gates of hell by faith and by the same Spirit Jesus was anointed with.

This same word is sometimes used to talk about "power" in the inner man for spiritual and moral strength. The power of the flesh is strong, but the power of the Spirit is stronger. The Spirit wins. The man is converted, the man is progressively sanctified, and the man is kept until he is sent home. This is accomplished because God's ability is greater in the man compared to the world's weaker ability. However, since in my experience most do not resist this we will focus on the power when applied to other areas.

Jesus commanded, not just the apostles, but any follower to wait in Jerusalem until they are clothed with "FORCE/ABILITY," from on high. To appreciate the logical order of this, first consider how God is pure "power." Thus, it is no surprise to hear the Scripture say, "*Not by POWER, but by my Spirit*." The contrast is about what is real power. True ABILITY is not in created things like men; rather, true ABILITY is the force that made all created things and upholds them. The world was made by the Trinity. It was made by the unstoppable power of the Spirit. Jesus, as the God-man, did not start His ministry of POWER, until He was filled with the Spirit of POWER. Jesus in John 14-16 told His disciples that it was good for Him to leave, because only then would the Spirit of POWER be given to all His followers. The world was to be conquered by the gospel, through POWER. But Jesus was just a single grain of FORCE. After His death, then all the grains produced by His atonement would have

²⁹ This power in the most direct sense is referring to the Holy Spirit. The Spirit anointed Jesus as a man born under the Law. Jesus said He drove out demons by the Spirit, and not His own personal power as the only Son of God.

FORCE like Him. The application of the Spirit of POWER to all believers was a stipulation of the New Covenant (from the Father to the Son), Acts 2:33, 39.

“But you will receive POWER when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8 LEB)

Jesus’ word for “power,” is the same one He used to refer to Yahweh on His throne. The same word He termed to Himself under the ministry of the Spirit. And now that He is at the Father’s right hand, He will clothe His believers (most in the upper room were not apostles) with the same unstoppable FORCE. Also, the “farthest part of the earth,” is still in play. Jesus said He would come back again, when every nation has heard the gospel and contains a remnant in them. We are still here, and thus that is not fulfilled. Thus, as long as the gospel is in play, this Power from the Spirit baptism is still in play, despite demons saying otherwise. Also, in Peter’s sermon in the next chapter, connects this “power” and salvation as intertwined. If you negate one, then you necessarily negate the other; for both have the same foundation. Peter’s point about predestination (2:39) is directly about future generations receiving this POWER and not forgiveness of sins. That is, Peter’s contrast about the elect and reprobate is about receiving this Power. Jesus says we are to be witnesses of the gospel of grace, through POWER. Why do so many Christians willfully disobey their commanding officer on this and still call Him Lord?

To summarize. God is Spirit and Intellectual. This invisible Spirit of immeasurable intellectual propositions and communion, is unstoppable force. Adam and Eve, were made in the image of God, regarding some core issues, but their potential was far from the mark, even before they sinned. Adam did not have God’s Spirit in Him, like we do, so that we can say, “I have the Mind of Christ,” or “I have the Mind of God.” The same is about intellect and force. In Jesus Christ, the image of God in the Elect, is truly realized in precious and awesome ways. The Christian’s eternal life is summed up as “knowing God.” Their intellect is truly elevated to divine levels. We are not saying the mind of man is like God’s, with attributes like eternality, immutability or infinity; rather, we are saying the way God knows Himself, His Spirit, is how we know God and the thoughts we do know are God’s thoughts.

God is Spirit. Thus, He gives His SPIRIT to the Elect (1 Corin 2:10-16). His same SPIRIT is in them! They have the Mind of Christ.

God is intellectual. Thus, God reveals His KNOWLEDGE (2 Corin 4:6) to the Elect. They think God’s KNOWLEDGE with Him. In the New Covenant God promises to be their personal teacher. They know the world as it truly is. They know God, not by sensation or observation; rather, they know Him intellectually, as His truth is revealed to them. They fellowship and worship Him in truth.

God is Power. Thus, God takes His power and clothes His elect, in the same power. God’s ability becomes theirs. Faith gives the Christian access to God’s power. Faith puts God’s power and their disposal. God’s power to cast out demons and work miracles becomes their power to cast out demons and work miracles. In ultimate level ontology God directly does all things; however, Jesus the most God-centered man who ever lived, said that He gave authority and POWER to His followers, (NOT to Himself), to cast out demons and work miracles. Jesus mostly speaks on this relative level ontology. Thus, God’s ability to move mountains or have trees plant themselves in salt

water, becomes their ability. Jesus says the tree will “OBEY” you, not God, when you speak in faith. This is true because the bible denies pantheism. Power will flow out of “you.” Power will flow out of “your” shadow (Acts 5:15), not Jesus’. The power is ultimately God’s. However, it was “you” who spoke to the sickness to leave. Even though it was God’s power, you wield it (i.e. speak it) and God’s power flows out of your belly, not some random earth worm down the street. And so Jesus is correct when He says it will obey “you.”

God and His Word are one. God’s thoughts and power and decree is one seamless thing. When you speak God’s Word in faith, you just released unstoppable power.

God’s TRUTH is dauntless.

God’s POWER is unstoppable.

God’s UNMERITED FAVOR is indomitable toward us.

Thus, our FAITH is already triumphant.

A summary of some of God’s attributes that relate more to revelation.

Spirituality of God:

Since this point has been talked about in the opening of this section, we will move on to the next.

Infallibility of God:

This has already been introduced in the first chapter.

“Two immutable things... impossible for God to lie,”

(Hebrews 6:18 NKJV)

Some things are impossible because there is a limitation. For example, it is impossible for a house fly to lift my car and throw it. It simply lacks the force or ability to do it.

However, somethings are impossible because of the laws of logic. The laws of logic are both a law of the mind and of reality. Jesus is the LOGIC, and so, logic is not something God obeys; rather, logic is part of the Divine Nature itself. For example, a square cannot be a circle, not because it lacks the power, but because a contradiction is impossible. As said before in the introduction, try saying, “I do not exist,” without using your existence. Reality forces you from doing a contradiction. It is a category fallacy. A square circle does not exist in my mind or in reality.

And so, the doctrine of the Bible is that it is infallible. Some say the Bible is inerrant. This is indeed true, as far as it goes. However, it goes further than that. Inerrant means the Bible does not error. But as we have already learned from Hebrews 6, it is not even possible for God to lie. But since the Scripture is included as part of God and

all of it is truth, then the possibility of the Scripture to error, is the same. The possibility does not even exist. It is a stronger statement that correctly belongs to the scripture. Thus, the bible is infallible.

The [whole] of your word is truth and your every righteous judgment endures forever. (Psalm 119:160 (LEB))

“No lie is.. truth,” (1 John 2:21 NKJV). [Do a circle diagram if you need to, to see the distinctness of this statement.]

Jesus, “I am the way, the truth and the life,” (John 14:6)

“All who invoke a blessing or take an oath, will do so by the God of truth,” (Isaiah 65:16 NLT).

“Let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No,’” (Matt. 5:37 NKJV).

“The world through its wisdom (i.e. a human epistemology) did not know God,” (1 Corin.1:21 NKJV).

God is truth. God has revealed truth in the scripture. He has only revealed propositions of truth in the scripture, for the scripture is a public portion of God’s mind revealed, and God is Himself truth. There is also a lecture on logic as we are told, truth, is not a lie, and reversely. No [lie] is in the [truth]. This is both a lesson on contradiction and contrariety. Thus, it is false to say, “all lie is truth,” or “some lie is truth.” Because God’s nature is truth, there is not even a little bit of a lie. Also, as this is applied in a command or ethic for mankind (Matt: 5:37) we are also given a lesson on the law of identity. Jesus is commanding His followers to be holy as their Father is holy. In other words, God the Father is cut-above all things, and as His image bearers, we are commanded to also be morally superior. We already know God’s truth is truth, for there is no lie in it. Thus, Jesus is demanding we speak in the same consistent way. Our yes is to be yes, and our no is to be a no. If we say to our boss, or spouse or friend, “I will meet you at 9am,” our words are to mean what they say. That is, we are to apply the laws of identity and contradiction constantly to all we say and do. By this we image our Father in heaven, who’s word is truth, and not something else, or its opposite.

Thus, since God has already been defined as truth (as being part of His divine nature itself), and all He has revealed in the Scripture is truth, then it is a category impossibility for God to lie. For God to lie, would be to deny the law of contradiction. It would be to deny Himself. For example: to say God is truth, is to say, God is a circle. And to say a lie, is a square. God cannot categorically be a circle and a square. It is a thinking and ontological impossibility. A square circle has no possibility to exist, and the God of Scripture to lie has no possibility to exist. It is not that a square circle could possibly exist but simply does not; rather, the possibility does not even exist. The same with God and lying. It is not merely that God could lie, but just chooses not to; rather, the possibility does not even exist. It is impossible for God to lie. It is impossible for the Scripture to have a lie in it.

The knowability and incomprehensibility of God:

What is the use of God revealing all this truth, if God is not knowable to begin with? There is some reason to ask this in a broad sense; however, considering the God of all POWER and intellect, such a risk, would never exist. Ultimately the issue of a created thing, having the ability to understand what God reveals about Himself to them, rests on God's POWER and ability to create and reveal it. As per my Theology Maximum: God is the foundation of theology, not man. God's understanding and ability have no limit. For example, I can say, "If God forgets to think about me, I would stop existing." I do not mean by this, that it is possible for God to have divine memory loss, but that "IF" such a thing were possible, then "x" would be the necessary outcome. It is not possible for God's ability to be limited or deficient. God does not have to jump over a wall or do something that is a limitation to man, He can bulldoze right through it. God can teleport right into it. He can cause things that do not exist to suddenly exist, whether it is babies or knowledge. There is no limitation with God's power.

Many try to give God praise in humility. However, their "humility" is just lazy and/or outright perverted worship. To praise God, it is not necessary to self-debase oneself. In fact, to give God truthful and spiritual worship, it is often necessary to exalt oneself, in the sense, of "how God" has so exalted "you" (but exalted "you" nonetheless) to praise Him for it. How can you praise God for cleansing "your" conscience (compared to the world), when it is not? How can you praise God for having the Mind of Christ, if you do not? How can you praise God for boldly approaching the throne of grace and getting help in the land of the living, if you do not? How can you praise God for strengthening "your" inner man for moral superiority, when it is not? How can you praise God for endowing "you" with power, if you have not been so? You are not worshiping at this point. You are lost in a delusion and fantasy. Paul praises God, for more than one church in his letters, that they were "once" these evil things, but are not anymore. "Some of you were these things, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God," (1 Corinthians 6:11 LEB). Paul says earlier in chapter 2 that they have the "mind of Christ," and that (2. Ch.5) because they died with Christ and are now both the righteousness of God and filled with God's Spirit, that he does not even consider them to be lowly humans anymore. Paul is thankful and praises God that they are filled with powerful gifts of the Spirit. Paul sees them different as He sees Jesus differently on the throne as compared to His incarnation on earth. He sees them as a new creation and categorically superior. They were at one point inferior non-Christians, but now they are superior as Christians. This is what true humility is! I was once stupid and evil, like the rest of the world, but Almighty God, saved me, washed me, empowered me and has exalted me to sonship in Christ! Anything less, is unworthy worship of the God who saves His people.

Isaiah 55 is a favorite passage for theological perverts to abuse their false humility on.

"Whoever has no money, come, buy and eat,
and come, buy without money,
wine and milk without price ...
... For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so my ways are higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:1,9)

Let us deal with the absurdity when people say something to the effect of, “God’s thoughts are not our thoughts,” as a doctrine. If that was the case, then the thought that “God’s thoughts are not our thoughts,” would not be God’s thought. For this self-refuting nonsense to be true, it would have to be false at the same time. To know that you do not know is a contradiction. It would be an infinite regress of affirming and denying. When our opponent is finished with this regress, I will admit I was mistaken. Also, the two statements would cancel each other out, and so there is no knowledge.

Thanks be to God, He is the logos and does not speak in such self-contradictory nonsense. Look at the context. Or even better, consider the words themselves. To say my thoughts are not your thoughts, could mean a variety of things. I could mean, “I have not told you my thoughts,” and so of course you cannot think them. Our opponent picks the dumbest self-refuting possibility, and then makes a formal doctrine out of it. Spiritual Pervert!

When formulating a doctrine, you show the terms clearly, and if a conclusion is being made, is a necessary/logical outcome. But at the very least, apply the law of noncontradiction, and show that it does not contradict the context or other passages on the subject. Our opponent fails at this smallest requirement. Isaiah 55 starts by saying come buy from God without money. The context is having God’s favor and deliverance. It is about the gospel. God is highlighting the extreme level of “unmerited favor” that is in the gospel. A good picture of this is in Hebrews 4 and 10, when we are told to boldly approach the throne of “GRACE,” to receive all the help we need. Grace means “unmerited favor.” It is not having the credit/money to afford God’s favor. Jesus gives us an unlimited amount of unmerited favor, for us to buy all the (milk and honey) favor, help and blessings from God we need. When God said His thoughts were not their thoughts, the point was that God’s thoughts, about how free His favor is, through Jesus Christ, is not theirs. They were still under the law, and the full understanding of Jesus had not yet been revealed.

However, for those who approach the throne of grace (unmerited favor) to buy all the mercies and help, in faith in Christ, are those who are thinking God’s thoughts with Him, and who ways are walking in God’s ways. God’s thoughts of grace, are now their thoughts. God’s ways of grace, have now become their ways. They are truly sons of God, by thinking His thoughts and walking in His ways. They have the mind of Christ. And so the passage means the opposite of what many imply that it means.

Beyond the basic doctrine of God’s ability, which alone would invalidate any objection to man knowing God, God has promised in the New Contract that He will be their personal teacher. Jesus in John 6 quotes Isaiah 54, saying, “They shall be taught by God.” The contract (Heb. 8, quoting Jeremiah 31) even says, “*they will know me.*”

God knows an infinite number of propositions. Man is not a infinite being like God, and so man does not at once, and intuitively, know an infinite volume of propositions; yet, the promise from God is that in Jesus Christ, all that we do know (which is substantial Colossians 2:3, 2 Tim 3:16-17) is what God knows. For all those propositions, we think God’s thoughts with Him.

Necessity of Revelation:

This necessity is built by the negative and positive. Negatively, the bible says, “*Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom,*” (1 Corin. 1:21 NLT). In context both the wisdom the Greek’s seek and the signs the Jews seek, are both thrown in the category of “human” wisdom, or a human epistemology. They are both starting with human observation (like the Socratic method) and inductively produce premises about the world from human speculation, whether it be about Greek philosophy or Jewish signs, African culture, or worldwide science. All these reject God’s revelation as their starting point; they start with human speculation and end up with human speculation. The positive contrast is with God’s revelation. Paul in a few verses later in chapter 2 verse 4, uses the word for a 3 premise syllogism (“demonstration”), to described why the Corinthians faith is in God, not man.³⁰ By the ability of the Spirit Paul gave a deductive argument from Scripture that the Corinthians understood and believed. Because deduction does not contain any extra information than the source, (in this case the Bible) then the conclusion is what the Bible asserts. Thus, their faith was indeed in God, and not human speculation.

Recall some earlier comments about innate knowledge. Romans 1 and 2 teaches man is born with God’s laws (which is substantial knowledge) and by viewing the world it stimulates this knowledge to the front of their thinking. However, in man’s sinful and depraved condition they suppress the knowledge of God and God’s laws. Thus, this knowledge is enough to condemn man guilty, and to downgrade them as worthy of the flames of hell; however, it is not enough to save man. And so innate knowledge is enough to condemn, but not enough to save. Thus, there is a necessity for a starting point of knowledge, where man can be saved.

“[God’s] divine power has bestowed on us all things that are necessary for life and godliness, through the knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence of character,

(2 Peter 1:3 (LEB))

Peter says there is some things that are “necessary” to live life and live godly. Life is broadly referring to living in God’s creation, under His supply and abundance, which is more about metaphysics and ontology. It is God’s supply for health, prosperity and

³⁰ Vincent helped me immensely to understand this passage. To see his argument, Vincent Cheung, “Proof of the Spirit,” which is found the book, “Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians.” 1 THESSALONIANS 1:5b. 2008. Pg 24-27.

“Paul deliberately slips into philosophical terms in verse 4, asserting that his preaching was shown true, not by speculative and fallacious arguments, but by the “demonstration” of the Spirit. The word indicates a logical proof, as in philosophy and geometry. The English translation is appropriate, since “demonstration” denotes a “logical proof in which a certain conclusion is shown to follow from certain premises.”

His point is that he insisted on presenting a message that was based on divine revelation instead of one that was based on human speculation.

Bullinger writes, “Here, it denotes the powerful gift of divine wisdom, in contrast with the weakness of human wisdom.” This is the issue at hand. Paul’s preaching differs from the orators both in method and content, but his arguments are nevertheless logical and persuasive. Unlike the fallacious “proof” of the sophists, the apostle provides sound “proof” for his message that is powerful to effect conversion in his hearers...” pg. 26.

His favor that makes the world react to you in a positive way, particularly in the things He has called you to do, (including, your own hearts desires). We define life this way because starting with Abraham we see that God's favor abundantly increases the totality of a person's life, including human fame, military victories, prosperity, healing, long life, and friendship with God. Even if we narrow "life" to "eternal life" (John 17:3), it still would not be less than God blessing your entire life, including health and wealth. We know this because in the 3 proceeding chapters Jesus says, over and over, we are to ask for anything, and God will give you what you want. This is life. This is what it means to "know the only true God." This is the "abundant life" a person has when they are reconciled and in fellowship with Jesus. John 15 talks about us living and dwelling with Jesus like branches connected to the vine. When we live in the Vine, we ask for anything, and we get it. Those who have eternal life, so that they "know the only true God," have access to Him to ask for anything and get it. You cannot have "eternal life" and not have the ability to ask for anything and get it. If you do not have this, then you do not have life, you do not have eternal life, you do not have fellowship with God. "Godliness" is about ethics in that we act in a way that is like God and in according to "God's" definition. Peter says these necessary things to live, is provided by God's power. Man needs this power, for without this power man lacks the necessary things for ethics and to have abundant life. Yet this power also has an antecedent. To get this power man needs God's knowledge. And as Peter in context of his own letter, it is the Scripture that is the source of this. Thus, Scriptural knowledge is a necessity for man, who needs life and godliness.

"In whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden,"

(Colossians 2:3 (LEB))

Paul says to Timothy that "from childhood you have known the holy writings that are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness," (2 Timothy 3:15–16 LEB). Recall in the section about innate knowledge, and how much knowledge must be included in the phrase "laws of God"? The same applies here. To act "righteous" in "*this reality*," would mean the Scripture must contain by implication basics about the ultimate questions of reality. Indeed, Paul says that the Christian philosophy is superior to the non-Christian in his teaching to the Colossians. Paul's point is *not* that "all philosophy" is bad, but that "non-Christian philosophy" on the "ultimate questions" of life is bad and stupid; the Christian teaching on ultimate questions is superior and logical.

Vincent also comments on this Letter to the Colossians in chapter 1 verses 14-19.

"Christology is presented and emphasized, including the deity of Christ before and at the creation of the universe, and the humanity of Christ in the incarnation and atonement. As it sets forth a broad and coherent christology, the passage also relates to it epistemology (revelation), theology proper (God, Trinity, creation, providence), angelology and demonology (angels, demons, powers), anthropology (man), hamartiology (sin), soteriology (reconciliation, atonement, resurrection, conversion, faith, perseverance), ecclesiology (the nature, structure, and mission of the church), and eschatology (glorification, judgment, heaven, hell).... It is comprehensive and logical, and Paul uses

almost the same outline in his speech on Mars Hill in Acts 17. This is in fact the biblical-logical outline for systematic theology, and there is nothing wrong with calling this simply the systematic method.”³¹

The doctrine in this text (v.13-19) is broad and short, but it is a systematic theology structure (or systematic philosophy, or ultimate questions put into a logical structure), expressed particularly through the lens of Christ. This simplified form is great for sermons and also where time is short. And so, Paul used this outline starting in verse 14: “*Christ the Revealer, Christ the Creator, Christ the Sustainer, and Christ the Redeemer.*”³² Paul’s theology structure is a doctrine of Knowledge, a doctrine of God, a doctrine of Redemption and lastly a doctrine of Ethics. To put these biblical words into philosophy jargon, Paul’s teaching is about Christian epistemology, Christian metaphysics,³³ Christian soteriology and Christian ethics.

We are told the Father has grabbed the saints out of the kingdom of darkness, and then put them into the kingdom of the Son of His love (v.13). And so, this Christology that follows (v.14-19) is told to us (Revealer, Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer) to expound on the greatness of the SON we have been grafted into. Lastly, (or ethically) this is done to encourage faith in understanding all the implications for what it means to be transferred into this Kingdom of love. It is having faith to turn away from thinking like the old kingdom of sin and fear, to receiving all the positive benefits that come from being part of God’s kingdom of favor.

This entire book is structured in a simple type of philosophy/worldview argument. It is organized by contrasting the Christian (1) first principle, (2) metaphysics and (3) ethics, with the world’s (1) first principles, (2) metaphysics and (3) ethics. Paul shows the vast superiority of the Christian system.

3...hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
[Epistemology]

4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive arguments...

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.
[Epistemology & doctrines from it]

9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete.
[Metaphysics]

13... He made you alive together with Him [NASB]
[Soteriology, as subcategory of metaphysics]

Some English translations say “elemental spirits/powers,” which is an unjustified translation. It is correct, the term “angels” is used briefly in chapter 2; however, it is not the main context of Paul’s preaching, and more so, it is not the immediate context

³¹ Vincent Cheung, *Commentary on Colossians*, 2008, page 35

³² Lilbd, pg.35

³³ In the broadest sense, as used here, metaphysics is both who God is and what He as created. That is, what is God’s existence (theology proper) and what is creation’s existence.

of the verse itself. Many instruct others to read in context, but few do it. The question is about the context of Paul's preaching. This "context" of Paul is about "ultimate questions" over and over, both in general and immediacy of the verse. Also, the first rule to reading comprehension is to read the words in question. As Vincent say, "*read the words.*" "The usual first rule of biblical interpretation is to observe the context, but it is not my first rule. Christians often neglect to inspect the verses that they are using to prove their points, so that they are refuted even before the context is taken into account. Thus my first rule of hermeneutics is, "READ THE WORDS." Just read the thing before you throw it at people." ³⁴

The NASB has a more literal and helpful translation. What does "foundational principles" mean? It is like a starting principle of the law of contradiction for logic, or that a square is a plane figure, of equal sides and with 4 right angles of 90 degrees in geometry. From these starting points, the rest of the system deduces, or proceeds forward.

Look at the verses. In verse 3 the context is about epistemology. Paul literally says that "all" knowledge is in God and Christ. Not only is God's revelation our first principle for knowledge, it is our sole epistemology. This becomes clearer in that Paul later rejects human starting points, and that the bible rejects all other first principles of knowledge as failures, including empiricism. Next, the context is about not being deceived by "persuasive arguments." It is not about being deceived by elemental fire spirits or being possessed by them. It is about propositional "ARGUMENTS." Paul himself is giving persuasive arguments to have faith in Jesus Christ, and thus, he cannot be saying argumentation is bad. He is addressing ultimate questions, which is what Philosophy is. Paul is not against philosophy in general, for then Paul would have to be against preaching that Christ is the ultimate source of knowledge, ultimate point for all creation, and salvation. In verse 8 we are given more clarification to what these bad types of persuasive arguments are. They are based from "tradition of MEN." These bad philosophies do not start with Christ's revelation for knowledge; rather, they begin with "human" starting points for knowledge. They were bad arguments and bad philosophy from the start because they started with human observation rather than God's revelation.

In context of truth, when someone says, "I observed," or "in my experience," we know their thinking is malfunctioning, is rebellious and human from the start.

This point was mentioned before but it bears repeating. Paul says some similar points to the Corinthians in chapter 2. Paul says he gave them a deductive argument about Christ they could not refute (2:4). Paul starts by saying he did not convince them by "persuasive wisdom," but then a few verses later labels this same term as, "human wisdom," (2:13). Earlier Paul says that the "world through its wisdom did not come to know God (1:21 NKJV)." The world's wisdom starts with man; it is man "starting" with "his" sensations, observations and inductive conclusions. Man's epistemology is empiricism and his logic is inductive (thus, fallacious). Man starting with himself fails to understand reality: "*through its wisdom did not know God.*" Their starting points are malfunctioned, and their arguments unsound. They stupidly attempt to make up for this glaring impotence by flowery speech, or by pious, self-debasing speech. "I am

³⁴ Vincent Cheung. "The Gospel Guarantee of Self Knowledge." from the ebook, Fulcrum, 2017. Pg. 50

the worst of sinners,” “God thoughts are not mine,” “God’s ways are not mine,” (etc). This is all the persuasion they have left. All they can do is exalt in their smooth words, or exalt in how self-debasing they can sound.

And so, in this immediate context of not getting knowledge from Christ, but from men’s speculations, we are given the term, “rudimentary principles.” Therefore, if we are to judge without bias, the context is about “human” traditions that came from “human” starting points. In philosophy jargon this is called “empiricism,” and the Socratic method.

Furthermore, “rudimentary principles,” is sandwiched between Christ philosophy, and “Christian ontology.” All power dwells in Christ (2:9). And believers are made complete by Christ’s power in them. Next is soteriology in verses 10-13. And so, in the middle of Paul talking about Ultimate Questions of epistemology, going into metaphysics and then ending into soteriology, and then later into ethics (2:20-23) we get this term, “elemental principles.” This philosophy term is about starting points, and in the verse, the context is talking about starting points for knowledge, and the doctrines inferred from them. Why some people rip this out of direct and immediate context to mean “spiritual powers,” is beyond me.

The point about worshiping angels (i.e. you “ought” to do this) is about bad ethics produced from “human” starting points. This is solved by the Christian philosophy. When one starts with the Christian starting point of Christ’s revelation and the doctrines of ethics produced, then all these superstitious ethics go away. Recall the immediate context of verse 3. It says all knowledge is from the Father and the Son. So, here is a question. Where does the “worship of angels” deduce from? Obviously, in Christian revelation there is no such knowledge revealed from the Father or Christ. The scripture does not reveal this knowledge. Therefore, we know such an ethical doctrine/tradition did not come from the Christian first principle of knowledge or deduced from it. This superstitious ethic started with empiricism. They probably had some reasoning like: (1) God is from Heaven. (2) All angels are from Heaven. (3) Thus, man should worship angels.” Or some other inductive nonsense. See Psalm 50 how man by their inductive reasoning thought God needed food, because man needed food. Stupid!! All inductive logic is a non-sequitur.

When it comes to logic, starting bad will cause you to end bad in a philosophy system. Take for example the first principle of a square. Let us imagine someone is trying to define the correct idea for what a square is, in the following way. If you said the first principle for a square was that it was “an unknown numbered figure plane, with an unknown number of uneven or even lengths, and with four, 90 degree angles,” then no amount of time or progress will help you end up with a correct conclusion for what a square is. The bad starting point ensures the rest of the system is corrupted. One might end up in the conclusion correct on an accident, or because they did not follow their own system correctly, but then they would have no logical warrant to accept their conclusion. They would end up in skepticism, but skepticism denies the law of contradiction. Contradictions have no existence. If you leave the Christian starting point for knowledge, you will always be wrong and irrational, and no amount of time or progress will help.

The big idea. If you desire to have correct ethics and doctrines (who to worship), then you must have a first principle that gives truth, that gives truth for all of life, and is self-authenticating.³⁵

Paul's point is this: if our rudimentary point (Bible) reveals that Christ alone has saved you and brought you to God, then why are you walking in dogmatics produced from a "human" rudimentary starting point? Paul is showing us how to be consistent in applying the Christian philosophy. God has revealed all things regarding man believing in Jesus Christ and obeying Him. It is a complete revelation for man to know and walk after God, until the restoration of all things in Christ's coming. Therefore, it would be stupid for the Christian to find their first principle in the Bible, to then look to man's speculation for ethics. With premises from the Scripture (and with proper deduction) the Christian has all they need to fully please Christ in faith, following Him in all ethics and religious practice.

The world has its "first principles" (v 2:8, 20) and from this starting point of knowledge the world also has its speculations about metaphysics, ethics and doctrines for religious practice. Verse 22 terms this as the "doctrines of man" or "traditions." From their human first principles, men manufacture their own doctrines concerning how man obeys God. This is contrasted to Christ who is our superior first principle (1:15, 27; 2:3); Christ who is our superior metaphysics and ontology (1:16, 27; 2:10, 19; 3:3-4); and Christ who is our superior ethics and practice (chapter 3-4). For the Christian to turn to the left or right from this path, would be harmful and insane.

Robert Reymond, who gets some things correct in his systematic theology book, exposes his incompetence on this point of the Necessity of Scripture.

It is important that we clearly see that the Confession grounds its doctrine of the necessity of Scripture in two antecedent conditions that obtain at the present time, namely, (1) the insufficiency of general revelation, and (2) the cessation of special revelation. If general revelation is insufficient to provide that knowledge of God and of his will that is essential to salvation, and if special revelation has ceased, then one must go to Scripture if he would learn those things which are "necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation" (I/vii). Moreover, it must be noted that to the degree that one believes that God still speaks directly to men and women today through prophets and glossolalists, just to that same degree he is saying that he does not absolutely need the Bible for a word from God, and accordingly he has abandoned the great Reformation principle of sola Scriptura.³⁶

Point 1 is correct, as has already been addressed. Point two is false.

First, there is nothing in the Scripture that says such a thing. This will be addressed more in the ethics section. Second, his own argument does not logically follow. That is, Reymond, who has read Gordon Clark and who knows the importance of logic, misses it here. His conclusion has more information than what the scriptural premises say.

³⁵ See Vincent Cheung. "Ultimate Question," "Systematic Theology," and "Presuppositional Confrontations."

³⁶ Reymond, R. L. (1998). A new systematic theology of the Christian faith (pp. 58–59). Nashville: T. Nelson.

There is no logical necessary connection from the antecedent to the consequent. There is nothing necessary about saying, “if one still believes in prophecies (like in N.T.), then they do not absolutely need the Bible.” He has no scripture to support his claim, and no sound argument. Part of the problem is the ambiguity of the phrase “*need the bible*.” If it is meant having the Bible as a starting point of knowledge and making deductions from it, then what if one deduces the command to eagerly seek the gift of prophecy, or Peter’s application of the baptism of the Spirit to bring dreams and visions?

If the bible is my only source of knowledge and it tells me to seek prophecy and visions, then this is knowledge and anything against this is false. This knowledge would come from a human starting point. And this is in fact what Reymond appeals to, by saying, “reformation principle of sola Scriptura.” Using a human starting point, men made a human doctrine about the scripture. It was not the Scripture’s doctrine about scripture, but a man centered view about what scripture is.

Also, Paul makes a remarkable comment about the “sufficiency” of the Bible to Timothy, which the cessationist and non-faith’ers use, but use to their own damnation. This is not directly about “solo scriptura,” but an aspect about it. Vincent was the first to bring this to my attention. He writes,

The cessationist argument is based on the sufficiency of Scripture. You claim that a sufficient Bible should render prophecy unnecessary, and if a prophecy only repeats or applies what the Bible says, then it is not prophecy in the biblical sense, but only a reminder of what the Bible says. This is a familiar argument, and therefore I will not repeat all the details. You mention that the Bible says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This is a significant passage for the doctrine, but your inference is false.

Paul was speaking to Timothy, not to you. Of course, it applies to all of us by extension. The principle applies to all of Scripture and anything that is Scripture, so it is correct to affirm it for our Christian Bible. However, Paul referred to whatever “Scripture” that Timothy had. You cannot make this identical to what you have now — you have more. You mention that Second Timothy is considered one of the later New Testament documents, but this is irrelevant. To use Paul’s statement this way in order to make the “Scripture” in this verse identical to the complete Christian Bible, this must not only be the final document, but it must be the final sentence in Scripture. Moreover, for the “Scripture” in this verse to be identical to what we have, Timothy must have had access to the Christian Bible in its complete form. Unless this was the case, it would be irrelevant even if this is the final sentence of the final document in the Bible. Timothy at least did not have access to Second Timothy while Paul was writing it! In fact, it is likely that Paul had in mind only what Timothy could access in his infancy, since the verse before says, “From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

My point is that the Scripture was already sufficient way before 2 Timothy 3:16-17, but since it was not finished, God continued to write. This is why the sufficiency and the finality of Scripture are two different doctrines. The

Christian Bible is not only sufficient to equip us for every good work, but it is more than sufficient for this. Scripture was sufficient before it was complete. If the cessationist uses the sufficiency of Scripture to undermine the continuation of prophecy, he must first use the sufficiency of Scripture to undermine all the Scripture that was produced after Timothy's infancy — this would include Second Timothy itself. Therefore, to use the doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture against the continuation of prophecy is first a repudiation of Scripture. Before any debate about the continuation of anything, the argument would first prevent both the completion and the collection of Scripture. When you do that, from the Christian perspective, you are finished. It is over for you. You are anti-gospel. You are the counter-Christian heretic. Save yourself before you pretend to be a theologian and criticize other people...

The cessationist makes at least three attacks against Scripture in this one argument that supposedly defends Scripture. First, contrary to the Bible's own claim, he declares that the Bible was never sufficient until completion. Second, because the Bible indeed declares itself sufficient before completion, but the cessationist claims that anything that is beyond sufficient is unnecessary, and not in the same class as biblical prophecy, he declares that all portions of Scripture produced after what Timothy had in his infancy are unnecessary and uninspired. Third, because he claims that prophecy that repeats the information contained in Scripture as in a different or lower class than the prophecy of Scripture, or even not prophecy at all, he declares that all portions of Scripture that repeat the words or ideas that were already contained in previous portions of Scripture are unnecessary and uninspired. Any one of these offenses, if made clear to a cessationist, and if he refuses to repent, is a sufficient basis for excommunication.³⁷

Thus, there is no logical connection of the sufficiency of the Scripture and prophecy ceasing. There is however, a logical connection of using the sufficiency of Scripture to undermine prophecy, to undermining the entire New Testament.

Reymond mentions the WCF³⁸, and how it defines knowledge as what the Bible reveals and what is deduced from it. On this point Reymond and the WCF is correct, as this section has shown both are taught by the Bible itself. If only they would do it. Paul says in Timothy the Scripture is sufficient for teaching in "righteousness." Well? What does the Scripture command us to do, in order to live a righteous life before God? There is the painfully obvious exhortation in 1 Corinthians 12-14 about seeking the gifts of the Spirit. However, since the "gifts" is in fact a minority type in the Scripture, in which such things as prophecy operate, let us look to the majority type. Jesus, and the New Testament letters put emphasis on "faith," and the "baptism of the Spirit." Peter brings up Joel's prophecy. Joel puts the powers of the Spirit and forgiveness of sins together. Peter continues what Joel says by keeping them together. In fact, Peter puts it into context of the doctrine of God's sovereign predestination. The crowd asks, "what should we do"? Peter says they ought to repent, "SO THAT," God might pour out

³⁷ Vincent Cheung. Scripture, Sufficient Against Cessationism. Found in, Fulcrum. 2017. Pages 12-13, 15. www.vincentcheung.com.

³⁸ In the section, The Bible's Sufficiency, from A New Systematic Theology. first edition, pgs 83-86

the Spirit upon them. In context, this pouring out of the Spirit is directly about power, not about ethics.

Paul in Acts 13 is often quoted, showing God predestines in context of believing for salvation. *“And when the Gentiles heard this, they began to rejoice* and to glorify the word of the Lord. And all those who were designated for eternal life believed,”* (Acts 13:48 (LEB)). However, Peter is referring to predestination in context of the baptism of the Spirit. Peter says, if God has predestined you, then you will receive the promise of God Spirit. This exposes the obvious point that traditionalist/empiricists do not have the Spirit. To cover up the fact God has not Elected them for such a good thing; they conspire with devils to kill off the Spirit and His gift, and/or to make fun of those who do as crazys. Furthermore, they invent long creeds, traditions and histories to mask over this issue. Then they build towers and scholastic powers. From these factories of unbelief and perversion they manufacture those who agree with them. They appraise and congratulate one another. They have their reward. They will both fight against God and men, if they do not have to admit they have the sin of unbelief.

At any rate, most of the time, the majority type for such power, is faith. Jesus commands us to ask and receive anything we want (John ch 14-16). This would include asking for a prophetic word, by faith, and not by a spiritual gift.

Vincent first made me think carefully about predestination and fruit bearing as normal discipleship to Jesus Christ, in his essay, Predestination and Miracles.

God will give me whatever I ask. I will have whatever I ask. What I ask, I get. And I am predestined for this. So I am chosen to get whatever I ask. I am predestined to get whatever I ask. It is my foreordained destiny to receive whatever I ask God in the name of Jesus. If you have never heard this, then you have never heard the Bible’s doctrine of predestination, you have never heard the Bible’s doctrine of prayer, you have never heard the Bible’s doctrine of the name of Jesus, and you have never heard the Bible’s doctrine of discipleship. Just several verses earlier, Jesus said, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples” (15:7-8). Getting whatever we ask from God is intertwined throughout his discourse with the notions of bearing fruit, being his disciples, and loving one another. Thus getting whatever we ask from God is as pervasive as the gospel itself. It cannot be taken out and thrown away without tearing apart the entire gospel, and thus also our salvation. Here bearing fruit is almost the same thing as getting whatever we ask from God, and by getting what we ask from God, we show ourselves to be true disciples of Christ.

Tradition teaches that we show ourselves to be disciples when we demonstrate how well we put up with God when he does not answer our prayers. Historic unbelief suggests that we show ourselves to be disciples when we keep our word of allegiance to him more than he keeps his word of blessing to us! That is supposed to be good fruit. That is supposed to be true discipleship. But Jesus said that we show ourselves to be his true disciples when we abide in him, have his words abide in us, and then ask for whatever we wish, and receive whatever we ask from God. Look, are we disciples or not? If we are disciples, then we should let the master define what it means to be disciples. People say that we show that we are disciples by remaining faithful when we do not get what we

want from God – when he disappoints us and appears to break his promises. But Jesus said that we show that we are disciples by asking for what we want and getting what we want. Decide. Accept what Jesus said and be a Christian, or reject what Jesus said and walk out the door.³⁹

Jesus puts an emphasis on doing greater miracles than He did (John 14:12-14). In the next chapter (15), Jesus says this asking and receiving anything by faith, is discipleship fruit. Jesus also in this same context says, if you are unfruitful, you will dry up and be thrown into hell. Later in chapter 15 Jesus makes a necessary connection of answers to prayer (discipleship) to God's predestination. "Appointed to bear much fruit."

The Big idea, is that answers to prayers (and in context this is greater miracles than what Jesus did: healing, prophecy, resurrection), is normal discipleship to Jesus, and has no necessary or logical connection to the "gifts of the Spirit." It is NOT the gifts of the Spirit doing the greater miracles here, it is normal, everyday faith and discipleship to Jesus. And this Jesus puts this as normal disciple level; it is to be done continually. Thus, the manifestations of healings, prophecy and such, is NOT done by the gifts, but by normal faith and normal discipleship to Jesus. In other words, the same discipleship faith you use to know your sins are forgiven and forgotten, is the same faith you use to produce daily answered prayers. This is not to minimize the "gifts," for the command still stands to earnestly seek the gifts. However, basic faith in God is the majority type that Jesus highlights for producing the miraculous and causing the power of God to manifest. For this reason, Vincent in more than one place points out the obvious logical fallacy non-faith people commit, when they attack the "gifts of the Spirit." He says to this that traditionalist are "pointless,"⁴⁰ because even if the "gifts" have "ceased," yet everyday discipleship faith is still able to produce all that the gifts do. Cessationism as a whole therefore, is one gigantic informal fallacy of non-relevance. Intellectually, they are pointless people.

There is also a problem where some super pious people will try to attack what has been said here as "biblicism." They attack the idea that one can use the Bible as their "sole" epistemology and make deductions; rather, they assert one needs to add to this, a submission to the church history and in particular the creeds. In other words, they affirm a dual epistemology, for they assert we must submit to the creeds, and the creeds are produced by a human starting point, and not divine revelation. This is what some mean by "sola scriptura." This is deceptive, for instead of meaning only Scripture as our first principle, they actually mean "multiple scriptures." At least they admit they do not believe the Bible.

Logically speaking any use of history is a fallacy of induction, and would thus, result in skepticism at the epistemology level. But again, skepticism denies the law of noncontradiction; but a contradiction is impossible. The result is that any appeal outside of the Bible, to men and history, would be an appeal to logical fallacies. This will be given more attention in the section, Logic.

The WCF says all creeds have erred (which would logically include itself). Thus, if the creeds are used in any sort of a dual epistemology with Scripture, it would result in epistemological skepticism. However, let us move on from this to consider the

³⁹ Vincent Cheung. Predestination and Miracles.

⁴⁰ Vincent Cheung. "Faith Override."

contradiction in their thinking. How did the writers of the creeds formulate doctrine? If they only used the Bible and deductions from it, then they would be guilty of the “biblicism” they accuse others of. If they admit they mixed in a human starting point (similar to how the Pope is a dual epistemology to the Scripture, or to Paul’s comments of human wisdom to the Colossians and Corinthians) then they are guilty of a dual epistemology. They would be guilty of a “theology of man.”

Some resort to saying superstitious things like, “God ordained/predestined these creed writers hundreds of years later to write creeds that we all must submit to.” Yet, the crucial issue again is that pesky Revelation from God. Did God reveal that men hundreds of years later, after its completion, would be predestined by God to write creeds, that the church must submit to it? If so, then where does the bible say it? The bible does talk about having teachers and prophets to help instruct the Church, but it also says there will be false teachers. What does the bible say we ought to do, to know the difference? Does it say men were predestined 1500 years later to write a creed? Where? God predestined the Pope to a place of power, and write formal theology and predestined many to follow them, yet does that mean we can use induction and history to say; “therefore what the Pope says is correct?” Or, does it say we are to compare what teachers say to the scripture and see if what they say, is what God says, or if it is this “human wisdom” Paul warns us against? Since the Bible does not reveal predestined Popes, devils, or creed writers for the church to submit to, then there remain two options. Either these creed writers Solely used the Scripture as an epistemology and made deductions, or they added an additional human epistemology. If it was the first, then we can do the same. If the second, then we know from the get-go they are nothing more than a boring rehashed version of the Pope. Since this is not in the Bible, then they admit to adding a human starting point of knowledge. Plus Ultra Stupid!!

Remember Paul in Corinthians 1, puts both the secular Greeks, seeking truth in their philosophies, and the religious Jews, seeking a sign, as both in the category of “human wisdom.” The presuppositional level of human wisdom is a human starting point. It is empiricist, sensual, and its methods are inductive rehashed types of the Socratic method. Thus, despite the deeply religious sounding words the Jews used, they were nothing more than empiricist sluts, spiritual perverts and biblical adulterers, disguised as spiritual people. They sought signs, not because the Scripture told them to do it this way, but because from what “they” observed and what they calculated⁴¹, they decided this. They are *sensual* (as in sensation) and *animalistic* (instinct and feelings and not intellectual); however, the elect are spiritual and intellectual. The kingdom-of-self ruled them, not the Kingdom-of-God. They were empiricists, that used induction to formulate a religious truth. These voodoo practitioners use God’s causality seen in the world, to inductively formulate from man’s observations. Again, it is like the Socratic method, with the exception that it is clothed in religious sophistry to deceive people in thinking it is biblical. This has similarities to demonic divination⁴² as well. What we “ought” (ethics) to do is based from God’s command, and not divinations from ontology. In other words, whether it be secular philosophies with epistemologies of rationalism, or empiricism and fallacious

⁴¹ i.e. induction.

⁴² Like with a ouija board, “causality” is used determine what you “ought” to do.

In contrast, Christianity teaches that God’s “commandments” determines what you “ought” to do.

methods such as science, or whether it be religious people using their inductive observations, Paul throws them all into the trash heap of human wisdom. A human starting point and human induction divorced them from understanding God and reality.

The traditionalist and their appeal to the creeds are part of this same type of wicked game. They say all the creeds have error, and only what is deducted from the Bible is to be affirmed as truth; however, they deny it in application. They make themselves such easy targets to attack, because they claim to be so educated and biblical, and the crazys on TBN as not making deductions from Scripture correctly. Yet, if you were to add up all the deductions from Scripture the Reformed make, versus the health and wealth preachers make, I would suspect the Reformed would have a lower overall score. This score would be heavily impacted by their cessationism and denial of “biblical expansionism,”⁴³ because it deals with application of everyday ethics. The reformed get a few things about imputed righteousness correct, (and some of the original people like Calvin and Luther say correct things about God’s sovereignty) but they blindly assume the rest of their doctrines are as good. And even these are not as good as they think. These perverts, in the open daylight, hump on empiricism, committing spiritual adultery, and then march back into church to say with a sweaty face, “sola scriptura.” In the end, it is always a human starting point vs God’s revelation. Traditionalist, Pope’s, David Hume and non-faith people prefer “human” starting points, over God’s revelation. But “in their wisdom, they did not know God.” Do not let people who do not know God, to teach you about Him.

To summarize: Human starting points fail to produce any knowledge (more on this in the section, Defective starting points). Innate knowledge (general revelation) is only enough to condemn. Thus, the Scripture is necessary for man to have a justified starting point of knowledge, so that man can deduce truths about God, the world, himself, and the way to salvation. And lastly, it is often those in the Church, who claim to be consistent to this standard, that are often the most perverted with it.

⁴³ Vincent Cheung labels this doctrine as expansionism. I will post his definition of it below. It is a doctrine about faith and the supernatural, defined in the positive definition produced by the Scripture. This is the real battle ground. Not only are there variants to cessationism, but all of these are battles fought on the wrong battlefield. To know what is the right battlefield, one must start with the Biblically produced “definition.” All forms of cessationism is heresy and all those who adhere to any form should be excommunicated, because all contradict the Biblical doctrine of expansionism.

“It is applied to every aspect of the advance of the gospel, but in this context we will focus on the supernatural powers and miracles that God works in association with his people. This is the biblical doctrine that supernatural powers and miracles are to increase in God’s people beyond what Jesus Christ himself exercised. They are to multiply exponentially in quantity and frequency, in intensity and magnitude, in the diversity of representation, and in the scope of jurisdiction. There should be an accumulated momentum, so that compared to Jesus and the apostles, and compared to each previous generation, the church should demonstrate more miracles, greater miracles, miracles performed by more kinds of people, and miracles performed in more areas of the world.” (from, *Fulcrum*, 2017. Page 5. Chapter 1, “Expansionism: A Gospel Manifesto”)

Self-Existence:

The doctrine of self-existence is part of the section on epistemology to point out the obvious that “truth is self-existence.”

People who view ultimate questions by empiricism and induction, tend to think metaphysics starts with creation, and invisible things such as truth and premises came after the material world. However, reality is the opposite. The immaterial or invisible was first and creation/material was later. In fact, the material was produced by the immaterial

*“For just as the Father has life in himself,
thus also he has granted to the Son to have life in himself,”*
(John 5:26 LEB).

The Father as life in Himself and so does the Son. Jesus says this in contrast to speaking to created man, who does not have life in themselves. Jesus says that the Father has life in Himself, and not that the Father created life in Himself. Therefore, God is said to have “always existed,” rather than the fallacy of “self-creation.”

Scripture says God holds all creation (or non-God) into being by His power. “[Jesus] is ...sustaining all things by the word of power.” (Hebrews 1:3 LEB) (see also Colossians 1:17). This is a straightforward “all” category proposition. That is, all things not-God, are upheld by God’s power. There is nowhere in Scripture that contradicts this all statement. The few that I have seen brought up are usually passages that do not have clear context of dealing with ultimate level ontology, and thus, no deduction about ultimate level ontology can be made. And/or the passages are dealing with relative level ontology, and thus again, no statement can be said about ultimate level ontology. The first lesson to learn in logic or critical thinking skills, is have clearly defined terms. Once this super basic step is taken, many issues get answered before any arguments are even made. Since man is the pinnacle creation, it is worth asking, “does God uphold man into reality?” This is already answer from Heb. 1:3; however, it could be asked and answered in this helpful way. If man is the pinnacle of creation, then if God does this for man, how much more for the rest of creation. Paul addressing the Greeks in Acts 17 says that in God man and all things live move and exist in God. And so, man does not have self-existence, nor does any other created thing. “For in him we live and move and exist,” (Acts 17:28 LEB).

God is Spirit, Power and Intellectual. Also, God’s self-existence has always been spiritual (invisible), powerful, and intellectual. God did not discover truth. Truth has always been self-existence. Truth created all things. All things are upheld by the Truth. There is no falsehood in the Truth, and so this self-existing Truth is always right, and never wrong. It is for the very reason that “All Things” is produced (and upheld) by His intellectual force, that God knows all things about All Things.

Timelessness / Immutability:

“Praise the Lord, the God of Israel,
who lives from everlasting to everlasting,”
Psalm 41:13 NLT

“there he worshiped the Lord, the Eternal God
Genesis 21:33 NLT

“Long ago you **laid** the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
They will perish, but you will endure.
And like a garment they will all **wear out**,
you will **replace** them like clothing, and they will be set aside.
But you **are the same**, and your years **do not end**,”
(Psalm 102:25–27 LEB).⁴⁴

God is timeless; He exists in an “eternal state.” What does that mean?

God is Spirit, Power and intellectual. What is timeless is truth.

Time is a measure of change. Without any change, in any degree, there is nothing to measure, and if there is nothing to measure, then the concept of time is meaningless and nonsense. Time has no logical relevance without change.

Thus, all material existence is automatically ruled out in being attributed with timelessness, because all material things change. Even invisible things like the mind of man, changes as man learns new things; however, we will focus on the issue that matter is not timeless.

Vincent Cheung commenting on this says,

Matter cannot be eternal, in the sense of being timeless, for there is no before and after with that which is timeless. And if there is no before and after with matter, then it would be impossible for it to be one way before and another way after. Therefore, if matter changes at all, it cannot be eternal. And matter could not have existed forever, for if matter is bound to time but has existed forever, then it would have an infinite past. But if it has an infinite past, it could never have reached the present. If it has reached the present, the past cannot be infinite. Therefore, matter is not eternal, but bound to time, and it originated at some point in time.

God is uncreated. He is eternal, timeless, and immutable. And he created the universe out of nothing, that is, without the use of any existing materials, since there were no existing materials when he created. All linguistic and historical arguments that attempt to suggest an opposing view must be wrong. In fact, these kinds of arguments are irrelevant unless the logical arguments based on the very ideas of matter and creation are demonstrated to be inconclusive.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Notice how created things had a beginning point “laid the foundations” and change, “wear out”; however, God is without beginning and without change, and stays the same forever.

⁴⁵ Vincent Cheung. Sermonettes Vol 1. Chapter 2. “Creation: In the Beginning.” 2010. Pg. 7

To further explain this. By this we know that any naturalistic or evolutionary claim that matter has “always existed” is bottom of the barrel stupid. To always exist with change, would mean an “infinite” chronological measurable time/distance. Another way to say infinite in regard to time or distance, would be “an unreachable distance.” If it is reachable, then it is not unreachable. Matter’s history of change is not an unreachable distance, if the distance to the past is reachable. Evolution teaches matter has always been here; they say this because if it was not, then either matter was created, or “self-created,” which is a contradiction. Either is not acceptable for evolution. Thus, since timeless is out of the question, they make matter eternal. However, that is a contradiction, and as shown before, a contradiction does not exist in the mind or in reality. To say matter has an “unreachable” distance going into the past, yet, we have “reached” this “unreachable” distance by being here today, is Plus Ultra Stupid.

God exists from “everlasting to everlasting.” He is also the “I AM who I AM.” He is also said to be immutable. The IMMUTABILITY of God is stated in various places:

Numbers 23:19 (LEB) “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of humankind, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? And has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?”

Psalms 102:26–27 (LEB) “They will perish, but you will endure. And like a garment they will all wear out, you will replace them like clothing, and they will be set aside. But you are the same, and your years do not end.”

James 1:16–17 (LEB) “Do not be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of change.”

The *I AM who I AM*, has always been that way, and will forever be that way. Thus, God’s existence is not eternal properties that might change; rather, God’s existence is an eternal, unchanging state. For this reason, “emotions,” are not part of the Divine Nature, which gives us the doctrine of the IMPASSIBILITY of God. Emotions change, but God does not change. God is timeless; yet, emotions by definition are measurable, and thus, are not timeless.⁴⁶

At the very least, God cannot have “passions,” which is more directly related to the changeableness of emotions. If God did have passionless emotions, with perfect control, so that there is no, ups or downs, then at the very least God’s emotions are not like man’s. It would be a category mistake for a man to conclude, because our emotions are like this, then God’s are. When the Bible says that God has passions (mutable emotions), then it is God using language that is relatable to us; it is not meant to convey that God is changeable. The same is when the Bible says something

⁴⁶ I will say that it is theoretically possible that God has had one infinitely high emotion of joyful love, (in the Son and the Son in the Father), that has never changed in intensity. Jonathan Edwards would say this shared- intellectual, force of love -between the Father and Son is the Holy Spirit. From this it is possible, like how induction is understood by God to be used by man, but not part of His own reasoning(His is deductive), other non-joyful love emotions are a derivative from this for a created world, but not part of God own emotion. Such a thing could be possible, but not a direct deduction made from scripture.

like, “He sees us with His eyes.” God does not have physical eyes. What it means is that God knows all that we are doing.

God’s mind is timeless. God’s thinking, with subjects and predicates, is timeless. There is nothing to measure in God’s eternal state, because there is no change. God’s thoughts are not learned. God’s thoughts are not in a linear progression like man is with his limitations of thinking. God has always self-existed as intuitively knowing all things in “one thought” without progression. God did not have to wait to create, to see images to understand their connection to other created things. He does not learn or progress. How can perfection progress, unless it is not perfection? God has always known that He would create, in every possible detail and connections with all other things. Included in God’s thoughts about all things, as an intuitive and never changing thought, was creation. This is why after creation, God does not change. This is why God is not different between the Old Testament or the New Testament. The eternal state of God’s intuitive thought about all things, has not changed.

God is also said to be perfect. And thus, for God to change is not only a denial of His timelessness and immutability,⁴⁷ but it would be a change for the worse; it would be to liberate from perfection; it would make Him less valuable; it would be a serious downgrade. If you have been following what has been said about God’s nature, for God to change it would mean God would have to exchange a truth for a lie. This is an impossibility.

If all this is so about God’s mind, knowledge and immutability, then does God think in order, at all? This leads us to our next point.

Deductive or Orderly Thinking of God:

The big idea is that although God knows all things as an intuitive thought, God still has a rational order to His timeless “thought.” This can lead some to have ignorant irrational ideas about God’s thinking, as if God has no order or perspective of order or time. Reymond says,

“...it is a non sequitur to conclude from the fact of God’s omniscience that God has no idea of succession, that is, that relative to his own existence he has no knowledge of a past, present, and future applicable to his own existence. This is to confuse the notion of the succession of ideas, which is surely not true of God if one means by this notion that God learns new facts, with the notion of the idea of succession which I submit God surely has.”⁴⁸

Vincent in an email said this to me about this subject.

“...someone said that I was wrong, since God does not perform deduction, but only direct intuition. In other contexts, I myself have taught that God knows all things directly but the focus here is induction vs. deduction in the context of theology. The person nitpicked at me because he wanted to sound clever and throw himself into the discussion. You know how people are. But it showed that

⁴⁷ Hebrews 6:17-18.

⁴⁸ Reymond, R. L. (1998). *A new systematic theology of the Christian faith* (pp. 173–174). Nashville: T. Nelson.

he really didn't know what deduction is. Would he say the same thing about a discussion on the order of the eternal decrees? When we talk about that, we sometimes qualify it by reminding people that the order is a logical order, not a chronological one, since there is no process of reasoning in God, as if he does not have in mind premise #3 when he is still on premise #1. No, he is directly aware of all premises at the same time, but it remains that he is aware of them, and of the logical relationships between premises. But whether we remind people of this or not, it is always assumed. This person did not understand deduction so he thought he had room to show off his knowledge. So I added this in case other people failed to assume the obvious. I was surprised, in fact, since it was so basic.

Deduction always produces correct conclusions, because the conclusions never produce information not already in the premises. Deduction is more like an application of knowledge, unlike induction, which is a fallacious attempt at arriving at more knowledge. So when applied to God in this context, deduction is the same as his intuition. Using the same example, when we talk about the eternal decrees, we are talking about God's deduction. But if we, like the person who complained, cannot even talk about God in terms of deduction, then we cannot even discuss the topic of the eternal decrees, because it would all be just one "thing." Take it to the extreme, we cannot even talk about God thinking, speaking, acting, or anything about God. Everything would just be one eternal "thing" in God's mind. But of course we can talk about God's deduction, thinking, speaking, acting, his before and after, and all that, just like the way he talks about himself. Several times I have pointed out that some Christians, after learning a little, makes what little they know the whole thing, and then try to police everyone else with it, including their expressions. Many Calvinists are like that. They become trapped in their own personal terminologies. It happens when they talk about justification, predestination, and many other things. This is a sign of ignorance, not knowledge or orthodoxy.”⁴⁹

The immutability of God does not conclude there is no logic or order to God's mind; rather, it means the logical order of God's mind was not chronological in time, but always known intuitively as one thought. Vincent mentioned, the decrees of God. God ordered the history of the world, before it was created. But this ordering has always self-existed with God as one intuitive thought. For man, who is not timeless and has a limited amount of thoughts they can think in any given moment, needs time and a progression of thoughts to see this ordering. This will be discussed more later, but the same is for logic and God. Because God has already known all things, it means any thought applied to creation is a deduction⁵⁰ for God, because it is merely pinpointing specific information that was part of God's timeless intuitive thought. For God, any specific thought about creation, does not add more information to His conclusion. Consider this with Jesus. Starting with Jesus' divine mind before creation and His

⁴⁹ Vincent Cheung, in an email exchange. Jan, 2017.

⁵⁰ Vincent Cheung in an email first brought this to my attention, when I was discussing logic with him. Once I thought about it, it was rather obvious God's thoughts are deductive, by definition of what deduction is.

timeless eternal intuitive thought about all things, then go down to the incarnated Jesus who limited His mind (but the Divine Mind did not stop or change); any thought He had is still just a deduction from His timeless intuitive thought about all things (even what He would think and say as the incarnated Jesus).

Divine Dictation of Scripture:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

[God is not] served by human hands as if he* needed anything, because* he himself gives to everyone life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining their fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, ... in him we live and move and exist.
Acts 17:25-28 (LEB)

As said before God is the foundation for theology not man. Recall an earlier comment about how the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty automatically ruled out many implications for a doctrine of knowledge. The same goes for here. Whatever the doctrine is regarding how God revealed His Scripture through and to man, it is in context of God's absolute and direct sovereign control over all existence and causality (as everything else is). Thus, any doctrine put forward about the revealing of the Scripture that contradicts "God," is to be mocked. For unrepentant Christians who espouse such, they are to be excommunicated. As said in the beginning of this section on epistemology, the doctrine of knowledge affects every other ultimate question. Thus, this is one doctrine, in particular, where no compromise can be made. Resistance must be confronted with the same harsh rebukes Jesus gave, such as name-calling, referring to human beings as sub-human, referring to humans as stupid vile animals, referring their heritage to Satan, and condemning them to hell. Do not forget that Jesus said these things, as a "man" born "under the law"; this law commanded Jesus to love His neighbor as Himself.

"The ESV makes the meaning clear: "All Scripture is breathed out by God." He did not produce the Bible by merely stimulating the minds of the writers or by suggesting ideas to them. He did it by direct causation. You say, "Certainly this cannot be, since human authors were the ones who wrote down the words." But God is not a man – he does not write out only words on paper, but also entire planets and galaxies. No, he "wrote" out the human authors themselves by his creation and providence, and then he directly caused the human authors to write out what he wanted them to write. This does not mean that he suspended their consciousness. His control was much more extensive than that – he "wrote" out their very thoughts and personalities. Peter tells us that the

prophets “spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).⁵¹

Vincent’s short summary says, “*God did not find the right people to write Scripture, but he created the right people to write it, and then he caused them to write it.*”⁵² This is simply doing deduction 101 with God’s sovereignty, and applying it to the writing of Scripture. If God directly causes all things, then God causes x, y, and z. Or, If God decrees and causes all things, then God decreed and caused the Scripture to be written as He wanted it. Since God wanted it to be a perfect (without any false statement Psalm 119:160) revelation of Himself, then God caused it to be so. “Well,” you might ask, “what about the human element?” What about it? The human element is no less under God’s direct control than any other part of creation. God created the right world, for His predetermined purposes. God created the right ethic for the right groups. God created the right cities. God created the right culture. God created the right person, in the right family, in the right time. God then directly created the thoughts in the man (as God caused light to shine out of darkness), and then directly caused the man to write down those thoughts He put in his mind. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4⁵³ that the knowledge of Jesus Christ is put into the Christian’s mind as sovereignly as God created light out of darkness. That is referring to “out-of-nothing,” power and direct causality. If this is so, for God’s children reading the Scripture, then how much more for those who wrote it?

Some complaint this makes man a puppet. However, how many things does a man “control” in a puppet. Whether it is a hand puppet, or one 3 or 12 strings, there is at most several things a person has “control” over the puppet. Yet, if we are to calculate all things God controls directly about us and relating to us, then what? Thousands? Millions? Trillions of things about us? The issue is that to ascribe God controlling us like puppets or computers, is to steal from God the true scope and depth of His sovereignty. It is far too small to describe it. God controls not only things like where we were born and physical things like our hair, but He also controls all spiritual and invisible forces as well: including all minds and thoughts. We will deal with the idea of responsibility and so-called free will later.

In any event, Peter said the prophets wanted to know more about the Christ, that they prophesied about. Thus, these writers did not fully know what they were writing. So what? God is the foundation of theology, not man. God knew the man He was writing, and He knew the Scripture He was breathing out of the man.

The Authority of Scripture:

“For the scripture says to Pharaoh, *“For this very reason I have raised you up, so that I may demonstrate my power in you, and so that my name might be*

⁵¹ Vincent Cheung. “Breathed Out by God.” Found in, Reflections on Second Timothy. 2010. Pg 71. Also see Vincent Cheung, Systematic Theology, 2010, pages 17-19.

⁵² Vincent Cheung, Systematic Theology, 2010, pages 18.

⁵³ 2 Corinthians 4:6 (LEB) For God who said, “Light will shine out of darkness,” is the one who has shined in our hearts for the enlightenment of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

proclaimed in all the earth.”
Romans 9:17 (LEB)

“And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the good news in advance to Abraham: *“In you all the nations will be blessed.”*”

Galatians 3:8 (LEB)

The argument for understanding the scope of the Scriptures’ authority is simple. What is the authority of God? It is absolute. If the Scripture claims to be God, then the Scripture’s authority is equal to God’s. This is what the Scripture claims about itself.

In Galatians 3:8 Scripture is attributed with Divine foreknowledge of God’s personal decrees for reality. This is not just foreknowledge of a leaf that will move, in such a way tomorrow, but foreknowledge of God’s predetermined choices of salvation. Only God knows such things, but the Scripture knows them. Thus, the Scripture is attributed with exclusive Divine attributes. Also, it was God, or more likely the pre-incarnated Jesus, who said to Abraham, “In you all the nations will be blessed.” Yet, the Scripture exchanged God for itself, in preaching this to Abraham. The scripture is the part of God’s mind revealed to man. God’s essence is not physical but intellectual. The scripture therefore uses itself and God as exchangeable. It has all the authority of God’s mind, because it is God’s mind revealed to us. Therefore, the scripture and God are exchangeable. When the scripture speaks, God speaks.

Jesus said it was not wrong for us to say that we are sons of God because the Scripture calls them “gods,” to whom the old message was given. John 10:34-36, “Jesus replied, “It is written in your own Scriptures that God said to certain leaders of the people, ‘I say, you are gods!’ And you know that the Scriptures cannot be altered. So, if those people who received God’s message were called ‘gods,’ why do you call it blasphemy when I say, ‘I am the Son of God?’” If the message of condemnation made them “gods,” then how much more us who have received the message of Christ to preach it? Also, Paul says we will judge the world, and we will judge angels one day (1 Corinth. 6). One quick note, Jesus says the Scripture cannot be altered or changed. Thus, Jesus branded the Scripture with the divine attribute of immutability.

Paul, further says, the past, present, the world and all things have been given to us (1 Corinth. 3:22). Paul, after saying we have been given God’s Spirit, who along knows God, says we categorically have “the Mind of Christ.” I do not have infinity, or immutability, but in Christ there are many divine attributes given to me. Some divine attributes are exclusive to God, and some that are passed on to my nature, as a child of God. The point of this is to show, that even with all these divine (god like) things true about Oshea, I would not be wicked and delusional and say, “Oshea preached the gospel to Abraham.” I would not interchange myself with God that way. To do so logically is a non-sequitur. It is the inductive argument of analogy. (1, 2, and 3 all have attributes of A, B and C. Thus, if 4 has attributes of A and B, it also has attribute C. This is irrational.) Or in layman’s terms, it is delusional and superstitious.

In Romans 9:17 it again interchanges the Scripture with saying something God said.

Scripture interchanges itself with God. It is not that Scripture is the 4th member of the Godhead; rather, the Scripture is so interchangeable with God, it means for man using the Scripture as our epistemology, it has the same authority as if God appeared before us and gave us a direct command. The Scriptures' authority is as equal to, as if we stood before the Throne of God and He personally read us the Scripture and says, "obey it." This is the level of authority the Scripture has. God's "word" made light come out of nothing and out of the darkness (along with the rest of the universe). God's word is not only interchangeable with God's authority, but it is also God's unstoppable force.

Self-authenticating starting point

Note: The specific argument or apologetic argument I give for Christianity is something I learned from Vincent Cheung. Because this argument includes the teaching on the self-authenticating nature of Scripture, I will use this section to teach both doctrines. There is the *positive doctrine* that the Scripture teaches about its self-authenticating nature. Then there is a second *negative use* of this doctrine to be used as an apologetics against thoughts that rise themselves against Christ, and against the people who given them.

Let me quickly give a definition of a positive and negative doctrine. Positive can mean two things, or both at the same time. It means the "direct" meaning of a doctrine, or it can mean good things. For example, God's natural favor (rain for all the earth) is positive, but for those who do not acknowledge God for this, this favor is used to store up wrath, which is negative. Referring to the first meaning, there is a non-direct version/use, or negative form of a doctrine. For example, injustice is the negation of justice. Justice is the positive doctrine. It directly and logically comes first. Injustice is intelligible, only if justice is understood first. Negative, in this context is the "indirect" meaning. Apologetics is a "indirect" or negative use of "preaching." Preaching is first about God, and God saving His elect by it. This will be more clearly seen in the section on God's decrees. God's original decree was always positive for His elect. All doctrines in His original intention for His elect are good and positive, other decrees that follow can be a mix of positive and negative. Preaching is formulating doctrines from the Scripture and applying these truths to ourselves. This is preaching in the direct and positive sense, when people receive it with faith, or at the very least are trying to believe the good news. Because God's original intentions were good, those who receive the good news, are interacting with God's good intention as it was designed. This makes it all positive and direct. The negative use is to attack(apologetics) those who resist this positive, direct message. In heaven there will be no more reason to use doctrines in this negative use. Who will you use apologetics on?

The quote from Vincent is in the broad context of a negative use of preaching, for it is used against thoughts and people who resist the positive message. However, the

argument he gives is itself a positive type.⁵⁴ This gives an additional abstract layer to think about, but it is helpful if you can grasp these concepts and understand them.

I will quote Vincent giving this apologetic argument in full context below. For a full book length use of Vincent giving this argument then see, *Ultimate Questions*, *Presuppositional Confrontations*, and *Systematic Theology*.

We will first go over the positive doctrine, then revisit its use in the Christian apologetic argument.

Vincent Cheung's Argument:

For any true proposition, there is literally an infinite number of possible errors related to it or possible deviations from it. For example, if " $1 + 1 = 2$ " is true, then the possible errors or deviations would include $1 + 1 = 3, 4, 5, \dots$. Therefore, it is impossible to make a specific refutation of every possible error or deviation from the truth. Instead, what we need is a positive claim or argument that excludes all errors or deviations by logical necessity.

If Christianity (the Bible) is true, and this same Christianity declares that all non-Christian claims and worldviews are false, then all non-Christian claims and worldviews are false by logical necessity.

Now, to eliminate all non-Christian claims and worldviews by logical necessity would demand that your positive demonstration be correct by logical necessity. Supposing that we have such an apologetic, the situation would be thus:

Christianity is true by logical necessity.
Christianity excludes all non-Christian views.
Therefore, all non-Christian views are false by logical necessity.

The key is (1) – the rest are easy and automatic. And to attain (1), you will have to read my works on apologetics and learn how to apply the method. I recommend reading *Ultimate Questions*, *Presuppositional Confrontations*, and *Apologetics in Conversation*, among others.

Then, this forces your opponent to interact with the Christian's positive construction, rather than allowing him to evade the force of your presentation just by throwing mere possibilities at you – since you have destroyed those possibilities, not by specific refutations, but by logical necessity. If you are dealing with a specific non-Christian worldview, you might also perform a refutation of this particular belief system.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ A specific negative argument would be to attack empiricism, by demonstrating how irrational it is, and how it leads to the denying of the LoC. Vincent's individual board points/(major premises) (antecedent) come from Scripture, and the consequent is a necessary result, and so it is direct message. When the self-authenticating method is applied to an individual (so that their denial provides the premise of their use of Scripture), then it at this level it becomes an indirect method/proof.

⁵⁵ Vincent Cheung. *Captive to Reason*. 2009. Chapter. *Excluded by Necessity*. Pg. 44.

So, if we keep the same hypothetical syllogism Vincent used, then it looks like this:

H.1. “(P) Christianity is true by logical necessity, and (Q) Christianity excludes all non-Christian views, then (R) all non-Christian views are false by logical necessity.

H.2. (P and Q)

H.3. Thus, R.

Because of the conjunction in the antecedent, this would be best for Natural Deduction; however, because a truth table will always demonstrate that extra conjunctions are always valid when used in the Modus Ponens and Modus Tollens structure, we will just keep it as a simple modus ponens syllogism.

Vincent is correct, Q and R would be easy to demonstrate. As has already been shown in our section on epistemology, the Bible says only it is true. And if P and Q are true, then R would necessarily follow. Thus, the point that needs some attention is to show P is indeed taught by the Scripture.

It has been pointed out what self-authenticating means, by the example of the law of noncontradiction. To use the LoC, to deny the LoC, is in fact to prove it by using it. It is like using air to breathe and then use this air to say, “I do not use air.” The solution for such a person is obvious. This can be solved by holding their head under water. This is what we do with the Scripture. We hold deniers under Scripture and logic⁵⁶.

“For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made (His handiworks). So [men] are without excuse [altogether without any defense or justification],”
(Romans 1:20 AMPC)

The AMPC translates the Greek word more directly here by saying, “without a defense or justification.” Some other translations will finish this by saying, “before God.” Its base word is our word for apologetics. This Greek word has a few variants. Most translations use the term “without excuse,” which is a necessary consequence, rather than the direct meaning itself. The direct meaning of this term in Romans 1:20 (which is a derivative of ‘apodeixis’) is about “not being able to give a rational defense.” The word is where we get our English for “apologetics.” It is how Peter said to give a “defense” (apologetic, a rational defense) for the hope that is in you.⁵⁷ It is a negative particle of “apologeomai,” which means to give a positive rational answer or argument.

⁵⁶ Because the knowledge about Logic comes from Scripture, then it is not a separate thing from Scripture.

⁵⁷ I will not take long to explain this, but will make a passing comment. Because the Christian **has the truth**, or true premises, **to begin with**, it means a “rational defense” does not necessarily have look like a polished sound argument, that one gives in a logic class. A new Christian merely giving a basic testimony or quoting a single verse, as long as it is relevant to the defense, has the potential to be a most beautiful crafted enthymeme very made. To give a defense, can mean a carefully crafted syllogism and argument, but it does not need to be this.

The negative is not being able to give a rational answer. Strong's Greek says, "379 ἀναπολόγητος [anapologetos...] 1 without defense or excuse. 2 that which cannot be defended, inexcusable."⁵⁸ If you are before a judge and cannot rationally defend your actions, then what is the result? And thus, the necessary inference, or indirect meaning is that they are "without excuse" before God. But the direct meaning of the term is giving a rational defense and failing at it, or not being able to give a good justification to a Judge about your actions.

In 1 Corinthians 2:4 Paul says that he makes a deductive argument (apodeixis) from Scripture so that the people's faith is in God's word and not man's sophistry. Some might miss this because of the old translation of the term. The word in most English translations is, "demonstration" in the Spirit. It is incorrect to think this is about supernatural demonstrations by power of the Spirit as in healings and being teleported. This word for demonstrate is philosophy jargon for a sound deductive argument. It is not merely a variation of the word Aristotle made popular, but it is the very same word. It is what one is taught in an English Comp class in college (as I was), where there is an Ethos, Pathos and Logos⁵⁹ essay. Stanford's Philosophy encyclopedia, says regarding this word and how Aristotle coined it:

"A demonstration (apodeixis) is "a deduction that produces knowledge."⁶⁰ As the Encyclopedia goes on to explain, Aristotle's use of "demonstration" is not just a "valid" or deductive argument, but a valid argument with true premises. This is the only way to produce "knowledge in a conclusion."⁶¹ In modern logic classes (as with the one I took), this type of "demonstration" is called a "sound" argument. A valid argument only means its logical structure is deductive, or that is, the conclusion is necessarily inferred, without added information. A "sound" argument is both valid and has true premises. Aristotle stupidly explained such true premises come from observation and science, which is inductive. This has to be one of the biggest mental blunders in all history, but that is for another time.

The big idea, is that Aristotle's epistemology is a human starting point, and thus, it is speculative and superstitious. Paul says that the Greeks did not "know" God by their human starting points. Thus, when Paul uses Aristotle's coined word for a "sound" argument he is purposefully contrasting this concept of where to get "true premises." It is similar to how John handles the term LOGOS for Jesus, when philosophy's usage of the term is about the ultimate divine order to all things. John in essence is implying the Greeks attempt was defective and laughable, because Jesus is what it really means to order all reality, by the order and predestined purpose of His will. Back to Paul, Paul uses Scripture, over and over in all his letters, and says that it is sufficient for all teaching and correcting. Thus, when Paul made a demonstration to the Corinthians, it means Paul, did not start with the Greeks' wisdom that uses human observations (or Jewish tradition) and science; rather, Paul started with Scripture and

⁵⁸ Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

⁵⁹ Keep in mind that Aristotle meant a "deductive" or "sound" argument for the best "logos" argument, whereas in today, it is use in a contradictory meaning to how Aristotle used it; today it is popular to teach the best logos arguments, are "inductive" and "irrational" statistical arguments. Plus Ultra Stupid.

⁶⁰ Smith, Robin, "Aristotle's Logic", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL =

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/aristotle-logic/>

⁶¹ Or in a broader philosophy jargon, A justified True Belief.

made deductions about Jesus Christ and ethics from this. The result is that the Corinthian's faith is in "God" and "not man." The true premises were from "God," and deduction is "God's" reasoning. Therefore, on the occasion of leading Paul to make this "sound argument," the Spirit then led the Corinthians to have faith in God.

Back to Romans, when Paul says man is "without excuse" in Romans 1:20 the word has similar Greek variants in how Aristotle used "apodeixis." Now, "anapologetos," is more broadly defined, as not being able to rationally give a defense, when you are questioned. The context is that because God's knowledge is in the inner man, you cannot stand before God and give an apologetic about how you did not know God, and thus, should not be charged guilty. Put in as a chain hypothetical syllogism, "if (P) you use God's knowledge to deny why you do not know God's knowledge, (Q) you have no apologetic for why you suppress God's knowledge; and if (Q), then (R) you have no excuse." Or, "If (P) you use air to breathe, then necessarily (Q) you have no apologetic for denying that you don't breathe." Or, "If (P) you use the law of noncontradiction to deny it, then (P) you have no apologetic for denying it."

As said before, innate knowledge is further explained in Romans 2:15, and that this knowledge is sizable. It included, not only categories about God's power, but of the world, man, logic, math, ethics (etc.). God put all things that are necessary for man to have "intelligence" to know God and reality. Therefore, all things necessarily for intelligence only comes from God's revelation, and in this instance innate knowledge. We also learned innate knowledge is only enough to condemn and not save. Thus, the doctrine of the *Necessity of Scripture*, means we are able to infer from scripture that all things necessary for intelligence, only converge in the Scripture. This is where the idea of "presupposition" comes from regarding the Scripture and how it is like the LoC. Because the doctrine of the necessity of Scripture, one must not merely presuppose "innate knowledge," but one must also presuppose the "Scripture" when they deny God.

With the example of the LoC, by using it to deny it, it does not yield the information (subject and predicate) about logic or any other topic. The LoC's self-authentication, is narrow in what it is authenticating. You use it; you must use it to deny it; you always use it. To infer extra information from this is inductive and invalid. It proves itself, when you deny it, but it lacks the positive doctrine of itself or its context. This is where fatal mistakes have been made in transcendental and TAG type arguments. Such presuppositional arguments do not validly negate all other wrong answers. At best some might eliminate some wrong ideas, but not all wrong ideas. They are missing the 3 key points, which the scripture has that make a presuppositional argument work. They do not have doctrines for all of life, is self-authenticating and says all others are false. Vincent points out that there are infinite possible ways to get a wrong answer (i.e. "what is 4+4"), or since we are talking about epistemology, then there are an infinite possible wrong starting points for knowledge, even if pragmatically most only use a few. Both Christians and atheist will use these defective TAG arguments. These trash arguments will be reviewed in the next section.

This is why Vincent's use of the presuppositional aspect is with a conjunction in the antecedent. The extra premise because it comes from scripture, is direct. Not only is there the positive self-authenticating method, but in addition, the Bible gives the information that only it is true and "all" other methods to know God and reality are wrong. This includes the use of induction, science and observations. To use these as

part of Christian argumentation, is to deny the scripture, while trying to use it. First, the scripture says you are using it, and secondly, the Scripture says all others are wrong. Thus, the *infinite possible ways* to be wrong are eliminated in one logical tactic. Any non-Christian way-of-thinking, is false by logical exclusion. As a whole, because both premises in the antecedent are produced by the Scripture, this apologetic method is a positive, even while the self-authenticating aspect is indirect.

We need to address why the self-authenticating aspect of the Bible is called a “method” and not the Christian apologetic itself.

Take again the example of the LoC. When I show a person, that in their denial of the LoC they use it, it is a “method to show” or point to the LoC. This method is not the LoC itself. This is also why such a proof avoids begging the question, because I did not supply the premise when they denied LoC, they did. My opponent supplied it the moment one word left their mouth. This is the same with a correct use of biblical presuppositionalism. When the doctrine is applied this way to an individual, it is a method, or an indirect proof/justification.

This is a point Vincent help me to understand in an email exchange, saying,

“...The transcendental "argument" in the context of apologetics is more like a strategy than an argument or a proof. This is because the argument in itself can at best show the necessity of bits and pieces of the Christian faith each time it is used on specific items. But we mean to say that the whole God (not just particular properties, and not just to the extent shown to be necessary) and the whole Scripture (not just a verse here or there) are necessary at all times, and that the whole first principle is ONE, not subject to division and selective affirmation. This does not come from the transcendental argument itself -- the argument itself does not yield this conclusion -- but it is already assumed as we employ the transcendental strategy. For this reason, the transcendental approach is more like an illustration for what we mean when we say that the whole Christian faith is necessary, just like the law of noncontradiction is an illustration to what we mean when we say that we can "justify" a first principle, but we cannot offer a "proof" or "demonstration" for it.

We believe that the Christian faith is true, that it is the foundation for all thinking and necessary for all thinking, not because of a proof or demonstration, not because of a transcendental argument or many transcendental arguments, and not even because it seems to be necessary, but we believe that the Christian faith is true and necessary because it is God's revelation. This is what we should say if the Christian faith is indeed God's revelation. So since God is one, his revelation is one, and not subject to division and selective judgment (one cannot affirm one part and discard another). This is the basis for affirming the whole thing at one time and at the beginning. The transcendental approach can only illustrate the necessity of a part of it at a time, but to say that we need to take up the whole thing because we have illustrated the necessity of a part comes from this other consideration, that we accept any of it and all of it in the first place, because it is God's revelation. This is why the foundation of Christian apologetics is not the transcendental approach (indirect or negative), but biblical dogmatism or rationalism (direct and positive).

Suppose only Vincent has the key to this car. If you want the key, you will have to ask Vincent. But "Vincent" cannot be divided into a thousand pieces so that a person could deal with only one of these pieces. If you deal with Vincent at all, you deal with the whole person, because Vincent is one person. However, this "whole Vincent" idea does not come from the key itself, or from the fact that you need Vincent to get the key. The fact that only Vincent has the key means that 1) it is useless to ask anyone else, and makes it necessary for you to 2) deal with Vincent and 3) with the whole Vincent, or Vincent as a person."

To summarize. First. The Scripture teaches, and deduces a doctrine that it(the Scripture) is self-authenticating. As also pointed out, this Scriptural doctrine (Rom 1-2), has a particular (but not only) focus on the necessary things for intelligence. A point to bring up is that the Christian learns the concept of self-authenticating from the Christian starting point, not from somewhere else. The Christian can judge/evaluate if Plato or whoever, is speaking correctly about what self-authenticating means, both in the biggest sense and narrow sense, by comparing it to the Scripture's doctrine. The Christian does not need history to know about ultimate questions, all they need is to be made wise by God's revelation.

Second. This self-authenticating aspect can be used as an effective "method" in Scriptural apologetics, when applied correctly.

A quick point about the "ontology of epistemology," or the "causality of your starting point of Knowledge," or in biblical terms, "God's sovereign control over knowledge." This is a place even famous secular philosophers seem to overlook. I will keep saying this until it becomes part of your thinking. "God." "God is the foundation of theology." Without Him, there is no point in doing theology. God's foundation is His absolute and direct sovereign control over all reality. This foundation takes away all the problems that non-Christians have with their fruitless attempts. They cannot find a rational answer for the ontology of epistemology. David said with God's strength he can leap over a wall. Yet, God is not only able to leap over a high wall, but He can push right through it, or just teleport on the other side, or just create something from nothing and do whatever He wants. Thus, on one hand God has given the Scripture, which is a public, complete and perfect starting point for knowledge and when studied faithfully the Christian can find answers to all sorts of deep and ultimate things (we are commanded to do so), yet on the other hand, God can just force Himself pass all this.

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,"

Romans 8:15-16.

"Our usual epistemological challenges against man's attempts to derive knowledge do not apply. The text addresses the issue from the standpoint of metaphysics, not epistemology, and it says this is something that God does. It is not something that man discovers, but something that God performs. It is not only something that God communicates, but something that God causes, and something that God causes you to do, and something that God causes you to BE. The text says nothing about any attempt or method by man to discover that he is a child of God. There is no issue with epistemology. You get a Spirit of

sonship. You call him “Father” by the Spirit. It does not say you learn it. It says you do it. Then it says that the Spirit does something — he testifies with your spirit that you are a child of God. He testifies. It does not say that you request to know. It does not say you attempt to find out. It does not even say that you listen or receive. It says he testifies. He does it.”⁶²

Often a Christian’s new birth is like this, for most often our understanding of Scripture at this point is limited. Often in times of weakness, when our mind has a hard time concentrating, the Spirit bypasses this epistemology (our current strivings to understand the Scripture as best as we can), and like a man running through a concrete wall, He makes the soul cry out, “**Abba Father**,” and ushers us right into the throne of Heaven. Praying in tongues is cheat code for this. It is a life hack to use God’s power to make us do epistemology, especially when we are weak and confused. The Spirit causing us to cry out, Father, is making us “do” epistemology. This is private knowledge⁶³ and one can deduce such things for themselves from public Scripture⁶⁴; but this point is about the causality aspect that God does, not us. Our great Father heals the whole man. Our Father gives a perfect starting point of knowledge. He lovingly causes us to privately do and be this knowledge, bypassing all our weakness. Indeed, God causes us to be victorious in Christ. God gives us a sound mind that knows the truth and make rational applications for oneself; He gives power for a healed and healthy body; power over the weaknesses through the Spirit, faith and heaven’s authority; He gives power to have success in all that we touch; He gives power to the soul to delight in His commands.

⁶² Vincent Cheung. The Gospel Guarantee of Self-Knowledge. Found in, “Fulcrum.” Pages 52-53. 2017

⁶³ All of God’s revelation(s) is man’s epistemology, just as in heaven God will cause us to know Him without the old way of studying the Scripture. We will know Him much better. The point about the Scripture, is that it is our “public” starting point for all Christians. It is the starting point to evaluate to see if a private revelation (prophecy) is correct or false. So that even if a person does not have the Scripture, if the Spirit gives them new birth and causes them to say “Abba Father,” this person is “doing” Christian epistemology (God’s revelation) right, even if they do not have the full context.

⁶⁴ About Private Knowledge vs Public.

“To make deductions about yourself, you will need premises about yourself. The Bible also covers this. Paul wrote, “For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11). We derive two points from this. First, this means that a man can know his own thoughts. Thus he can supply premises into biblical deductions about himself. At this point, it is sufficient to note that this is possible. How one evaluates his own thoughts is a separate issue. Second, a man knows only his own thoughts, and not other people’s thoughts. The followers of this philosophy that denies self-knowledge tripped up themselves because they failed to make this simple distinction between private and public knowledge.

They are usually debating believers about theories in philosophy and methods in apologetics, and occasionally debating unbelievers about the Christian faith, which is what these theories and methods should be used for in the first place. Almost all of this entails arguments about the correct public worldview, regardless of what a person knows or thinks in his own mind. We have a public first principle, and to others we make public deductions with public conclusions. But when we make deductions about ourselves on the basis of this same first principle, we supply premises that are private, that we cannot show to the public or prove to the public, even if we know that they are true. But this is irrelevant in most debates, since most debates concern public issues.”- Vincent Cheung. Fulcrum. Pages 51-52. 2017.

Summary: The Scripture teaches that it, as an epistemology, (1) it is self-authenticating, (2) that it does not contradict itself, and (3) it gives extensive knowledge for all of life, godliness and ultimate questions.

This gives a doctrine to evaluate other epistemologies from other worldviews, to see if they make knowledge possible. Does empiricism or rationalism or Islam, (or some famous philosopher) meet these 3 principles that makes knowledge possible? If not, then they are to be mocked and then sent to the city trash heap.

Defective Starting points

First we will deal with the two most common faulty starting points; however, out of the two, one is used much over the other. In fact, practically all non-Christian starting points can be summed up into it.

Empiricism has already been addressed to an extent. Scripture shows that man's sensation isn't always correct about reality. This alone should end all debate. The Scripture, which you're already using, says empiricism isn't a reliable epistemology. As a "starting point for knowledge," this puts empiricism into skepticism; but skepticism denies the law of non-contradiction. Thus, for empiricism to be true, it would have to be false at the same time. Both Scripture and logic teach that empiricism is to be mocked and dismissed.

Empiricism is, by definition, a starting point for knowledge. From your starting point, the rest of your system of thinking will proceed; thus, empiricism will proceed and deal with other ultimate questions. One of those questions is what type of logic your system uses. Your starting point will either directly tell you how to apply and proceed with its knowledge, or the very nature of your starting point will force you to use either deductive or inductive reasoning. There could be combinations of these; however, the nature of a starting point will usually leave only one option for how to proceed with its reasoning method. This method has to do with logic. The Bible, for example, uses the laws of logic and deduction and presupposes them repeatedly. Also, the nature of our starting point being God's revelation means we apply knowledge because truth is given to us upfront. The Christian doesn't observe or discover truth; rather, it's given in verbal revelation. Scripture shows the starting point of knowledge has nothing to do with human effort or anything human. As soon as someone brings any human element into epistemology, we know they've messed up.

The foundation for epistemology is God's revelation. Because truth is revelation, we apply it in the form of deduction. Inductive reasoning presupposes that you don't have truth and must start with human observations to gather it. This is why any

epistemology with a human starting point will be forced to use the fallacy of inductive reasoning.

Empiricism's logic is induction. Empiricism doesn't start with the truth. Thus, when interacting with reality, it must use observations to attempt to find knowledge and affirm the consequent (e.g., scientific experimentation). It has no choice but to do this, just as math problems must accurately reflect reality. If I purchased a clump of bananas with 4 and another with 7, and now I have 11, then for this math problem to reflect reality, it must be about addition, not division. The logic one attaches to an epistemology must reflect its reality; it's not a matter of picking and choosing what you want it to be.

Empiricism teaches that all knowledge for man "starts" with the senses. Some are enticed to hybrid empiricism as a dual epistemology (empiricism and rationalism, or worse, Scripture and empiricism). The problem with such attempts is that rather than combining strengths, they combine and multiply logical fallacies. This is an insurmountable problem because just one fallacy in the epistemology makes your worldview deny the law of non-contradiction. And to have multiple fallacies is to beat a corpse.

It's a non-issue if one combines so-called strengths in a dual epistemology because some points will always be more foundational, like critical pillars for bridges. If one of these supports is defective, the whole structure falls. Since empiricism logically ends up denying the law of non-contradiction, any other epistemology unfortunately hybridized with it will logically be attached to something that denies the law of non-contradiction. If the foundational pillar falls, anything attached to it will also fall and become defective. Empiricism always falls as an epistemology, and if another epistemology is attached to it, it also falls. For example, if Scripture is hybridized with empiricism, then Scripture is made to support a point that denies the law of non-contradiction—the same law that Jesus Christ appeals to in Mark 12:35-37. If the Bible vouches for a liar, then the Bible can't be trusted. Empiricism is a lie as an epistemology, so if Scripture is said to vouch for something that's nonsense, then Scripture isn't to be trusted. As Vincent Cheung says, a reliable man wouldn't vouch for a liar.⁶⁵ And so, firstly, Scripture directly contradicts empiricism, for it teaches man's knowledge starts with God's absolute and direct sovereignty. Secondly, if Scripture were hybridized with empiricism, it would fall when empiricism falls—as it already has.

Empiricism is a sensory scam. Scripture and logic give it the boot for flunking reality's test. It is a skeptical mess that trips over the law of non-contradiction, dragging any hybrid buddies down with it. God's revelation's the only legit launchpad, serving truth on a deductive platter, but empiricism is just a sad wannabe eating inductive dust.

The Blank Mind

Stepping outside Scripture (for the sake of argument) and putting ourselves into the worldview of empiricism (this is going to be painful, so brace yourself), we discover that since God didn't put innate knowledge in man, it must, by definition, come from the senses. A baby that's born hasn't had the opportunity to use the senses to somehow put knowledge in the mind, and thus, it's blank. It's a non-issue whether we assert (based on empiricism) that all humans are born with a blank mind or that the

⁶⁵ Vincent Cheung. *Ultimate Questions* Pg 63. 2010.

first humans started with blank minds. Either way, the elephant in the room that must be dealt with is a “blank mind.” How does a blank mind “learn”? How does a blank sheet of paper learn? Or consider a video camera with “hardware,” visual, and audio senses. With a blank SSD drive but no computer or programming in it, how will it learn? This is still being too kind, for even a blank SSD drive is logically set up to receive data. How would a blank, non-thinking organic mass even know how to first structure its organic tissue to be suitable for receiving information? An analog camera might better describe what we’re talking about, but even then, the film is designed to receive information of some type. However, back to the camera: how long will it need to sit there before it has an intelligent thought? Remember, a thought involves a true or false proposition. Even binary language is built upon the concept of true and false and the laws of logic; otherwise, 0 is 1, 0 is 0, 1 is 1, and 1 is 0. It involves subjects and predicates.

The issues are more easily seen in the bigger presuppositional universals that a thinking mind must have to think at all. These are (1) the laws of logic and (2) the ideas of space, self, measurement, math, time, and a unit, along with the understanding of basic categories (remember categories, in many ways, are the Laws of Identity, Contradiction, and Excluded Middle applied at the universal level or universal idea of a unit, rather than only on particulars). Particular sensations cannot give universals and logic, for one must already have them to think. To go from particulars in the premise to universals in the conclusion is a category error. It’s like saying, “This empiricist is a frog. This river is a bird. Thus, all cats are 12.” This is no less invalid and stupid than playing with categories like Playdough or going from particulars to universals. The reason both are equally stupid is that both equally violate the law of non-contradiction and make all knowledge impossible. Plus Ultra Stupid. Empiricism is a childish delusion and superstition.

If, by sensation, there’s no possible way for knowledge to be in the mind, then there’s no worldview. In fact, there’s nothing. No knowledge means there’s nothing to talk about. Nothing. It poses no logical threat to my worldview or to any worldview, for that matter.

If we go back to a blank analog video camera, what makes this different from a “smart” video camera would be the pre-installed programs or pre-installed AI. Without this, the camera would be blank. It wouldn’t even have the concept or program to utilize the laws of Identity, Contradiction, and Excluded Middle. In binary language, it would mean the 0s are 1s and the 1s are 0s. Try to see if a program is intelligible upon that foundation. Thus, even if it did have some invisible concepts, such as subjects and predicates, the idea of “I sensed something” could mean its opposite, “I didn’t sense something.” If the mind, analog tape, or SSD is blank and thus doesn’t have the concept of the law of non-contradiction, how would it get this understanding without already having it? For it to intelligently (without meaning the opposite) affirm, “I think I just discovered the law of non-contradiction,” it must have it first; otherwise, “I think I just discovered the law of non-contradiction” would mean its opposite, “I didn’t discover the law of non-contradiction.” If an empiricist can demonstrate this to me with formal validity, then please show me.

Since math is built upon the foundation of logic, not only is logic impossible to start with sensation, but so is math.

Even if I wrote the premise on a blank mind or SSD, “Empiricists are stupid,” how will the unthinking mind or SSD understand this? That premise was in English. Without the presupposition of language, how would a blank starting point think about anything?

Also, if I were to point to a tree and say to little Johnny, “This thing is a tree,” there’s no way to “logically” or validly conclude Johnny’s sensation, “That is a tree.” Johnny’s sensation of the event of me pointing would be a premise in the syllogism. What he heard me say would be another. No matter how you try to frame it, for Johnny to conclude, “That is a tree,” would be an invalid inference; it would be a non-sequitur fallacy. The conclusion would always have more information than what the premises provide. Maybe my pointing, or multiple pointings, is saying that my pointing itself is the tree or about the color brown, etc. There’s no valid way to conclude either way. Thus, empiricism, as an epistemology, would again lead to skepticism. If empiricism is true, it would be false at the same time.

Empiricism is a blank-mind fantasy, a logic dumpster fire. The senses can’t spark knowledge from a category error. It’s like expecting a blank camera, without programing or Ai, to write Shakespeare. No logic, no math, no nothing—just a skeptical void that trips over its own contradictions. Scripture has the real juice: God’s revelation, and it doesn’t need sensory’s square training wheels.

Vincent Cheung, puts it in terms of observing a game.

“If we take the time to enumerate, we can make explicit dozens, or more probably hundreds or even thousands of presuppositions that are necessary for the game to be intelligible to your observation, when at the same time these presuppositions cannot come from the act of observation. To make matters more difficult, there are thousands of arbitrary elements to every game that are not essential to the rules, although they are objects of observation. For example, if a chess game is played by two men in formal attire, what can you infer from this? Are you to infer that this is an essential rule of chess? And if so, must women also wear men's suits, or are they allowed to wear dresses? Of course, people wear regular clothes when they are playing chess in other settings. But how do you know that they are not in violation of the rules, and that they are just getting away with it? Or do you assume without warrant that if they were indeed in violation, the rules would always be enforced against them?

Without knowledge that comes apart from observation, observation itself can make no sense or communicate any information. The intelligibility and interpretation of observation presuppose knowledge about the objects of observation, and this knowledge cannot come from the act of observation itself. That is, the intelligibility and interpretation of an experience is made possible by knowledge that comes apart from the experience. This knowledge may be something that is innate or something that is received by verbal instruction.

If the mind is totally blank, so that it does not even possess categories such as time, space, and causation, intelligibility and interpretation are impossible. In fact, if your mind is a blank, without any knowledge that comes apart from observation, your world will be to you as a whirlwind of sensations with no way to organize them or interpret them. However, if a prior non-observational

knowledge of reality is required in order to properly interpret observation about reality, this means that the order and meaning you observe is imposed on what you observe, and never derived from what you see. This is another way of saying that the meaning of what you observe is governed by your presuppositions.

Returning to our initial illustration, what happens if you presuppose the rules of basketball or chess when you watch the tennis game? Even if it appears that you are able to make sense of the things that you observe, because the wrong rules are presupposed, your interpretation will be false. Therefore, it is not enough to recognize that nonobservational presuppositions precede intelligibility and interpretation, but we must realize that not all presuppositions are equal, and that they can be true or false.⁶⁶

Then there are all the logical absurdities that results such as: does one know they are having a sensation? How can this be other than by a sensation? What is the sensation that senses a sensation? This directs to an infinite regress in thinking and proving; however, an infinite regress in this context is not compatible with reality. Once you are finished with your own infinite regress, you let me know, and I will believe that it is possible in reality?

To further elaborate, how do we know this sensation senses a sensation other than by a sensation that senses the sensation that senses the first sensation? Is the lack of a sensation a sensation? How does one know this? By sensation?

Vincent first brought this absurdity to my attention saying in an email debate,

“Are you conscious of all the sensations that you are having? How do you know that? Do you sense that you are sensing all? But then, do you sense that you sense that you are sensing all? How do you know? By sensation again?

Do you always sense everything around you? If not, how do you know that you are not sensing everything around you if you are not sensing what you are sensing?

How about radio waves? Are there radio waves? If so, do you sense radio waves? All the radio and TV stations at the same time? If you use a radio device to pick up these waves, then what are you sensing? The sound from the radio, or the radio waves? Do you hear words and music from the radio? If so, then are radio waves words and music? Ah, but you might say that these are the "effects" of the radio waves. But then, you are only sensing the effects and not the cause. If so, how do you know the cause? If you infer from the effects to the cause, then how do you know that the inference is valid? By sensation again? What do you sense that would confirm this?

Also, how do you know that you do not know certain things? By sensation? Again, is the lack of sensation a sensation? How do you know this? Do you sense that a lack of sensation is a sensation?

⁶⁶ Vincent Cheung, “Presuppositional Confrontations,” 2010, p. 5-6

Then, if you know that you do not know certain things, what are these "certain things"? If you know what they are, then you must know what they are by sensation, but then, this means that you have sensed them -- if so, in what sense do you not know them?"⁶⁷

Therefore, how can empiricism escape begging the question and infinite regress? This leads to Skepticism. To be true, it must be false at the same time.

Moreover, an invisible concept of a true or false proposition isn't a physical thing. "A proposition," or rather "thinking," isn't physical. But sensation is physical. Sensation isn't the "propositional thinking" of the sensation. Also, understanding a true or false proposition about a given sensation isn't the sensation itself. One could arbitrarily and without justification, assert something at this point to make the leap from physical sensation to an invisible understanding in the mind, but a child can delusionally assert without justification: "Splashing super blues sevens are big 2 running dog tree justice." Isn't make-believe fun?

If invisible knowledge comes by sensation, where's the justification? Where's the sound argument to prove it?

To have a picture in the mind of Mt. St. Helens is a copy of it (2); it's not the actual mountain (1). That's one category, and then there's another. In addition, there's another categorical leap: to think propositional thoughts about (3) the indirect copy (2) of the real Mt. St. Helens (1). There's no logical justification for these two categorical leaps between premises and conclusion. In essence, the syllogism is like saying, "All dogs are mammals. All blue things are color. Therefore, all humans are clouds." There's no more justification for that syllogism than saying the propositional thoughts in an invisible mind about the picture copy in my physical brain are knowledge about the real Mt. St. Helens. Both are playing with categorical reality as if it's Playdough. That might work to sell fantasy novels, but not so much when asking ultimate questions about the reality we live in.

B1. [A picture in the mind] is [physically coded information].

B2. [Conceptual information] is [true and false propositional knowledge in the mind].

B3. Thus, [A picture in the mind] is [true and false propositional knowledge in the mind].

The problem with syllogism B is twofold.

First, how is premise B1 proven? Let's, for the sake of argument, say DNA is a code-based language (by physical symbols) for complex operations of the body. So what? Stepping aside the presuppositional issues about how readable code got there, the issue is about the logic of the code, and how one validly infers from this with only sensation (etc.)? Let's focus on the immediate issue. If I think a proposition right now, "Empiricists are monkeys," can it be seen (or sensed) in my physical brain? Of course not, because, by definition, true and false, like math and logic, are invisible concepts. What if they had my brain under a machine to detect electronic signals? So what? The machine isn't my brain. Even if, in the future, they could somehow see a picture on

⁶⁷ Vincent Cheung, *Some Questions for Empiricist*, chapter 25. *Sermonettes* Vol. 1. 2010. Pg. 69.

their machine, it would be seen on the machine, not my brain. How does one know the inference was valid? It would end up being an appeal to the result to infer the cause. This is called affirming the consequent and is logically invalid. It would be a non-sequitur fallacy, for the conclusion would have more information than what the premise(s) provide.

Second, to go from Premise B1, “physically coded information,” to B2, “conceptual information,” is an equivocation (or a four-term fallacy) because the first term is about physical symbols, but the term is changed into invisible concepts. Thus, the only options for the empiricist are to have premise(s) that are unjustified speculations or to make an equivocation in the terms to make the conclusion say what they want it to. There’s no way to prove empiricism with formal validity. Empiricism is an onslaught of category fallacies and affirming-the-consequent fallacies.

Empiricism’s a category-clown show, trying to leap from physical ouchies to invisible brainstorm with zero logic. Sensation is not your thinking; It’s a fallacy-fest, with equivocations and non-sequiturs galore. Empiricism’s Playdough syllogisms make children’s fantasies appear as boring slice of life.

Clark on Empiricism

Gordon Clark has been helpful to me in applying the presuppositional Christian apologetic, particularly in a negative attack. Clark says these points quickly and precisely, and so I will shamelessly quote him on several points below, with him critiquing empiricism. I would recommend his book, *A Christian View of Men and Things*.

(Clark) Empiricism: No self

“Berkeley was quite sure that there must exist a mind to have these impressions. A mountain is something perceived, and a perception can exist only in a mind. But Hume was acute enough to see the next step. If material substance is an absurdity because it is an abstract idea, so too is the spiritual substance or the mind. Experience consists entirely of images, impressions, and their resulting combinations. No one has experienced a Self. What common opinion calls a person is simply a bundle of images. And this, as was argued above, results in skepticism. If all knowledge is based on experience, we may conclude, there is no knowledge.”⁶⁸

(Clark) Empiricism: Time, Space & Math

“All this may be so, but it is a poor defense of empiricism. The trouble lies deeper. If knowledge is a result of sensory experience, or even of internal experience – if after Hume there can be any internal experience – how could the ideas of space and time be obtained? Time has never been impressed on the senses so that we might have an image of it. If anyone thinks he has an image of time, let him describe its color, its shape, and smell. But more profoundly Kant argues,

⁶⁸ Gordon Clark, Vol.1, “A Christian View of Men & Things,” (2005, pg.214). Published by The Trinity Foundation, Unicoi TN.

The idea of time does not originate in our senses, but is presupposed by them. For sensory impressions can be represented as simultaneous or successive only through the idea of time. Succession does not produce the concept of time, but presupposes it.

Similarly, with respect to space Kant argues that the idea of space is not abstracted from external sensations, for I cannot conceive anything external to me except by representing it as in a place where I am not. Therefore external perceptions do not originate but presuppose the idea of space.

Space and time, for Kant, give the basis for mathematics – for geometry and arithmetic respectively. And the truths of mathematics are examples of truths that cannot be derived from experience. Teachers of small children may think that “two and two are four” is taught by playing with marbles. Does not the teacher show the pupil how two marbles and two marbles make four marbles? Roll them together into a corner and see that there are four marbles. Then, after this is done with different colored marbles, and different sized marbles, and with pencils and erasers, the child generalizes or abstracts from his experience the truth that two and two are four. However, this explanation of the learning process seems to be unsatisfactory. In the first place, the child would have to recognize one marble before he could count two of them. Where did the concept of a unit come from? From the marble also? But would not the pupil have to have the concept of a unit before he recognized a marble as one? If he did not know one, he could not count one. He has to know the numbers in order to count. And in the second place, this consideration holds for four as well as for one. He must know four before he can count four marbles. Perhaps this can more clearly be seen if large numbers are used. Let the teacher try to teach the young child that 356 marbles and 791 marbles are 1147 marbles. Everyone has heard children say their numbers: one, two, three, four, seven, sixteen, five, twenty-one, sintillion. The young child who so counts cannot learn the example by counting marbles because he cannot count numbers. He can count marbles only after he can count numbers. And since numbers are not marbles or anything else sensory, it follows that arithmetic is not abstracted from experience. So much for mathematics.”⁶⁹

(Clark) Empiricism: Logic

“Hume’s analysis of causality also points up essentially the same difficulty in empiricism. While Hume treated the subject more or less in isolation, Kant saw that a general principle was involved. Physics as well as mathematics requires necessary and universal judgments, and these are impossible on an empirical basis. All images, sensations, or experiences are unique occurrences....

No doubt we are accustomed to this sequence of events just as we expect the Sun to rise in the east tomorrow; but there is no logic by which we may begin with a few experiences of the past and arrive at a judgment about the future...

If all knowledge is based on experience, no statement can validly be made about the future, for experience is always past. Even if it were possible to learn by experiment that two and two have always been four, and that the Sun has always risen in the east, there would be no conclusive reason for supposing that these things would be

⁶⁹ Clark. Ibid. pg.214

the same tomorrow. But not only does this principle of universality and necessity prevent an empirical knowledge of the future; it applies to the past as well. Since no one can have experienced every case, empiricism cannot consistently assert that the Sun has always risen in the east, that two and two have always been four, or, to use one of Kant's examples, that all bodies are heavy. Similarly, no experience necessitates the conclusion that every change requires a cause.

More important still, the validity of syllogistic reasoning can never be based on experience. The laws of logic may well be called more important than the propositions of mathematics and physics because logic underlies them both. In all our conversation and writing, the forms of logic are indispensable: Without them discussion on every subject would cease. But if empiricism cannot establish the truth that two and two will always be four, neither can it assert that the conclusion of Barbara always and necessarily follows from the premises. Empiricism, therefore, is conclusively shown to be skeptical, because the law of contradiction cannot be abstracted or obtained from temporally conditioned particulars. And without the law of contradiction it is impossible to say anything meaningful. Scientists like Pearson, Carlson, or Bridgman, and liberal theologians like Brightman, may produce complicated and persuasive systems of thought; but if they claim to be empiricists, their systems contradict their epistemological principles, for if all knowledge is based on experience, there is no knowledge."⁷⁰

(Clark) Empiricism: Equivocation from God to man.

If empiricism is used to prove God, from sensing nature to man having propositional knowledge of God, then the fallacy of equivocation or a 4 term fallacy occurs. The definition of existence(is) if constructed through empiricism, cannot produce the same definition of (is) in what the Bible means by it: "Must believe that God is." (Hebrews 11:6).

St. Thomas and other modern philosophers (Van Til) try to rescue this by using the idea of analogy. There is a fallacious way to use an analogy. The point that makes analogies invalid is if the terms in the syllogism are *not* the same. Using empiricism in this context to know God's existence makes the terms not the same and so invalid in the conclusion. Again, it would be a non-sequitur fallacy. The conclusion would have more information than what the premises provides.

There is the more basic problem of empiricism not being able to validly go from an "is" to a "proposition" in the mind. What is indirectly or directly sensed and the copies of these sensations as indirect images of the so-called real things, to then concepts in the mind. Famous philosophers in history such as Locke, Berkeley to Hume recognized this issue. But as Hume concluded, it is an inescapable fallacy that empiricism is stuck with. Empiricism creates an abyss of skepticism. At least Hume was honest about it.

Then there is more particular problems related to this such as empiricism going from an "is"(what is) to an "ought(what ought to be)."

But as for analogies here is Clark again.

⁷⁰ Clark. Ibid. Pg. 215-216

“It follows, therefore, that the Thomistic proofs of the existence of God are invalid on two counts. First there are the previous empirical difficulties with causality, abstraction, and logic; but now there is this second. Even if no other fallacy were to be found in the arguments, and if we should arrive validly at the conclusion, God exists, this existence at which we have arrived would not be God’s existence. Syllogisms and valid arguments require their terms to be used univocally. If this has been done, the “analogical” and actual existence of God has not been obtained. All through the argument the term exist or is has been used in a human or temporal sense; and if the argument is valid, the term in the conclusion must also have the same temporal sense. But in this sense of the word exist, God does not exist. Once more, empiricism has failed.”⁷¹

To go from transient, past observations to conclude with “future,” “all” or “every time,” or in the above case, “eternal existence,” is a non-sequitur fallacy. The invalidness from premise to conclusion denies the law of contradiction by saying, “some” is “all,” and “past” is the same thing as “future,” and “this one time,” is the same thing as “every time.” If they are ok with denying the law of contradiction from premise to conclusion by saying “some” is the thing as “all,” and “past” is the same thing as “future,” and “this one time,” then every claim they make about reality must also be denied as false.

Since logic is something that is always true, there is no way empiricism and observations can produce a conclusion to say logic is always true.

For them to say, “Jesus is dead, and science is true,” they must, and we must, always apply the law of contradiction (past, present and future), otherwise, they assert the opposite, “Jesus is alive, and science is false.” The law of contradiction they always use and will always use to assert their claims, cannot be produced by empiricism and observations. Empiricism fails again.

(Clark) Empiricism: Categories, Classification

“If the arguments of the last few paragraphs are sound, along with the considerations on empiricism that occurred in several of the earlier chapters, a satisfactory theory of epistemology must be some sort of apriorism with or without intellectual intuition. The notion that a blank mind can learn must be repudiated.

Of all the modern philosophers it is Immanuel Kant who is naturally thought of first as a representative of a priori theory. For him experience gives us a rather indefinite, even chaotic manifold of sensation, and the mind arranges, or imposes unity on, this manifold by the application of innate categories so that knowledge results. All items of knowledge are judgments or predications. A term, such as triangle, by itself cannot be either true or false. But if one says, “the triangle is an isosceles triangle,” or, “the triangle is a four-sided figure,” one has said something either true or false. All judgments are classifications. This triangle is classified under the species of isosceles triangle, or, falsely, under the class of four-sided figures. Two terms, therefore, the subject and the predicate, are brought together. Thus the mind imposes unity on experience by judging or classifying. Since judgments or propositions are the products

⁷¹ Clark Ibid. Pg. 218.

of the mind's unifying activity, the several types of judgment are witnesses to several functions of unity. These are the categories, the non-empirical contribution of the mind to knowledge – the prerequisites of learning. They are not based on or derived from experience, but rather the possibility of meaningful experience depends on them.

To one who has been impressed by the universal and necessary factors in knowledge, in particular the law of contradiction and the validity of implication, and who sees clearly the epistemological skepticism and ontological nihilism implied in empirical philosophy, this a priori view is inescapable. And yet when one comes to work out the details, there is danger of emulating Kant's many self-contradictions. At any rate, Kant's categories cannot be accepted as they are.

Kant might continue to object that no one should be allowed to have his cake and his penny, too. The categories are either derived from experience or they are innate. By this decisive disjunction, so Kant might argue, the preformation theory is proved to be unfair to organized philosophy. However, preformationism does not repudiate the disjunction as just stated: *The categories are indeed innate, but in addition God has fashioned both the mind and the world so that they harmonize.* And some such scheme must be accepted if the Kantian a-priori is no less skeptical than empiricism. That the cake and penny illustration is inapplicable may be seen by asking the question, Does the law of contradiction hold in thought or does it hold with things? The objector would have to choose one and reject the other. But is it not more plausible to say that the law of contradiction applies both to thought and to things? Even a Ding-an-sich, unknowable as and if it is, cannot also be a Not-Ding-an-sich."⁷²

This brings up the point of the existence of the law of contradiction in reality, and the ontology of knowledge and ontology of categories. God's sovereignty is the answer to such. But what about the opponents of scripture? What is their answer?

(Clark) Empiricism: Blank Mind, Private Thoughts.

"The idealistic philosophers have argued plausibly that truth is also mental or spiritual. Without a mind truth could not exist. The object of knowledge is a proposition, a meaning, a significance; it is a thought. And this is necessary if communication is to be possible. If a truth, a proposition, or a thought were some physical motion in the brain, no two persons could have the same thought. A physical motion is a fleeting event numerically distinct from every other. Two persons cannot have the same motion, nor can one person have it twice. If this is what thought were, memory and communication would both be impossible. The reply might be made that although the motions are numerically distinct, they are generally similar; therefore, today I have the motion, Columbus discovered America, and tomorrow I have another one like it. This reply, however, is faulty. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that two motions can be similar: A baseball pitcher can throw a curve and later a second curve like it; and one cortical quiver could be like a second. But how could anyone tell that the two motions were similar....

⁷² Clark. Ibid. pg.219, 221.

Or, more to the point, how could any motion connect two other motions that no longer exist? When the second motion occurs, the first thought of Columbus is gone. In its absence how can the second be compared with it and pronounced similar? If only we could remember it! But memory, the making present of the past, is impossible on a physical theory. The first motion as a physical event in time and space is completely and irretrievably gone. It may as a cause initiate a second motion, but it itself no longer exists; and to say that a non-existent motion is similar to an existing motion is hardly more intelligible than to say they are the same. It is a peculiarity of mind and not of body that the past can be made present. Accordingly, if one may think the same thought twice, truth must be mental or spiritual. Not only does it defy time; it defies space as well, for if communication is to be possible, the identical truth must be in two minds at once. If, in opposition, anyone wishes to deny that an immaterial idea can exist in two minds at once, his denial must be conceived to exist in his own mind only; and since it has not registered in any other mind, it does not occur to us to refute it.⁷³

To conclude: empiricism is a delusion if used for a starting point of knowledge. The Scripture reveals observations being mistaken. This alone should answer and end any questions about this. However, if we pretend the Bible out of the way and examine empiricism by its own definition, we still find it speculative, superstitious and leads to the denying of the law of contradiction. Even when trying to combine empiricism with partial rationalism or partial biblical truths such as “innate” knowledge, it always leads to an irrational conclusion. If there is any amount of a human starting point for knowledge in the equation, then validity is automatically destroyed. Thus, for anyone to use empiricism as an excuse to not believe the Scripture on any point, are morally wicked and disobedient; regarding the intellect, they are broken and stupid.

Rationalism:

Rationalism can mean a few things. In my experience, it is often loosely thrown around in a vague and undefined way; however, in context of epistemology it has a precise meaning. Rationalism starts with logic as its starting point for knowledge for a worldview. The rest of the worldview will proceed from place. Since the laws of logic are used as the start, the logical order for the rest of the system will proceed as deduction rather than induction. The most important historical figure for making this known and popular is Plato. Like David Hume for empiricism, Plato was honest and admitted the limitations of his starting point, to a certain extent. He admitted his worldview was able to see the “world of the forms or categories,” from a distance, but also that his worldview could not get him there. His philosophy could not give him a clear and precise knowledge of the “forms,” or the ontology of it. It was like shadows on a cave wall. Or that is, using logic as a starting point,⁷⁴ he vaguely knew the order of the Forms (shadows dancing on a wall), so as to entice him, but his rationalism could not get him there in knowledge and clarity.

⁷³ Gordon Clark, “A Christian View of Men & Things,” (2005, pg.223). Published by The Trinity Foundation.

⁷⁴ He did use a weird mix of sensation and nubilous notions of the Greek god’s throughout his philosophy. However, he trying to mainly use rationalism.

Despite Plato admitting Rationalism was defective as an epistemology, and Aristotle showing how induction was irrational, many famous Christians would still use both rationalism and empiricism as dual epistemologies with the Bible. After Plato and Aristotle many famous Christian thinkers usually chose sides between the two. For example, St. Augustine of Hippo used a type of dual epistemology of the Scripture and Rationalism. This is a mistake, but it is not the worst mistake to make, because rationalism(laws of logic) gives no knowledge. Logic is only the structure of thinking, not the content. Rationalism strictly speaking, gives no content that would contradict the Scripture, because it has no subjects or predicates. Famous theologians like the medieval St. Thomas used a dual epistemology of Scripture and empiricism (if you include the Pope, it would be a triple epistemology). This mistake is a fatal mistake, because empiricism contradicts the Scripture outright (in epistemology and metaphysics and logic), and if you use induction to produce knowledge it would forever produce knowledge/content that would further contradict the Scripture. It would also condemn the Scripture for vouching for a liar.

Most Christians today, due to a lingering anti-intellectualism, have dual epistemologies of Scripture and empiricism. Thus they have more in common with Greek thinkers and Catholics, than they do with God's revelation. Such things as their love for the pragmatic helpfulness of science, makes them blind to fatal blasphemies they commit at the epistemology level.

Some Christians have a dual epistemology with rationalism or empiricism, but they are blind to their mistake. They think the Scripture is their only starting point. They are often very confident because they say Latin slogans such as, "sola scriptura." Such things might appeal to the flesh, but has little to do with the Spirit and truth. However, when Christians attempt to do apologetics, their dual starting points will often become uncovered and exposed. The subjects of healing, faith and God's sovereignty can also be pressure points to expose if the scripture is someone's only starting point or not. This is seen when Christians try to use TAG, presuppositional and Transcendental arguments to prove God.

Some, like St. Thomas, will NOT presuppose the Scripture, but presuppose empiricism and so use science to prove God. However, as Clark pointed out, the way God "exists" according to the Bible, and how we sense "existence" is not the same. The new term for God's existence in the conclusion, if biblical, will always be a non-sequitur fallacy when using empiricism as premises. This is Plus Ultra Stupid. Thus, any conclusion about God from observation is an invalid conclusion. It is a category error. The same is with using science, with the exception that science now has the additional fallacy of affirming the consequent.

Others, like Locke or Descartes, will not presuppose the Scripture but rationalism/logic to prove God. Since logic has no subjects or predicates, any conclusion made from a TAG argument using logics, is an invalid conclusion, no matter how fancy it sounds. It is a category error. It is a non-sequitur fallacy. It is beyond stupid to use subjects and predicates to prove God, when your epistemology gives no subjects or predicates.

Some argue that they are only trying to put themselves in the shoes of the unbeliever and use their worldview against them. It is fine to use their own standard as a negative attack, to show their standards are irrational (etc.); however, to use a malfunctioned starting point to "prove" something as a positive argument is beyond

moronic. For example, to use the starting point in geometry, “a square is a 7 plane figure with all unequal sides and the color blue,” to “prove” a positive argument that my phone is or is not a square is nonsense. If a starting point is defective from the start, there is no using it to “prove” anything. Nothing. One can use their standard to show their starting point is nonsense itself, but not to use it in any positive demonstration.

What was just said seems so simple a child could grasp this; however, many famous theologians and denominations are built using apologetics that try to use empiricism as a positive demonstration for God. Stupid! Wicked! It is truly sad to see those who stress using the Bible as their sole starting point for knowledge, often willingly use empiricism/science to prove something (Van Till, or Charismatics). Others out of sheer mental blindness keep falling back on empiricism and science to prove God, or prove bad doctrines such as cessationism. If you are so bold to go public to teach others to solely use the Scripture, as their starting point, then at least practice it enough that you are pragmatically faithful to your teaching. Since empiricism is essentially atheism, to hybrid these together is to hybrid God and Satan together. It is a monstrous blasphemy to make.

A few points of clarity about rationalism before moving on. To use a system of deduction versus a system of induction, is not by definition “rationalism,” when we are talking about worldviews and philosophy. Rationalism, in this context is about using logic itself as a starting point for knowledge, and not about the logic proceeding from that starting point. More will be said about logic in the Logic section, but Paul, Jesus and the prophets use deductive logic. Paul makes several logical deductive chain arguments. Paul in Romans 3 uses the old testament to make a systematic theology statement, “all [humans] have sinned.” We are to apply ourselves to this statement: (Oshea has sinned). Any Christian who has applied this verse to themselves is using deduction and not induction. Since they “started” with the Scripture, which reveals truth, they proceed by using deduction to apply it to themselves. When truth is revealed up front, then deduction is merely a way to apply this truth.

However, rationalism can be used as to signify the use of deduction rather than induction in a system of thinking. For this reason, there is nothing wrong with calling the systematic theology taught in this book as Biblical-rationalism, or Biblical-deductionalism. This combo is not stating a hybrid epistemology, but saying the bible is the only epistemology and deduction is logic used.

Other Points:

FIRST. Objections directly to God’s nature and the nature of His revelation:

Category Fallacies:

This category fallacy is often made by theologians, and lay people alike, because of this, it will be dealt with continually. Consider how this book is chaptered off in different categories: knowledge, reality, causality, logic, ethics (etc.). These are big

categories with big differences. To mix up such big categories will lead to big mistakes. It is one thing to mix up a maple tree with an oak tree, at least they are in the same broad category of trees. But to mix up foundational categories with each other will cause mistakes and conclusions that are overtly off.

Man starts with what He sees and then becomes irrational by applying things he sees in himself back to God. Because his starting point is wrong, man will make mistakes in his thinking and conclusions about reality. God is Spiritual and Intellectual and Powerful. Man being God's image has some similarities, but not the same. For example, man's foundation is a spirit-man, but this spirit-man is housed in a physical body. The Father has never had a body, and never will. Thus, for man to go from anything physical about himself to God, is not only the fallacy of induction, but a "category error," fallacy. It is to say, because I can run through a cloud, I can therefore run through a rock. Category error.

God's nature is not applicable to created things, just as the color red is not applicable to the concept of 5. God does not lift any rocks, red seas, or stars because God does not have a material body to lift material things with.

Thus, trying to prove God in the reverse is also a mistake. To ask God to prove His existence by making my car float up and down, is to make a category error. Thus, the conclusion from premise (This car floated up and down), to (an invisible, spiritual God) will always be invalid. To go from material things (in the premise) to spiritual in the conclusion is a huge category error. People who think like this are delusional, and are habitually trained to think like an empiricist.

One mistake that will be focused on in the next section is mixing up the categories of metaphysics and ethics, or what God creates with what God commands.

SECOND. Stupid and illogical starting points in general.

We have already addressed the issues of empiricism, which is what most start with. It is a human starting point. It is not starting with God, but man. It is speculation, and its inductive method is superstitious. However, there is another mistake often made here. It comes from when people try to make a dual starting point of the divine revelation and empiricism. In our analyses of empiricism we discovered it cannot rationally gain any knowledge of reality; it commits one category error after another, and it results in skepticism. If our sensation of sight is only a picture of the real thing (a copy), then we cannot make a valid inference about the real thing from the copy. Also, a picture or sound is a momentary (here and gone) observation. It is particular, not universal; it is not about the past or future. However, truth is universal, and is about the past, present and future. "[Truth] not only does it defy time; it defies space as well, for if communication is to be possible, the identical truth must be in two minds at once. If, in opposition, anyone wishes to deny that an immaterial idea can

exist in two minds at once, his denial must be conceived to exist in his own mind only; and since it has not registered in any other mind, it does not occur to us to refute it.”⁷⁵

I will not bore the reader with history, but a quick statement might be helpful. The western world has been abandoning the Christian starting point for empiricism for hundreds of years. Empiricism is the mother of science, or is it? At any rate, the West began to see empiricism as the foundation for all the nice things science was doing. However, when David Hume came out and showed that empiricism led to skepticism about reality, it began to erode the West’s confidence in knowledge itself. The Christian system with deduction was abandoned, and now the West’s new lover, empiricism, was shown to make knowledge skeptical. Rather than going back to God in repentance, the West, kept naively waiting for a future discovery to show Hume was wrong. However, since it was the starting point itself that led to the skepticism, no amount of time will rectify empiricism’s skepticism. In the 1700’s Kant tried to hybrid Christianity and science(empiricism). This is a simplification, but he tried to solve the skepticism of empiricism with a little dose of the biblical doctrine of innate knowledge and innate categories. He uses the idea of innate categories like a rationalism approach to combine it with empiricism. In this since, because the idea of innate knowledge is from the bible, Kant’s empiricism/rationalism hybrid is also an empiricism/bible hybrid. It obviously failed. If any amount of a human starting point is mixed in, then validity is always destroyed. The conclusion will always be a non-sequitur. Therefore, since empiricism leads to skepticism, this hybrid also led Christianity into skepticism. In the next century, the philosopher Kierkegaard noticed this. And so, what did he do? He began the process of giving up on knowledge. Kierkegaard began to embrace irrationalism, and skepticism as part of Christianity. The idea that faith was irrational was born.

Yet, all this nonsense is from the foundational mistake of making a dual epistemology of God’s Revelation and Empiricism. The result is that most of Christianity in the Western world has willfully chosen not to give up their harlotry with empiricism, and so, ever since Kierkegaard, there has been a steady increase in skepticism and irrationalism. This has happened both in the Church and the world. I recall a few years ago a study done by World Magazine. To the shock of the secular reviewers, the study found that students in America were both skeptical about Christianity and Evolution. This outcome was predictable. Skepticism is the fruit of empiricism.

And so, one way to sum up the last few hundred years in the West, would be to call it the Age of Irrationalism. To put this into more context. Both Plato and Aristotle, fought the skepticism in their day. When Christianity took over it began to wipe out skepticism, due to the singular starting point of God’s revelation and deduction from it. Even the famous St. Augustine of Hippo would battle the few remaining skeptics in the 400s. However, at this time, skepticism and irrationalism, was a small minority. In the last few hundred years, with the West abandoning a pure Scriptural starting point, the West has in essence reverted back to the way they thought thousands of years before Christianity started.

For us today this can be seen when people make overly, super, humble statements about, “our knowledge is only an analogy of God.” What these super pious zealots

⁷⁵ Gordon Clark, “A Christian View of Men & Things,” (2005, pg.223). Published by The Trinity Foundation.

don't realize is that, this would mean "our knowledge is only analogy of God," is also only an analogy of God, and so, for it to be true, it would also have to be false at the same time. And yet again, irrationalism fails.

An argument from analogy is in fact an irrational invalid argument.

[X, R, T, and F all have characteristic 1, 2, and 3. Also, X, R and T have characteristic 4. Thus, F has characteristic 4 as well.]

The problem with an invalid argument from analogy is when one takes it further.

Our knowledge is an analogy of God's. If meant as an argument, then it is fallacious. "God's knowledge includes a, b, c, and d. Our human knowledge also has knowledge, a, b, c. Therefore, our knowledge also includes God's d." This is a stupid and invalid conclusion. If the "d" included things that "God has chosen not to reveal," then man does not have that knowledge. Again, the argument of analogy fails.

However, if not meant as a technical "argument from analogy," but as an "illustration," then the problem remains.

Clark dealt with this previously; however, it also ties into the next point about bad use of TAG arguments. The basic idea is that to use a non-biblical starting point, to prove God, will never be rational. It will always result in a conclusion that is not sound, and that commits category fallacies. They will be non-sequitur conclusions that have more information in them than what the premises (provided by the non-biblical starting point) provide.

To start with man's observations. This is the foundational problem. Again, to start with man's experience and observations, man will say, "This is how "existence" is, or this is the conclusion/definition of existence." However, God's existence is not how we observe it, because God is separate from His creation and is invisible. If this is the case, then the existence of God's knowledge is different from the existence of our knowledge. Based on this, some morons will say our knowledge is an analogy of God's. Or knowledge is not exactly like God's. If that is the case, then it leads to skepticism, but skepticism denies the law of noncontradiction. This is of course, impossible with reality. Does man think the knowledge, "Jesus was born in Bethlehem," but when God thinks this knowledge, it means, "Jesus was born in Egypt?"

Some might say God knows so much more about a knowledge, that it becomes a different knowledge. This is of course, barrel of the bottom stupid. Just because I know advance Calculus, does not mean that my knowledge of " $2 + 2 = 4$," is any different than from the first day I understood it. I have gained more knowledge about math, but my understanding of basic math is no different than when I learned it in grammar school. God knows an infinite amount of things about premises and connections to other premises, I do not. This has no necessary connection that the premises I know are different from the premises that God has revealed. OR that is, if a math teacher knows much more than their students about math, does that mean, the students understanding of " $2 + 2$ always $= 4$," is only an analogy from the teacher. Of course not. As long as both assent to the truth of addition, the understanding is the same.

Some people, being man-centered start with “man,” for understanding rather than God. It is often Christians who say things like “sola scriptura,” that often play the harlot on this. If one starts with Scripture, then we learn God calls what He has revealed as truth; He cannot lie. We learn that God knows Himself by His “Spirit.” Yet, God has given us His Spirit, so that we know the things God as freely given us. Paul then says, “you have the mind of Christ.” God has knowledge about things He has freely given us. God knows this by His Spirit, and not something else. For us to know about this as God knows about it, God gave us His Spirit, The same Spirit that is the foundation for God to know Himself. We have the same foundation. Thus, we know the things God as freely given us, as God knows it. We have the Mind of Christ.

In fact, this is precisely how Paul says it, *“things which we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people. But the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to understand them, because they are spiritually discerned,”* (2 Corinthians 2:13-14 LEB). Knowledge comes from God as spiritual and intellectual, and we receive it as spiritual and intellectual. The passage did not say “God gives knowledge as spiritual, but the Christian receives this in a natural human way.” The non-Christian receives knowledge, in a human way; thus, they do not know God. For the Christian, who is a new creation, we receive God’s knowledge by spiritual power and ability. Human limitations for knowledge have been destroyed for the Christian, by the unstoppable Ability of the Spirit of God. For Paul to say the receiving and ability of this is the same for both parties (God and the Christian, by the Spirit), and then for someone to conclude “different,” is plus ultra stupid.

God is the foundation for learning, not man's limitations. Man-centered people judge reality by their limitations. As wicked as it sounds, they even Judge God by their limitations. Faith, however, judges what they can do, by God's ability.

“God is the foundation for theology, not man.” God can make man from a rock. God’s ability means He can do more than jump over a wall; God can go right through it and or teleport on the other side. There is no limitations with God. God can make man know Him, because GOD is the sovereign and powerful foundation that makes this happen, not man’s limitations. Man being able to know God in truth and precision is based on the foundation of God’s ability not man’s. This is the essence of faith. It starts with seeing God’s revelation and not believing what you see in your observations. It makes God’s limitless power and love, the measuring rod to know what is possible for man. The new covenant says God will be our personal teacher and tutor, so that we “Know God.” The measure is not man, but God’s ability and power to make man know. All things are possible with God. If God wants man to know Him with the same knowledge, (although not as a beginningless infinite) God has the power to make it happen. We are to judge the measure of a Christian, by God’s limitless power, not the old man’s limitations.

Many Christians are their own worst enemies. They are habitually man-centered. They judge everything by man’s limitations, man’s speculations and man’s superstitions. Then when their system of thinking does not add up, they let God take the disgrace by crying out, “it’s a mystery, paradox” and so on. They will have their just reward one day, for their continual ridicule and mockery of God.

True humility starts with Epistemology.

The sleight of hand that many of these man-centered theologians hide behind is the idea of being “humble” before God. Humility starts with believing what the Christian starting point says. That is, before humility is a pragmatic action it is first an intellectual abandoning of your human starting point and starting with Scripture. Humility starts at epistemology and then goes to action. This is why repentance to God’s command to be saved and converted is humility, because in this the sinner abandons his excuses, and then starts with how Scripture describes man, sin and salvation in Jesus Christ. True humility always starts here. Therefore, since the Bible says that we know God by His Spirit (the same way God knows Himself), then to say our knowledge is an analogy of God’s, is not only invalid, but it is the pinnacle of pride, arrogance and man-centeredness.

Humility always starts with truth. Paul says we live(continually) by faith and not sight. No matter what the issue is about reality, humility starts by abandoning what you observe and calculate, by throwing it into the garbage. For it is truly trash. Then you go to the God’s word to find out what it says about that it. If this does not happen first, then you are kidding yourself about living a humble life before God. Living by “faith and not sight,” includes standing on God’s promises and everything He has revealed. Hebrews says by faith we know God created reality out of nothing, by His power. Thus, to live by faith and not sight is to start with what God says about reality. Faith starts with how God defines the world, animals, trees, man and all things. If you do not start here, then humility does not start.

Thus, for people who desire to be humble, the application is simple. Examine all that you think you know that came by your observations and trash them. Read the Scripture and on every point and doctrine affirm its truths. When Paul says that Jesus was our substitute in poverty, so that by this substitution we might be wealthy (2 Corin 8:9), you are humble when you acknowledge this. You are more humble if you use faith to manifest this truth of wealth in your life. You are arrogant if you fail to do so. The path of arrogance is to deny God’s revelation because you observed something different.

Some do not even try to hide that they are spiritual sellouts with empiricism and human speculation and human superstition. With a straight face they ask me, “*why do we not see so many miracles today, unless God does not want it?*” They are like the people from Jesus’ hometown who said, “This is Joseph’s and Mary’s son,” and then in unbelief demand He prove by miracles who He claims to be. But their unbelief made that impossible. These peers did not start with God’s revelation; rather, their starting point for knowledge was their human observations. Scripture records it was due to their lack of faith, and not the lack of Jesus being willing and able to heal.

With such people I am asking myself, what happen to starting with God’s revelation for knowledge? Where did God go? Why is it so automatic for them to start with a “human” speculation and “human” superstition? If they only mean to do a personal attack (a logical fallacy) by saying, “*Oshea (or Johnny), how many miracles have you done,*” then why do they default to argumentation that the politicians use? Is it because politicians are such good examples for how to argue for truth? They are like the religious leaders who slapped Jesus and demanded He prove His claim as God by prophesying. They harlot themselves with David Hume’s empiricism in the open streets, and then march back in their pulpits, and after wiping off their sweaty faces,

they say with a straight face, “solo scriptura.” Maybe if they could stop humping on empiricism for just a few seconds, they might wake up and realize the disgrace they are committing against their own souls, and against those who hear them.

But for you, start with God’s revelation and believe Him. He wants you to know about all His benefits and to rely on Him to be faithful to fulfill all His promises, including both the spiritual and material ones.

THIRD. Bad use of TAG Arguments:

To put this into context that more might recognize, the self-authenticating method to demonstrate the law of non-contradiction is a type of presuppositional or TAG/ Transcendental argument. “I deny the LoC.” However, to say this I must use the law of contradiction, otherwise, terms such as “I” could mean something like “fish,” and “non-fish,” and the statement could mean the opposite, “I affirm the LoC,” or just nonsense, “Your mom is a fish.” It shows that the person denying the LoC is using or that is, “presupposing” it to deny it. The LoC demonstration also avoids begging the question, because our opponent conveniently provides the premise (as long as they say anything), not us. The history of philosophy is full of both Christians and non-Christians using forms of presuppositional arguments; however, they are, at least in my experience, always using a non-Christian starting point to do it. This is embarrassing for those historical Christians who made this mental blunder. Why did they not even consider, as a Christian, to start by presupposing God’s revelation? Why is this so difficult for so-called Christians to think about the sovereign God who has revealed Himself, “hey, I am presupposing Him in all that I do and think”?

Most of these non-Christian starting points, which the historic Christians have used, is either empiricism or rationalism. Of the two, using rationalism is the least fatal mistake to make, because the laws of logic give no content; they give no subject; they give no predicate. The laws of logic have no knowledge, it is only about how thinking is structured. Logic does not even give the subjects and predicates to even intelligently discuss the topic of logic. For such knowledge logic must go to a higher first premise, or to the starting point that makes talking about logic intelligible. Thus, to make this mistake, which St. Augustine of Hippo made (Plato as a non-Christian), is problematic, but not fatal, because although in principle this makes logic (equal to as in epistemology dualism) or more foundational than God in knowledge, it gives no knowledge. It gives no knowledge, to contradict Scripture in essence.

This other starting point of empiricism(observation with induction) is however, a fatal mistake. The non-Christians who made this mistake popular was Socrates, Aristotle, and David Hume. Christians who follow him were the famous Catholic St. Thomas. Others seeing the weakness in these two epistemologies, tried to hybrid empiricism and rationalism, but rather than multiplying their so-called strengths, all they did was multiply the ways they are irrational, stupid and delusional. Most Christians, I would suppose have some form of empiricism in their starting point for knowledge, and thus, use it to some extent in their use of presuppositional type apologetics.

Empiricism is both irrationally stupid and a blaspheme at the level of knowledge and causality. But this will be dealt with more later. Empiricism both contradicts God

Himself, and it contradicts God's revelation. It is in essence atheism. There is a reason why atheist like David Hume use empiricism (a human starting point) for atheism; rather than, the bible (a God starting point). To use Atheism to somehow prove God is nonsense. To use irrationalism to prove deduction is nonsense. To use Buddhism, to prove that Christianity is exclusive is nonsense. To use x, which contradicts God, to prove God is plus ultra stupid.

Beyond this act of Christians using atheism in their own use of TAG's to somehow prove God, there is a more basic problem with how most use these type of trash arguments. The mistake is that even if true, it does not prove "your" worldview is true, because it still leaves out the possibility of other worldviews to be true. Remember the section on the self-authenticating nature of the Scripture? There Vincent Cheung pointed out that in a statement of truth, " $2 + 2 = 4$ " there is only one correct answer and an infinite number of possible wrong ones. All the presuppositional arguments that I have seen, do not eliminate the infinite possible wrong answers. They simply eliminate that 7, 93, and 8 are not the right ones. Then they "*put more information into the conclusion*" (i.e. invalid/non-sequitur) and say, because 7 and 93 are wrong; therefore, 15 must be true. Yet such an argument is worthless, because a presuppositional argument is meant to show you are presupposing "my" position. And thus, it is a trash level argument.

Here is a basic type of presuppositional argument I might see (although they can vary).

(X = an epistemology, and Y= an epistemology)

X - is false by contradiction.

Y - is false by contradiction.

U - Bible is not contradictory.

Q - without truth nonsense results, but nonsense is impossible.

R - The (U) Bible does not rely on X or Y;

Therefore, the Bible is true and all others false.

This is a mistake. First the positive claim in the conclusion, is **not a valid inference** from our premises. The conclusion is a non-sequitur. Second, it could as easily mean that epistemology (T, G, or possible H) might be true.

Atheist and Empiricist often make this same mistake in their generic use of a TAG argument, to show that Christians presuppose their epistemology of empiricism. It is often in context of atheist saying to a Christian, "when you read the bible, the knowledge is not coming from God, but from YOUR SENSATION. You must read the letters in the bible, or hear someone say them. Empiricism is your foundation, not God. Empiricism is the foundation for naturalism not theism."

Their argument could look like this, or some form like it:

A.1. "If X (EMPIRICISM) is false, then nonsense results; [i.e. you must use your eyes to read the Bible to get knowledge (etc.)]

A.2. Nonsense is impossible or unacceptable;

A.3. Therefore, X (Empiricism) is true."

Or like this.

- E.1. You must presuppose X (the senses for knowledge), or nonsense results.
- E.2. Christianity denies X but affirms God's sovereignty.
- E.2.a. Christians must use X to get knowledge about God by reading the Bible.
- E.2.b. Christianity reduces to nonsense.
- E.3. Atheism has X.
- E.4. Thus, Atheism is true.

Again, this is **not a valid inference**. The positive claim in the conclusion has more information in it than what the premises provide. It is a non-sequitur. Also, *even if* nonsense is impossible, epistemology T, or O, or N might not lead to nonsense, and thus, empiricism could be just a fantasy and N be true.

The big idea about this mistake, is that the burden of proof in this type of argument is that you must prove your epistemology "is being presupposed." This type of TAG argument does not logically/necessarily show that empiricism is being "presupposed," thus, there is no logical warrant to use it. Because there is no logical warrant to use it, it has no logical value to say that another worldview is using it.

The Scripture says you can know for certain that it is true; yet, empiricism (your observations) cannot give certainty. The Scripture and your empiricism are two different contradictory epistemologies. Paul says in 1 Corinthians that man with this wisdom could not know God. Man's wisdom starts with himself and what he observes, then irrationally argues from this. In philosophy verbiage, this is 'empiricism' as an epistemology, and 'inductive reasoning' for a conclusion. It is, through and through, a philosophy of man.

All theology is a doctrine from fallen man? Oh no!!

Getting beyond the immediate contradiction for an opponent to say, "*all theology is a doctrine from fallen man*," is a doctrine from fallen man, the other issue is GOD. It is odd that when so-called Christians discuss GOD that GOD is the last thing on their mind, and GOD with His power and intelligence and love is only taped on to their argument as an afterthought. Even an unbeliever comprehends that the bible starts with GOD, "and God said." What is happening in such critiques, is that God's limitless ability is being swallowed up by man's limitation. Man's limitation is made to be greater than God's power. This is the opposite that the Bible teaches. The one true limitation man has, due to man not being God himself, is that man cannot hold an infinite number of propositions in a thought at the same moment, but that has nothing to do with the issue at hand.

In the new covenant God promises to be our teacher. God's limitless ability to teach and make us understand is infinitely greater than our fallen limitation. God is greater

than man. Let me say that again, God is greater than man. How can Christians not know this? Paul, referring to the "mature Christian," not those who can only take milk, says in 1 Corinth. 2 that we have "the Mind of Christ." Not man's limited mind, but God's Mind.

Also, Jesus evaluates the theology of the Jewish leaders with logic (Mark 12:35-37) to show that their theology was wrong, by using the law of noncontradiction. Also, Jesus used a deductive argument from the Old Testament to show that the theology of the resurrection is true. The point is that Jesus did not prove the theology of resurrection was true by appealing to His authority as God saying, "As God I testify this is the truth." No, by using a valid deduction Jesus proved that a particular theology was correct. We can do the same, who have the Mind of Christ, and have exercised our minds to know what is good and evil.

A theological maximum that should always be considered is that:

"God is the foundation of theology not man."

2. Metaphysics/Ontology.

Metaphysics, as described in the definition section, is about reality. Ontology is about the subcategory under this, which is about causality, or that is, how particular aspects of reality interacts relative to other aspects of reality, and then ultimately with God.

This section will continue with the Nature/Attributes of God. These were kept for this section because of their relative importance to God's sovereignty/power. Next, we will investigate how (1) Creation, (2) Man and even (3) salvation are subcategories of God's sovereignty. For example, how God uses His absolute control regarding creation, regarding man and salvation.

God's Sovereignty

Continuation of God's Attributes

Trinity:

The reason the Trinity is categorized under metaphysics and ontology, rather than epistemology, is because of the metaphysical and ontological application of the Trinity that will be made regarding salvation.

There's a reason why this doctrine could be placed under the category of epistemology. Indeed, the best way to describe the distinction of the Trinity is that they affirm for themselves a different set of invisible propositions. For example, the Father assents, "I am the Father." The Father doesn't affirm, "I am the Spirit or the Son." The Son assents, "I am the Son," and doesn't assent, "I am the Father." The Spirit assents, "I am the Spirit," and doesn't assent, "I am the Son." Their assenting only to propositions with their personal names is the most rudimentary or fundamental distinction that makes God a Trinity. Jesus also says, "He and the Father are one." Thus, Jesus affirms a distinction of personal propositions but also affirms they're one in the divine nature, meaning they're not separate in nature. Thus, the Christian definition of what One God means is one in the divine nature.

The Trinity all have and share the same infinite power, immutability, all-knowing, and spiritual nature. The Trinity isn't physical material. When the Trinity created, they were there, and all things were created by the members of the Trinity. Thus, the Trinity created all things. Therefore, there's no logical division of a physical nature or of ownership.

"The Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct "persons" because they represent three systems of consciousness. To illustrate, all three knew that Christ would die on the cross to save the chosen ones, but God the Father or God the Spirit did not

think, "I will die on the cross to save the chosen ones." Instead, they thought, "He will" – that is, the Son – "die on the cross to save the chosen ones." On the other hand, God the Son affirmed the same thought in the first person: "I will die on the cross to save the chosen ones." Thus although all three members possess omniscience, they have different relationships to the known propositions."⁷⁶

They all know the same propositions, but they have a different relationship or relation to the known propositions. Each member has the same infinite propositions, but each has a distinct (I or You, Me) assenting to some of the same propositions (the Mind, or system of propositions). This provides a foundation of what a mind is. It is a system of propositions and the relationship of assenting to them.⁷⁷ Man, being made in God's image, is made from this Trinitarian foundation. This is what makes man, made in God's image, at the rudimentary level. From this, we can see why we, who are made in God's image, were taught about God by propositions and faith in them (assenting to them) (Scripture), rather than pictures or some other sensation. The Trinity is the foundation for man's image, not the other way around.

This also displays the order or structure of how the system of propositions operates in the Trinity. They're non-contradictory. The Father doesn't affirm, "I am the Son or Spirit," and vice versa. Thus, the operation of the mind of the Trinity is rational. Man is also made in this image of structure and reasoning for their system of propositions.

The Trinity's a metaphysical masterclass—three distinct consciousnesses vibing with the same divine playlist but hitting different "I" or "He" notes. It's the blueprint for our minds, wired for propositional truth, not sensory skepticism. Non-contradictory and razor-sharp, God's rational setup shapes our image—stick to faith-fueled propositions, not fuzzy observations.

Scripture shows the Trinity, in proximity in passages.

"The (1) Spirit of the Lord (2) Yahweh is upon (3) me," (Isaiah 61:1).

"Now after he was baptized, Jesus immediately went up from the water, and behold, the heavens opened and he saw the (1) Spirit of God descending like a dove coming upon him. And behold, there was a (2) voice from heaven saying, 'This is my beloved (3) Son, with whom I am well pleased,'" (Matthew 3:16-17).

"The grace (favor and spiritual blessing) of the (1) Lord Jesus Christ and the love of (2) God and the presence and fellowship (the communion and sharing together, and participation) in the (3) Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen (so be it)," (2 Corinthians 13:14)

The Old Testament taught that the Messiah isn't merely human but much more, as Jesus pointed out in Mark 12:35-37. Thus, O.T. passages in Isaiah that speak of THE Servant of God bringing redemption are understood in this light. With distinct passages showing the Father, the Spirit, and the Son, the O.T. has a doctrine of the Trinity. The New Testament makes this even clearer. The Father sends NOT Himself but the Spirit to His Son. Thus, all three members of the Trinity were part of man's

⁷⁶ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. 66.

⁷⁷ This will also help us understand the incarnation of Jesus Christ, which will be mentioned later.

salvation. Hence, 2 Corinthians 13:14 is a Christian prayer/doxology with all three members.

This also gives us a logical priority within the Trinity. The Father is said to have sent both the Son and the Spirit. The Son is said to have sent the Spirit but never the Father. In fact, Jesus says, “The Father is greater than I,” is meant in this priority sense. The Spirit is never said to have sent the Father or the Son. The Father is never said to proceed from the Son or the Spirit. The Son is said to have been from the Father, but not the Spirit. And the Spirit is said to be from the Father and the Son. Lastly, the Spirit, in the human ministry of Jesus, is said to have empowered the Son.

“The Sacred Three are distinguished from each other by their personal properties. It is the personal property of the Father to beget the Son.—Ps. 2:7. It is the personal property of the Son to be eternally begotten of the Father.—John 1:14. It is the personal property of the Holy Ghost to proceed eternally from the Father and the Son.—John 15:26; Gal. 4:6. These are called personal properties, to distinguish them from the essential perfections of Deity.”⁷⁸

From this, Jonathan Edwards said something to the effect that the Spirit is the infinite joy/love shared between the Son and the Father. If we move past the emotion part, which we have already addressed, and focus on the mere mental fellowship and relationship between the Father and Son, we will still see a similar conclusion to Edwards’ point. If the thoughts of the Trinity are infinite ability and power itself—and they are—then consider the consequence that the Spirit is the back-and-forth fellowship of the Trinity, from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father. This is why the Bible says, “Not by power but by My Spirit, says Yahweh.” This is because the Spirit is, unstoppable power itself. If God thinking about creating the worlds was unstoppable power that caused them to exist, and the Spirit is the thinking of the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father in fellowship, then the Spirit is power. The Spirit is this power in constant motion between the Father and Son, and Son and Father. It’s not that the Spirit is infinite moving power and the Father and Son are not; rather, due to the relational aspect of the Spirit, He can be said to have this constant powerful motion. This is no exception on earth; on earth, the Spirit is the constant relational thoughts from the Father to the Son and the Son to the Father. The same applies to the Christian. The Spirit is the power of God’s loving fellowship shared with the Christian and from the Christian back to the Father.

The Trinity’s a cosmic brain trust—Father, Son, and Spirit vibing as one divine nature with distinct “I” and “He” scripts, powering salvation’s blockbuster. The Spirit’s the intellectual and favor-fueled turbo between them, zapping Christians with the same juice.

Think about this: The Spirit has been given in an overly abundant measure to the elect in Christ. The Christians is a powerhouse.

Because the Trinity Thinks So.

The Trinity is intellectual, spiritual, and powerful. That is, it wasn’t a physical arm that made the worlds; rather, it was a spiritual, intellectual system of propositions

⁷⁸ Robert Shaw in his, *Exposition of the Westminster Confession*, Christian Heritage 2008, or found at: www.reformed.org/documents/shaw (Italics added)

that made everything. The moment God thought, “Let there be light, (now),” countless stars were born. The power, thoughts, and decrees of God are the same thing. When we combine this truth with God being the Logic, it means He cannot lie because He’s positive attributes have no end, no limitations with unstoppable power and no contradictions. Nothing is impossible for Him. There’s no greater source of absolute raw power, clear definition, permanence and ability than, “God Thinks So.”

Errors about the Trinity.

Thus, the Trinity is non-contradictory because the categories (yes, this idea of categories raises its head again) of Divine Nature and affirming a different set of propositions in relation to the system of propositions are TWO different categories. Thus, there’s no possibility for a contradiction or contrariety. For example, if I were to say, “God is 1 being and 3 beings,” that’s the same category, so it would be a contradiction or contrariety, depending on how it’s said. That, however, isn’t the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity. To attack that definition is to attack a strawman. If attacked willfully this way, such a person is bottom-of-the-barrel stupid.

Also, some try to be overly humble and say there appears to be a contradiction or an apparent one. This is nonsense because the doctrine of the Trinity doesn’t affirm the same thing in two different ways. To attribute a paradox to Scripture when it doesn’t say there’s a paradox is to blaspheme and add to Scripture what it doesn’t say. A paradox is an autobiographical confession of one’s own limitations. It’s sinful to take your personal experience and insult Scripture as if it didn’t intelligently and clearly teach the doctrine.

Some think the definition of monotheism can include a non-Trinitarian definition. Scripture is true because it says so. Because everyone is already presupposing Scripture, and Scripture says all others are false, the Trinity is the only definition and the only possible definition for what “monotheism” could be. To suggest otherwise, you must use Scripture to speak anything with intelligibility; but this Scripture says only the Trinity is monotheism. “The Lord your God is One.” The Trinity is the only definition of a “monotheistic” God that could ever exist. All other ideas for what a “monotheistic God” is are impossible, stupid, and irrational. Wait. What? You thought monotheism could be defined as a non-Trinity? Seriously, how stupid can you be?

Non-Trinitarian monotheism? That’s a logical faceplant—Scripture’s Trinity is the only God game in town, and strawman attacks just scream “I’m stupid.”

All-knowing:

God knows all propositions. He knows all the relations between propositions, which are themselves propositions. God is all-knowing.

“For us to “think through” something implies a process, or a succession of ideas in our mind where one thought leads to another. And the fact that our minds are finite means that we can hold only a limited number of propositions in our immediate consciousness at any moment. But since God is timeless, all knowledge exists before his mind as an eternal intuition. And since he

possesses unlimited intellectual power, he is able to hold all propositions in his immediate consciousness at all times. Thus the mind of God perceives all things with exhaustive clarity and depth, including things that pertain to our future.”⁷⁹

The reason for including this in the section on metaphysics is due to how it relates to power and ability. Think about how much power and ability a computer processor needs to handle many calculations. The heat it produces shows, in a pragmatic (albeit irrational) way, the power it’s using. It’s an immeasurable volume of ability or power to know an infinite number of propositions clearly, perfectly, and in precise order. Since God is Spirit, intellectual, and power (and not material), we understand from Scripture that God’s thinking or intellect is raw power and ability. In fact, God’s thoughts, decrees, and power are, in essence, the same thing. God, as said before, is timeless, and thus He knows all propositions in an eternal intuitive thought. To calculate the power it takes to do this with an infinite number of propositions and their relations would be equally infinite or immeasurable. So, before we even get to creation, God is already a motion of unstoppable power and ability by merely thinking.

When formulating systematic doctrines, the basics start with, well, the basics. Even well-known theologians seem to forget this. If your footwork isn’t good, learning more advanced handwork won’t improve your Wing Chun. The basics are the laws of logic. Hebrews says in chapter 7, “beyond all contradiction.” Remember how Paul says, “Do not even let there be a hint of sexual immorality among you” in Ephesians chapter 5? The writer of Hebrews is doing the same with contradictions. He emphasizes there’s not even a hint of a contradiction in what he’s preaching. So, in systematic doctrine, we haven’t even begun to formulate a doctrine if it can’t pass the non-contradictory test.

We know Scripture teaches that God is immutable, so God’s knowledge must be non-contradictory, including all propositions and relations between them. When you affirm a contradiction, you’re affirming “X” and then affirming “X is non-X,” but to do this is to deny both, and then to do this is, again, to affirm both (etc.). It means your mind is constantly changing (mutable) in an infinite regress of affirming and denying both. A 50/50 or “maybe” affirmation of a proposition isn’t knowing a proposition as true or false. If it’s “maybe” but later turns into a yes or no, then your knowledge is mutable. For God’s knowledge to be immutable, He must know all propositions as true or false.

Also, premises can’t be learned, for then God would be mutable. In fact, Scripture also teaches that God knows the future because He’s already decided on and decreed the future. Romans 8 says that God first “foreloved” and then “predestined.” Thus, predestination is a consequent of the antecedent of foreloving/affirming His own decisions about the elect. God has a plan and then decrees/predestines all propositions needed to achieve this end. When their appointed times come, God causes these to happen. God repeatedly says that He predicts the future, which sets Him apart from false gods and shows Him as the true God.

God’s mind is an infinite supercomputer, nailing every proposition with zero lag—His thoughts are pure power, no cooling fan needed. Contradictions? Not a whiff in His immutable genius.

⁷⁹ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 68.

“Even if one cries to it for help, yet [the idol] cannot answer or save him out of his distress.

[Earnestly] remember this, be ashamed and own yourselves guilty; bring it again to mind and lay it to heart, O you rebels!

[Earnestly] remember the former things, [which I did] of old; for I am God, and there is no one else; I am God, and there is none like Me,

Declaring the end and the result from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure and purpose,

Calling a ravenous bird from the east—the man [Cyrus] who executes My counsel from a far country. Yes, I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;

I have purposed it, and I will do it,
(Isiah 46:7-11 AMP Classic).⁸⁰

I have declared from the beginning the former things [which happened in times past to Israel]; they went forth from My mouth and I made them known; then suddenly I did them, and they came to pass [says the Lord].

Because I knew that you were obstinate, and your neck was an iron sinew and your brow was brass,

Therefore I have declared things to come to you from of old; before they came to pass I announced them to you, so that you could not say, My idol has done them, and my graven image and my molten image have commanded them, (Isaiah 48:3-5 AMP).

“In [Christ] lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, (Colossians 2:3 NLT).

“He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit,” (Psalm 147:4-5 NIV).

Jonathan Edwards points out God’s decrees the sins of men. And so, if God decreed them, He knows them. Election will be looked at more in detail, but as Edwards points out, Election presupposes both foreknowledge and choice.

You cannot have a proposition without a subject. Election is about people, whom God has destined for His own ends, whether for joy or damnation. You cannot rationally claim God elects this ‘x’ (subject) to salvation (predicate), if there is no person for the subject. But God knows all propositions.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Emphasis added by author.

⁸¹ Also, if God chose the best option for this created world (the one that values His Son with the best possible love and public supremacy), then all other possible worlds are impossible, because this world is the one God wants.

[§ 30.] God decrees all things, and even all sins. Acts 2:23, *"Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death."* Acts 4:28, *"To do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."* If the scripture means only that Christ's sufferings should come to pass by some means or other; I answer, they could not come to pass but by sin, for contempt and disgrace was one thing he was to suffer. Therefore, even the free actions of men are subject to God's disposal. Proverbs 21:1, *"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes."* See Jeremiah 52:3, *"For because of the anger of the LORD this happened in Jerusalem and Judah, till He finally cast them out from His presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon."* The fact of people not complying with the terms of the covenant of grace is decreed, 1 Peter 2:8, *"A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense. They stumbled, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed."* What man determines, never comes to pass, unless God determines it, Lamentations 3:37, *"Who is he who speaks and it comes to pass, When the Lord has not commanded it?"* By commanding here, it means willed: God is elsewhere said to speak, and it was done; to command, and it stood fast. God determines the limits of men's lives. This is exceedingly evident. Job 7:1, *"Is there not a time of hard service for man on earth? Are not his days also like the days of a hired man?"* Days of a hireling signify an appointed, certain, limited time, just as Isaiah 16:14 and 21:16. If the limits of men's lives are determined, men's free actions must be determined, and even their sins, for their lives often depend on such acts. See also Job 14:5.

[§ 35.] As to the decrees of election, see Psalm 65:4, *"Blessed is the man You choose, And cause to approach You, That he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Of Your holy temple."* Isaiah 41:9, *"You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its farthest regions, And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away.'" Matthew 20:16, "So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen."* Chap. 22:14, *"For many are called, but few are chosen."* Chap. 24:24 *"For false christ's and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."* John 6:37-46, *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" &c. Chap. 10:3, 4, and verse 11, and 14-17, verse 26-30, "To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice... I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. Therefore, My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again... But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you." &c. Chap. 17:6-20, "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word...I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word."* Acts 18:10, *"for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."*

As to reprobation, see Matthew 11:20-27, *"Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not*

repent...Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” John 6:44-46, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day...No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.” Chap. 8:47, “He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.” Chap. 10:26, “But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.” Chap. 17:9-13, “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.” See 1 Thessalonians 5:9 “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:8, “A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense.” They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.” Jude 1:4, “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. (KJV)” 1 John 4:6, “We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” Revelation 3:8, “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.” Chap. 20:12-15, “And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds...And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” John 12:37-41, “But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him...because Isaiah said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes...These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.” Roman 9:6-8, 11-14, 16-19 verses 21-24 verses 27, 29, 33, “But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed... for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who call. It was said to her, “The older shall serve the younger.”...What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not... So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy...You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?”...Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?”... even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel... Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved”...And as Isaiah said before: “Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We would have become like Sodom, And we would have been made like Gomorrah”...As it is written: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.” And chapter 11:1-6 verses 7-11 verses 15,17,19-23 verses 32, 36, “I say then, has God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin...Even so then, at this present time

there is a remnant according to the election of grace...And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work... What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded...Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day...And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them"... And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree...You will say then, "The Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."...And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again...For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all... For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

[§ 39.] Concerning the decreeing of sin, see Acts 3:17, 18, with Acts 13:27, "*Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers...But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled...For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him*"

[§ 40.] It is objected, that this is a speculative point. So might they say, Jesus' being the Messiah, is a speculative point.

[§ 37.] God's foreknowledge appears from this, that God has foretold that there will be some good men.

[§ 48.] ...Christ is the head of all elect creatures. Thus, both angels and men are chosen in him in some sense, i.e. chosen to be in him. All elect men are said to be chosen in Christ, Ephesians 1:4. Election contains two things, namely, foreknowledge and predestination, which are distinguished in the 8th chapter of Romans. The one is choosing persons to be God's, which is a foreknowing [fore-loving] of them; and the other, a destining them to be conformed to the image of his Son, both in holiness and blessedness. The elect are chosen in him with respect to those two, in senses somewhat diverse. With respect to foreknowledge or fore-loving, we are chosen in him as God chose us, to be actually his in this way; namely, by being in Christ, or being members of his Son. This is the way that God determined we should actually become his. God chose Christ, and gave his elect people to him; and so, looking on them as his, owned them for his own. By predestination, which is consequent on his foreknowing, we are elected in Christ, as we are elected in his election. For God having in foreknowledge given us to Christ, he therefore, beheld us as members and parts of him. By ordaining the head to glory, he therein ordained the members to glory. In destining Christ to eternal life, he destined all parts of Christ to it also. Therefore, we are appointed to eternal life in Christ, being in

Christ, his members from eternity. In his being appointed to life, we are appointed to life. So Christ's election is the foundation of ours..⁸²

Again, the basic doctrine is that God knows all propositions.

"Have you never heard? Have you never understood?
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth
He never grows weak or weary.
No one can measure the depths of his understanding,"
(Isaiah 40:28 NLT).

"And no creature is hidden in the sight of him, but all things are naked and laid bare to the eyes of him to whom we must give our account,"
(Hebrews 4:13 LEB).

God knows all propositions about man and their thoughts. "*For the Lord searches all hearts and minds and understands all the wanderings of the thoughts,*" (1 Chronicles 28:9 AMP). "*O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord,*" (Psalm 139:1-4 NLT). God moves the hearts of man; thus, He knows them, or that God knows His own actions. "*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as are the watercourses; He turns it whichever way He wills,*" (Proverbs 21:1 AMP). God moves the feet of man; thus, He knows them, or that God knows His own actions. "*We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps,*" (Proverbs 16:9 NLT). God even controls the random throwing of a dice, thus, God knows what the outcome will be in seemingly accidental events because He is the one who made a choice about it, and then made it happened. "*The lot is cast into the lap, but the decision is wholly of the Lord [even the events that seem accidental are really ordered by Him],*" (Proverbs 16:33 AMP).

Paul says that we all live, move and have our existence "in God," and so how absurd would it be for God to not know Himself. This is not pantheism, but saying our existence, exists in God's, by power and choice. We are controlled by God's thoughts and power, but we are also separate from God. What God creates, is not Himself. Thus, He knows all propositions about man, for man moves in God, but God controls Himself, not something else. This is means for man to have so-called free-will would mean something must control God, must control His thoughts.

God is the foundation for Himself knowing all propositions, not man. God does not know what man does because of man. God knowing all things about man, is because God knows Himself and knows His own choices. God knows what man will do because God thought about the man, and predestined all his days, for the result that God decided for the man.

As for the application or doxology for this Vincent concludes,

⁸² Jonathan Edwards. "*The Divine Decrees in General and Election in Particular.*" A light modern editing done by author.

The omniscience of God makes it possible for the Christian's mind to become an altar of worship, constantly offering prayer and thanksgiving to God: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer" (Psalm 19:14); "The LORD detests the thoughts of the wicked, but those of the pure are pleasing to him" (Proverbs 15:26).⁸³

Infinite Unstoppable Power/Ability:

The attributes of God are without measure in how God possesses them, and He can express any of these in an infinite way. God's glory (or value) is described both as an internal possession and as a public outshining of this (similar to how Jesus is described as the "outshining" of the Father (Heb. 1:3)). God possesses His divine attributes in an infinite way; likewise, He can also make them go public in an infinite way.

God's internal glory/value is (1) Spiritual, (2) Intellectual, and (3) Powerful; and this is shared in the (4) relationship of the Trinity. This relational aspect of the Trinity is where I believe one can place the idea of "love"—not the emotion, but the mental disposition to always choose 'X' as your favorite and favor them.

Thus, infinity is most foundationally attached to God in these four things. Jonathan Edwards says it a little differently with different points on 2 and 3. However, his broad strokes about internal versus external and infinite are correct.

My warning with Edwards here is his attribution of emotion (emotional volition) to God. He seems to be under the idea that the "mind" consists of (1) knowledge, (2) willing, and (3) emotion. But this is an unbiblical presupposition that isn't deduced from Scripture. Willing and emotions are actions of the mind; they aren't the mind itself. As said before about the impassibility of God, it might be theoretically possible for God to have one passion in an immutable state (or God has such mastery of emotions that they're never up or down; but if so, they're so categorically different from ours that calling them emotions would be misleading), but to say you can deduce this from Scripture seems more like human speculation than knowledge. Since God is immutable, some form of impassibility is necessary for God. Not much more can be deduced from Scripture about this.

The Bible teaches that the inward part of man is the mind. The will and emotion are not things in themselves, but merely functions of the mind. To illustrate, digestion is not an organ apart from or within the stomach, but the stomach is the physical organ, and digestion is the function of this organ. Likewise, the mind is the inward and incorporeal part of man. Sometimes it becomes disturbed, and a disturbance of the mind affects how it thinks, often in a negative way. Therefore, the emotion is not good in itself. Although the Bible does not call all emotions sinful, many emotions can indeed be sinful, and sinful emotions often lead to other sins:

Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right,

⁸³ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 68.

sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."
(Genesis 4:6-7)

Christians do not need more emotions; they need more self-control. The Bible contains not nearly as many emotional words or phrases as people want to believe. Some people may even misinterpret the contentment in Philippians 4:12 as an emotional satisfaction, that is, before they realize that it is a Stoic word denoting indifference. And is "happy" even an emotion in the Bible? Love is not an emotion in the Bible, but a volition. The spiritual man is marked by self-control, and has achieved mastery over his emotions. **The mind of God is so integrated that he does only what he wills.** As we increase in faith and holiness, our emotion should increasingly come under our conscious control, so that we become excited because we decide to become excited, become angry because we decide to become angry, and we can stop when we decide to stop.⁸⁴

That the mind of God isn't disturbed by outside actions or by inward actions like emotions, and that God has perfect knowledge of His mind and infinite power to master/control His mind, means that "the mind of God is so integrated that He does only what He wills."

With that in mind, Edwards explains how God's infinity applies to His internal value and then to His ability to express this. The pinnacle of this expression is in the redeemed elect, knowing the Father through the Son and by the Spirit. Another aspect Edwards points out about God's infinite value is His regard for Himself. Since only God intrinsically possesses these valuable attributes in an immutable and infinite way, God, who has perfect understanding, thus understands how awesome He is. Therefore, God values Himself INFINITELY above all others.

Therefore, billions of wicked souls burning in hell are only a drop in the bucket in displaying God's value and the value of His plan to show the riches of His grace to His elect. Or, put another way, if God's plan to show off His value and the value of His unmerited favor to the elect requires billions of souls in hell, then God's infinite worth—and His knowledge of His infinite worth—makes it, by definition, an infinitely wise, righteous, and good choice.

God's mind is an unshakable fortress—zero drama, all control, and infinite swagger. Edwards nails it: God's boundless value shines brightest in the elect's redemptive glory, which is in return God's glory. Billions in hell? Just a footnote to God's epic self-love flex—His infinite worth makes it a no-brainer masterpiece.

We have no conception of God's *power*, different from the degree of these things, with a certain relation of them to effects. God's *infinity* is not properly a distinct kind of good, but only expresses the degree of good there is in Him. So God's *eternity* is not a distinct good; but is the duration of good. His *immutability* is still the same good, without a negation of change. So that, as I said, the fullness of the Godhead is the fullness of His (A) *understanding*, consisting in His (1) knowledge; and the fullness of His (B) *will* consisting in His (2) Holiness and (3) happiness.

⁸⁴ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 61. Emphasis added by author.

Therefore, God's internal glory being shown forth as His External glory consists in the communication of these 3 things. The communication of His knowledge is chiefly in giving the knowledge of Himself: for this is the knowledge in which the fullness of God's understanding chiefly consists.

Therefore it must chiefly consist in giving due respect to that Being to whom most is due; for God is infinitely the most worthy of regard. The worthiness of others is as nothing to Him; so that to Him belongs all possible respect. To Him belongs the whole of the respect that any intelligent being is capable of. To Him belongs ALL the heart... Consequently, it will follow, that the moral beauty of the nature, inclination, or affection of God CHIEFLY consists in a regard to HIMSELF, infinitely above His regard to all other beings; in other words, His holiness consists in this.⁸⁵

The doctrine of God's infinity means God is present everywhere. This means God is immediately close to all persons, whether in hate or love. This means if a sinner, is using his sexual organ for sin, God is present, by upholding their sexual organ in existence as they use it for sin. Or for the elect, as they pray, God's Spirit inside their soul causes them to cry out in faith, "abba Father."

Robert Reymond says regarding this,

Some have inferred God's attribute of omnipresence from his attribute of omnipotence and omniscience. For example, Richard Swinburne has argued:

A person who is omnipotent is able to bring about effects everywhere by basic actions. One who is omniscient at a certain time has justified true beliefs about things which are going on anywhere at any time.... An omniscient being does not depend for his knowledge on the correct functioning of intermediaries. Hence an omnipotent and omniscient person ... is of logical necessity an omnipresent spirit.

While such reasoning has value in that it demonstrates the coherence of God's attributes, one is not shut up to an inference as the ground for the Christian assertion of God's omnipresence. It is directly taught in Scripture:

Psalms 139:7-10: "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence [מִפְּנֵיךָ, *mippāneykā*]? If I go up to the heavens, you are there. If I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."

1 Kings 8:27: "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!"

⁸⁵ Jonathan Edwards, "The End for which God Created the World", Chapter 1, page 98, The Works of Jonathan Edwards -Volume 1, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995.
Emphasis and light editing done by author.

Proverbs 15:3: “The eyes of the LORD are everywhere [בְּכָל־מְקוֹם, *bəkol-māqôm*], keeping watch on the wicked and the good.”⁸⁶

Vincent correctly points out that God’s infinity is something that makes Him categorically different from the things He creates. Creation might be long; however, God’s infinite has always been, and will always be. The Greek gods were little more than a modern-day superman, but God is not like this. He is categorically different. Really big ability is categorically different from a beginning-less, infinite ability.

God possesses each divine attribute in an unlimited way and to an unlimited extent. This is the INFINITY of God. Psalm 119:96 says, “To all perfection I see a limit; but your commands are boundless,” and Psalm 147:5 says, “Great is our Lord, and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite” (NASB). God’s attributes are infinite and boundless.

For example, the doctrine of divine omnipotence indicates that God possesses unlimited power. What is infinite is not greater than the finite only in degree, but also in kind. A person who has a billion times the wealth of another still operates within human limitations and the monetary system, but one who has infinite resources operates on an altogether different level. A person who lives a thousand times longer than another person is still mortal, but one who is immortal is not greater only in degree, but also in kind.⁸⁷

Since we have already dealt with God’s power broadly, we will sum this section up as:

God is the foundation for all ability.

The Christian who is in Christ, judges what they can do by the measure of God’s ability in them. Can God jump or scale over a high city wall? Yes! Does God have the ability to tear down the huge gates that belong to a city? Absolutely. Then the believer can. “*For with you I can charge a troop, and with my God I can scale a wall,*” (Psalm 18:29 LEB). “*Samson ... took hold of the doors of the town gate, including the two posts, and lifted them up, bar and all,*” (Judges 16:3 NLT). Can a man sold as a slave end up as the second most powerful man in all Egypt? Humanly no. But with God’s ability there is nothing impossible for God’s beloved Children. Can God’s shadow heal people? Does man have this ability? “*As a result of the apostles’ work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter’s shadow might fall across some of them as he went by,*” (Acts 5:15 NLT). In fact, it is a command, not a suggestion, that Christians grab hold of God’s ability and wield it as their own. A Christian is to be a new and different creation. They are not to wield their strength; rather they are to operate in this life with God’s power. “*A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power,*” (Eph 6:10 NLT).

The Love and Hate of God:

One might ask, why not start with “creation” in a section about God’s sovereignty over all reality? God’s power/ability is first an intellectual ability. Creation, or the material,

⁸⁶ Reymond, R. L. (1998). A new systematic theology of the Christian faith (pp. 168–169). Nashville: T. Nelson.

⁸⁷ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 64.

comes later as a consequent. Not only does creation come later, but in the ordering of reality, the decree of creation comes last in God's ordered decisions. The intellectual power of God is seen in His mastery of His mind, His choices and in the relationship of the Trinity.

The supremacy of creation is Jesus Christ, as Paul says in Colossians chapter 1. However, right beneath Jesus, even included with Jesus as part of His body, are the elect sons of God. In this sense, the world was made for man. The Sabbath was made for man. This is why Paul says to the elect Corinthians, "All things are yours." It's also why Paul says that corrupted creation will be liberated into the valuable liberty of the sons of God, rather than just saying "God." We will see a circle diagram later, but you can visualize it now: "All things are inside the larger category of God's elect. The elect are inside the category of Jesus, and Jesus is inside the Father" (see 1 Corinthians 3:22-23). When we see this bullseye syllogism, we understand that all things belong to God, but they also belong to God's children.

As will be explained more in the section on the decrees, this means the elect would be the second decree for reality. The reprobate and all other created things come after and support these first two decrees. This shows that the love and hatred of God didn't come after God created but were before. They were at the very beginning of His decrees.

The love of God is a top-level order or policy, and thus, it affects the rest of the decrees that follow. Because God's ordering of the decrees has a rule or policy of "love" at the top level, it's important to discuss what the love and hatred of God are before moving to other aspects of how God "uses" His sovereign power.

"[Love and hate] are policies of [God's] thought and action. Since God is impassable, and his mind cannot be disturbed, it means that divine love is not a disturbance of the mind, but an intellectual disposition of favor and mercy. And hate is a disposition of disfavor and judgment."⁸⁸

Since God loves Himself the most, His policy of thought favors Him above all others. He has exalted His Word and Name above all creation, not someone else's. "For You have exalted above all else Your name and Your word, and You have magnified Your word above all Your name" (Psalm 138:2 AMP). "As the Scripture says, 'If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord'" (2 Cor. 10:17 NLT). "Therefore, give the people of Israel this message from the Sovereign Lord: I am bringing you back, but not because you deserve it. I am doing it to protect My holy name, on which you brought shame while you were scattered among the nations" (Ezekiel 36:22 NLT).

In other words, I don't save you because I value you, but because I value My own Name above all things. The crucial point that saves the elect is that God has grafted them into His Name by making them joint-heirs with Christ, by making them His very righteousness. God, who knows in perfection how infinitely awesome He is, has rightly made a policy of thought that values Himself above all others. This is similar to a broad definition of what "righteousness" means: to "think and act in a way that values

⁸⁸ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. 78

I find Vincent's definition of God's love and hate is to be correct, and so I will use it. However, I am not claiming that I am using this definition just like him.

God above all others.” The commands and precepts of God to man define how man is to accomplish this.

The love and hatred of God toward man is first an intellectual policy of thought about one group versus another; it’s not emotional. In Christ, God took His intellectual policy of thought of love for His elect and publicly revealed it in a blood-oath contract in the New Covenant.

God’s love as “a policy of thought and action” to act “favorably to this group” is similar to a contract, but with Himself rather than between two parties. Vincent Cheung describes God’s “Contract” in the New Testament as having the quality that both groups know how the other will always act under the stipulated conditions. Earlier, Vincent said, “God’s mind is so integrated that He only does what He wills,” because of His lack of emotions and perfect knowledge and mastery of His mind. In this light, God’s contract with the elect is the public expression/revelation of His “eternal policy of thought about them.” The New Covenant is a stipulated policy of thought and action toward this group that’s made public. God is letting the elect know that He only does what He wills, and the eternal/immutable policy for the elect has been revealed in the New Covenant. In the eternal mind of God, it’s a “policy of thought and action”; in the public revelation, it’s a “contract of promise,” made in the blood-oath of Jesus’ atonement.

One way to view this would be to consider me as a person who extraordinarily likes chocolate. Chocolate is my favorite by a tremendous amount. Thus, every time I’m given a choice about what candy I want, I always choose my favorite, which is chocolate. God is immutable, so even with a chocolate lover like myself, there’s always a chance I could change, even if slight—but not God. God doesn’t experience fluctuations. Thus, He’s not changed by emotions. God only does what He wills to do. He has willed to love the elect. He has willed to make you, in Christ, His favorite. Every time there’s a choice between the elect, reprobate, angels, or other created things, He always picks His favorite to favor them, which is you.

The application of this doctrine is for the elect to gain inner power and ability by renewing their minds on how great God’s love is for them.

God’s love isn’t mushy vibes—it’s a rock-solid policy to favor His elect, baked into His decrees before creation even hit the stage. He’s the ultimate chocolate fanatic, always picking His elect as His top treat, no waffling. This divine VIP contract, sealed in Christ’s blood, powers up the elect to revel in God’s infinite favor—sorry, reprobate, you’re not part of the family.

I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. (Ephesians 3:16-19 NLT)

Paul says you grow stronger by understanding and having faith in God’s limitless love for you.

As in most things a “policy” might have a highest or lowest threshold that triggers the policy. Like a computer program, you might have thresholds that trigger a particular program to execute. However, the Scripture defines God’s policy of favor for His elect with a threshold that triggers for the smallest and highest issues. It is in essence always on.

Even the death of God’s own Son, was not a threshold too high, so as to not trigger His policy of love for His elect.

“God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners,” (Romans 5:8 NLT).

Paul argues from this that if God’s policy of favor triggers for such a huge thing, then how much more for the little things.

“Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t he also give us everything else,” (Romans 8:32 NLT)”

Jesus also affirms this truth.

Thus, even the smallest things, like counting your hairs, or giving you your daily bread, is not too small to trigger God’s policy of favor.

“What is the price of two sparrows—one copper coin[k]? But not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without your Father knowing it. And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows,” Math 10:30-31)

Thus, no matter what trouble of life today you find yourself in, if you cry out in faith to God, it triggers God’s policy of thought and action of favor. You realize you do not deserve such love? Great! It is unmerited. Your faith qualifies you. Your faith gives you direct access to heaven, to trigger God’s favor for you.

God’s “unmerited” favor is another point to see how His favor triggers, even when God needed to give us His favor without us working or earning it. Also, we talked about God’s love policy triggering at the highest and lowest thresholds, however, Paul says something a little different when He speaks in Ephesians 1:6. He says the Father has put us into His “beloved,” or His beloved Son. This is like saying, “highly loved.” The Father loves His only begotten Son, with the highest type of favor, or His greatest favorite. This was like the example of me saying chocolate was by far my greatest favorite. God has placed us into this category.

This gives us three ways to define God’s love for us, so that we know how awesome it is. God’s love is toward us:

First, God’s favor is an immutable thought policy; the threshold of this favor triggers at the lowest things, and it triggers at the greatest things.

Secondly, this favor is an unmerited favor (grace).

And lastly, when His favor triggers, the amount of favor that it triggers is not small or even medium, but a super abundant favor; yes, as much as God favor triggers when considering His Beloved Son. We have been made part of His body. We are His righteousness. We are co-heirs with Him. We are made One

with Him, and Jesus One with us (John 17). In fact, we are even called, “Christians.”

A quick note about logic: The positive always comes first, not the negative. In logic, this is referred to as negation, and negation can only occur if there’s a positive first. Take, for example, justice and injustice. Injustice has no intellectual meaning without first understanding justice. Something can only be negated, or a negative form given, if the positive exists first. Therefore, James says that mercy triumphs over judgment. God’s love is first, not hatred. God has always loved Himself, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit for all eternity. There was no hatred there. The definition is entirely positive. A negation isn’t intellectually coherent without knowing what it’s negating. You must love first, then comes the negation, which is hate.

This provides broad insight into why the “end” or original intention of God’s decrees is positive, not negative. Love (for Jesus and the elect) is a higher, top-level decree compared to hate (for the reprobate) (Romans 9:21-23).

This also offers a broad critique against worldviews where hating is the end result or a higher top-level ontology over love (e.g., a world where hateful demons are hurting and hating everything). Since the Bible describes the history of reality as determined, the result of reality is based on a decision for an original goal. When examining how a situation ends up like that (a worldview with a negative ending), it’s like saying a negation came first. However, saying the negation came first is logically and metaphysically impossible. It’s like saying, “Blue fives are faster than cloud predicates swimming panda sevens.” Just because you can say something with your mouth doesn’t make it true or intellectually coherent. A story in anime or TV that makes such a negative worldview possible is describing something delusional and impossible.

Logic’s got rules: love’s the headliner, and hate cannot be a true opening act because it needs a positive to even get on stage. God’s eternal love-fest for Himself and His elect sets the cosmic script, with hate for the reprobate playing second fiddle that is designed to support the first. Worldviews banking on hate as the main event? That’s metaphysical gibberish—like panda clouds racing blue fives in a delusional anime flop.

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that?” Matthew 5:43-46. NLT

“But rather, love your enemies and do good to them, and lend expecting nothing back; then your reward will be great and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.” Luke 6:35 NTL.

A quick note about other uses of the word “love” in the Bible. Jesus says to “love” your neighbor and even your enemy by doing them “*good and blessing*” them. Jesus is obviously not talking about the eternal, electing, and saving love given to the elect. Only God can do that. The love in this context is a pragmatic, practical, or natural benevolence. God’s eternal, electing, and saving love is the fuller definition and scope of what a policy of favor means. This definition of love in our present passages is a

narrower use of this bigger love. It's a smaller subset definition of what love is, focused on practical actions toward another person that help and bless them with good things. In essence, it refers to the definition of good and evil when it's about harming or blessing a person with natural benevolence.

God is the foundation for defining value and definitions, not something else. If God wants to have a fuller definition of what love is within the Trinity and extended to the elect, and another narrower use of it, that's His choice. He's the foundation, and there's no other beside Him. This narrow use of love is also more focused on the "here and now." The fuller definition of love encompasses past, present, and future—it's eternal love. The context determines which definition of love we're talking about.

Jesus says to love and then defines it as "good," "blessing," and "kindness." This is how Jesus defines a narrow love given here and now to people. God then says He shows this SAME TYPE of love when He's "good" and "kind" to evil reprobates by giving them rain, sunlight, and many natural goodies. Jesus reaffirms this love through the story of the Good Samaritan. The question is this: what does it mean to "love" your neighbor? The Samaritan helps and gives blessings/gifts, such as paying for the medical care and housing of the injured man. Jesus defines this as "love." When God sends rain to the crops of a reprobate, and this rain helps the parched crops produce, God helped and gave a gift/blessing by enabling the reprobate's crops to grow. God loved them. And yet, they were unthankful for it. God loved Judas by washing his feet.

Think about God Himself washing your feet—His hands touching your feet and cleaning the dirt off. It wasn't an illusion. Jesus loved Judas, and Judas repaid that love with hate. After this example, Jesus again says for the disciples to "love" each other, following the example He gave them. Jesus "loved" the rich young ruler by giving him truth about how to find salvation. Many businesspeople pay high dollars for special insight into the business world. Jesus gave this man true and powerful insight, free of charge. It was love and kindness. The young ruler returned this love by rejecting it.

Love's got layers in Scripture—God's eternal VIP pass for the elect is the big kahuna, but Jesus also dishes out a practical "be nice" version for neighbors and even baddies like Judas. Rain for reprobates, foot-washing for betrayers, free salvation tips for rich dudes—that's God's kindness in action, no strings attached. Context is key, and God's the boss of His own definitions.

God's HATRED is the reverse, it is a policy of thought to *always* act in an unfavorable way. God's ultimate hate, is about for the long term. It is an eternal hate. This love and hatred is *always* God's policy to these groups.

Take for example when Paul says in Romans 8 "He works *all* things for our good." God plans for a big good, and so He creates (and causes) temporary evil for the Elect to overcome, and then by this receive this big good. This can be seen in the story of Joseph. What they meant for evil, God meant it for good. This only applies to God's elect. In Isaiah 45 it says God causes the evil and the good, the light and the

darkness.⁸⁹ It was the Holy spirit who led Jesus to the desert to be tempted by the devil, it was not another demon who led Jesus to be tempted by the devil. Thus, Jesus teaches us to pray, *“Lord, lead us not into temptation.”* However, this temporary evil that God caused Jesus to endure, was the steppingstone for Jesus to triumph over and then begin His public ministry. Isaiah also says that *“no weapon formed against you”* will prosper. It is not that no weapon will form, but that no weapon formed will prevail against you. These evil weapons are formed and caused by God, against His elect. God then causes the elect to overcome them by faith. This leads to more spiritual and material love (both now and eternal). The temporary hate from secondary objects that God causes the elect to endure and then triumph over, is used to propel the elect to experience more and more of the eternal love of God and to show the value of God’s name.

The same is for those who God hates. *“He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous,”* (Matthew 5:45 NIV). Jesus is referring to good benefits in the common sense, in basic pragmatic things like rain (etc.) and not spiritual or an intelligent working of all things for their good. And so, even when God is presently giving reprobates (love) natural blessings like rain or other circumstances, God is working out that they be fattened for the day of slaughter (Psalm 73).⁹⁰

God is working all things for their destruction and suffering. Their receiving the common pragmatic good of God, is God’s policy of thought of loathing to set them up for death. Their receiving of God’s pragmatic, common love, is designed to work all things for their bad and destruction. It is the reverse for the Elect children of God. God defines this pragmatic kindness as “love,” thus, their rejection of it, leads to their eternal damnation and hate. Even though this is the narrower definition of love, because God defines it as love, it is real and not imaginary. The eternal definition of love does not negate this presently applied pragmatic love; rather, it establishes it. Presently applied love is a subset or subcategory from the parent of eternal love. The reprobates receive this temporary love, use it, benefit from it, and then they discard it, ignoring the God who gave it to them. Paul says in Romans 2 that the goodness and kindness of God, (Jesus defines this as love) should lead you to repentance. The reprobates in addition to ignoring giving thanks to God for His love, ignore His command to repent and be blessed.

The gospel message, because it is God’s “word” is valuable and good to pursue in and of itself. It is wrong to say, “we only study God’s Word to be better people.” This blasphemy tramples on God’s Word as if it does not have infinite intrinsic worth. God and the Bible are interchangeable. To diminish the Word, in any way, is to diminish God. To study the Bible is an infinitely valuable pursuit, in and of itself. Even though reprobates reject the gospel message, to give them God’s Word, is giving them

⁸⁹ I am Yahweh and there is none besides me.
I form light and I create darkness;
I make peace and I create evil;
I am Yahweh; I do all these things.
Isaiah 45:6-7 LEB

⁹⁰ “Truly, you put them on a slippery path and send them sliding over the cliff to destruction. In an instant they are destroyed, completely swept away by terrors.”

something that is INFINITE value, in and of itself. Jesus defines neighbor and enemy love as “blessing them.” That is, blessing someone with gifts and things of value. To give a cup of cold water to your enemy, even if he later rejects it, is still a good gift. It is love. Their rejection of it does not negate the act as love. Giving a reprobate the message of Jesus is to gift them something of infinite value, their rejection does not negate the act as love. Their rejection of this gift, is designed for their destruction and hate. Even if you love your enemy so that God might later rain down coals of fire on them, your love given in the present is still love, because Jesus defines it that way. All the truth, hospitality, and good that the reprobates in 1 John 2 received, while attending the church, was love. Their receiving and then rejection of God’s truth, (John shows this as proof of their reprobation) does not negate the love given at the time, from the elect church members to them. The elect meant love to these reprobates, but God meant it as eternal hate and evil against them. The result of eternal hate, or eternal love, does not negate Jesus’ definition of love given to your neighbor and enemy, at the time it was given.

“Or does the potter not have authority over the clay, to make from the same lump a vessel that is for honorable use and one that is for ordinary use[pee pot]? And what if God, wanting to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And he did so in order that he could make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory.”
(Romans 9:21-23, LEB [-by author])

As Paul says about the twins, “before they were born,” and to clinch the nail on the other side, to stop any possible rabbit trails of excuses, Paul says, “before they had done good or evil,” “I loved Jacob and hated Esau.” Paul then repeats this doctrine by saying “from the same lump,” God molded the clay forms of the elect and reprobate. A lump is neutral; it’s like saying, “before they were born or had done any good or evil.” God didn’t start with a bad “chamber pot” to then form some for honorable and non-honorable use. No. God started with a formless lump. This means God had an idea of what He wanted them to be before they were formed and then molded them into that form.

This (neutral lump) is talking about man before Adam’s creation and before they were born. To consider a man as sinful is not to consider him as a neutral clay lump but as already a chamber pot. However, Paul teaches that God decides the outcome of men when they’re still an unformed lump. A lump isn’t already good or evil, righteous, or sinful—we know this because the parallel verse about the twins says, “before they were born, and before they had made choices of good or evil.” The neutral lump isn’t defined, thus no good or evil choices. A person who’s already made choices of good and evil already has a definition and isn’t neutral anymore.

God decided before all of this. How does God treat the chamber pots and vases after considering them in light of Adam’s fall? The elect are vases who became broken/sinful by nature in Adam’s fall. In their sinful states, they abused themselves with sin, employing their own use as chamber pots. However, God had decided to make the elect into beautiful vases, so He saves them in mercy. This mercy is used to show them how much He loves them. God demonstrates that His eternal, immutable love is exactly that—not even sin, Satan, or death can stop it. Likewise, the chamber

pots, left in their sinful state, are hardened even more to fatten them up for damnation; they're used to support His plan to make the elect into beautiful vases.

Some will want to resist this. However, if I wanted to express the doctrine that God is in absolute control and man's choice isn't free, I'd say, "God decided to love this person and hate this other guy before they made their own choices of good and bad." Thus, the objection that Paul meant something different is a smokescreen, because it makes what Paul says—the opposite of their (free-will) position—mean its opposite. For example, if I was against the idea that Johnny's favorite food is a banana, and Johnny says, "Bananas are my favorite food," and I respond, "This means Johnny's favorite food isn't bananas," it shows I'm intellectually broken and bearing false witness. If you see your opponent making both the affirmation and negation of a doctrine mean the same thing, then you know they've exposed how rebellious, disobedient, and stupid they are.

How can "God didn't decide a person's outcome before they were born and made their own choices of good and evil" mean the same thing as "God decided a person's outcome before they were born and had made choices of good and evil"? How is "bananas are my favorite" also "they aren't my favorite"? The only way to affirm, "God decided a person's outcome before they were born and had made choices of good and evil," is to affirm it. If my opponent is so desperate as to make the affirmation and denial of this statement mean the same thing, then we know they've abandoned the rules of logic and reading comprehension. They're not fit to read and explain "See Spot Run," let alone something as important as the Bible.

Deny Paul's point? That's a logic faceplant—might as well say "See Spot Run" means "Spot's napping."

As with man, it first started as love toward the Elect, as those who were always with Christ. *"Even before he made the world, God LOVED us and chose us in Christ,"* (Eph 1:4 NLT).⁹¹ Because man has no ultimate self-causality, God choosing them in Christ in love is the foundation of their being. It's their antecedent for existence, so the consequent means that love is always affirmed in all outcomes. Therefore, for this chosen group in Christ, even after the fall and sin, because love is their beginning and policy from God, mercy triumphs, not the negative of hate and condemnation.

The reprobate group was created to provide a backdrop for God to teach the elect about His love for them in Christ. The reprobate are the extras in the TV show to showcase God's main actors, His beloved children. The reprobate are like a filler section in an anime/TV series to give the elect a place for character growth. They're the cannon fodder to provide a context for the elect to practice their kingdom power against—to practice their sword and magic skills. Just as Goliath was the context for God to showcase His love to David by empowering David with faith to destroy the monster. Not all monsters are the giant type, for Paul says our weapons are used to

⁹¹ Philippians 4:3 NLT, "... They worked along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are written in the Book of Life."

Revelation 13:8 LEB, "And all those who live on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name is not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slaughtered."

tear down arguments from the devil. But the devil uses the reprobate to propagate his arguments. The elect use this context to tear them down by the Spirit and truth; by this, they level up in spiritual maturity and gain new spiritual skills and even temporary material treasures.

By seeking His righteousness first, God promises to give the elect the material treasures and things that the pagans seek after; the pagans seek more than the bare minimum. They conveniently store up material treasures for God's children to unlock at the end of each boss fight when they seek God's kingdom and righteousness first.

Furthermore, Acts 10:38 says the devil oppresses and victimizes by sickness and broken bodies. Jesus started the war by healing all those oppressed by the devil. After His departure, He's now endowed the elect with the baptism of the Spirit. They're to pick up Thor's Hammer where Jesus left it and start destroying the works of Satan. The reprobate are thus the monsters in a video game that give the elect opportunities to level up in spiritual strength by demolishing the works of the devil, which manifest in the reprobate, who are his fodder spawn. God's policy of thought and action of favor to His children is seen in making them victorious over the devil and the reprobate. By this, God's chosen ones are made ready for the main story, which is heaven. Thus, the reprobate are first conceived in hate and created in hate by God to help the elect see how great His love is for them.

God's the potter, molding neutral clay into elect vases and reprobate pee pots before they even blink—love for Jacob, hate for Esau, no free-will whining allowed. The elect shine as God's VIPs, leveling up against reprobate cannon fodder in a cosmic RPG, snagging spiritual XP and pagan loot.

...Paul explains in Romans 9, "What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath – prepared for destruction? What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory...?" (v. 22-23). In other words, God keeps non-Christians alive and functional so that they can provide an environment for Christians to interact with, to learn and practice the word of God, and to witness God's wrath against these people that refuse to believe in Jesus Christ.

Suppose a man wishes to preserve some beer bottles to use as targets when he plays with his rifle, and to show off his marksmanship to his children. He would collect these bottles, clean them, and preserve them in a safe place. He offers to these bottles a natural benevolence, but he has no personal concern for them as he does his children. And when the time comes he will line them up and shoot them to a thousand pieces without any remorse, while his children praise him and rejoice with him.

Does this mean that non-Christians are preserved and cared for by divine providence, just so they can be used and discarded? This is precisely what Paul says in his letter to the Romans. And he adds that God has "the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use" (v. 21). In those days, "common" vessels include receptacles for trash and feces. This is God's estimation of non-Christians. It also offers a

basis to illustrate God's great mercy toward those of us who believe in Jesus Christ – it is as if we have been changed from toilets where people dump their excrements into spectacular vases through which God displays the beauty of his wisdom, power, and glory...⁹²

Transcendence of God:

Attributes that describe God's existence (such as, Infinity, Immutability, Timelessness (etc.)), show God's existence to be Transcendent to every other type. This is where the base idea of holiness comes from, in the broadest sense. Holiness means God is a cut-above all others in a said category. However, God's transcendence is a step greater than this, in that God is all together different in these categories. To be cut-above the competition does not "necessarily" mean a whole new category; it might, but does not necessarily denote that. The context will define how to understand it. At the very least, sometimes God's Holiness does refer to His metaphysical attributes in the transcendent way, so that it means a category difference.

"For thus says the **high and lofty One—He Who inhabits eternity**, Whose name is **Holy**: I dwell in the high and holy place, but with him also who is of a thoroughly penitent and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the thoroughly penitent [bruised with sorrow for sin]."
(Isaiah 57:15 AMP)

At other times God's holiness refers to His moral perfection, in Justice, Mercy and His ability to help. In this light God's Holiness is the internal value of His nature. Glory, is referring to this same (internal) value, but the aspect of it expressed out in the public (external).

He is holy.
...They called to Yahweh, and he answered them.
...you answered them.
You were a forgiving God to them,
but an avenger of their wrong.
(Psalm 99:6-8 LEB)

Furthermore, this is like God being Ex Lex, or that God is above all ethical laws. This is indeed true in a sense; however, God is more than merely above the law. God is categorically different (transcendent) from the laws even being applied to Him. Again, the idea of category errors comes up. God's laws aren't so much below Him as they are applied to the category of man. It's not that God is above moral laws commanded to man; they don't categorically apply to Him.

As said before, God is the foundation of theology, not something else. The foundation of how or if laws apply to God is God; it doesn't start with man inductively making up superstitions about it. No. God is the foundation. God is the foundation that gave laws to man, not the other way around, despite how badly man wants it to be. God's law is commanded to man, not to Himself. If man tries to say, "Well, this means God must

⁹² Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology, 2010. Pg. 72-73

also behave this way,” it’s man starting with something not revealed in Scripture. It’s man starting with man and using man’s induction to command laws on God. It’s the height of rebellion and arrogance. God is the foundation for laws, not man.

God’s not just above the law—He’s in a whole different league, where human rules don’t even apply. Man’s desperate attempts to slap laws on God are like trying to make red outrank odd numbers—category chaos.

Back to the point: Is the category of humans above the category of “subjects and predicates,” or do they have no necessary categorical relation to even ask such a question? Is red above the category of odd numbers, or is there no necessary connection to even ask such a question?

In a publication I can’t presently find on Vincent Cheung’s website, called *Better than Ex Lex*, he says something to the effect of, “*My position is not merely ex lex; rather, the transcendence of God is that He doesn’t even have to be ex lex.*”

If God has infinite wealth and supply, owns everything, and even owns the persons who own things, then God is categorically different from a billionaire, not merely in degree.

If God has infinite propositions and infinite connections between these propositions and understands them not in a mutable, linear way but in an immutable, all-at-once understanding, then God’s mind isn’t merely different in degree but is categorically different from man’s mind.

Although this is true, it doesn’t negate the fact that the portion of God’s mind (the Bible, a system of premises) revealed to us isn’t categorically different from God. A teacher understanding advanced mathematics doesn’t make basic math ($2 + 2 = 4$) different in how they understand it compared to a student who only understands basic math. “Jesus was born in Bethlehem” isn’t categorically different for us compared to God. If it were, our knowledge would lead to skepticism, which would deny the law of non-contradiction. The mistake some make is forcing the transcendence of God’s mind, as compared to ours, into the basics. They’ll say God’s mind and ours are categorically different, so our knowledge is only an analogy of God’s. When it comes to the basics of logic, subjects, predicates, and basic truth claims, God’s mind and ours are the same. The amount and way (immutable) God understands is different, but the revealed part of God’s mind and our receiving and knowing it are the same. In childlike terms, God’s mind is bigger than ours, but what God has revealed to us is the same.

Sure, God’s mind is an infinite supercomputer to our pocket calculator, but the Bible? Same truth, no analogy needed— $2 + 2 = 4$ for Him and us, no skeptical squinting required.

The Nearness of God:

This doctrine of the Nearness or imminence of God is put right next to God’s Transcendence because the Bible often does so to show the value of God.

“Though the Lord is exalted,

He regards the lowly [and invites them into His fellowship]; But the proud and haughty He knows from a distance,” Psalm 138:6. AMP

Although God is separate from His creation and Transcendent to it, yet, God has made man in a special way; namely, spirit and intellectual/rational. When you combine with this that in Jesus Christ, God has given us His very own Spirit, then you have an incredibly, special result. The Saints know God in the same way God knows Himself. This does not mean the saints are God, or become infinite and timeless; rather, it means that the way God knows Himself, intellectual and Spirit—by His very own Spirit—God causes the saints to know Him in this way. God is near to them, in the way God is near to Himself, that is, in a rational and spiritual way, even by the Spirit who knows Himself.

"No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit, and no one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.

When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths. But people who aren't spiritual can't receive these truths from God's Spirit."

1 Corinthians 2:11-13

There are two main ways God is near to those who He favors/loves. Nearness in relationship (intellectually and spiritually), and nearness in participation in God's supply (receiving all His benefits).

In both the section on Epistemology and Metaphysics we have already dealt in a broad way, definitions for how God and the saints are close spiritually and intellectually. God is the original. God made man in His image. God in Jesus, truly makes man in His image, by giving them not only truth, but also His Spirit. By this man gets to know and communicate with God directly, in precision, immediately and intellectually.

The second part of God's nearness, is something many churches have decided to make war against God. They wish to be the foundation of theology and dictate to God, what gospel accomplishments they want and others they wish to trample under their filthy feet. However, despite their protest, God is still the foundation of the gospel and Jesus' victory from the grave is still available to those with faith. As with every war, this is one God will also win along with the saints, and those who oppose will be trampled under God's foot as worthless trash.

Our passage says after being near to God in spirit and intellect (or the inner man), the result is another necessary nearness. It is a nearness of practical blessings and goodies (outer-man).

“..so we can know the wonderful things God has
freely given us.”

I will chase this point for a little bit, since it is denied. I will end up going over some points about salvation, which will be explored more in a later chapter.

Many at this point, foam at the mouth like demons, about a doctrine called, “already-but-not-yet.” They are correct in the strictest sense of the definition. There are some benefits of Jesus’ finished atonement and New Covenant that are available now, and some are later. For example, healing is for now, and a new transformed body, that does not need healing, is for later. So far, so good. However, I mostly see pastors and lay people use this doctrine to emphasize what we do not get now. The problem with this is that the Bible contradicts this emphasis. The prophets, apostles and Jesus Himself, used this doctrine to emphasize the super-abundance of what we get here and now! Thus I am in agreement with Vincent Cheung that this doctrine when mainly used, is a logical/exegetical fallacy.⁹³ It is sad to see the elites of orthodoxy, who boast of their knowledge and intellect, act like demons by turning a biblical doctrine into a convoluted fallacy.

The Psalmist said in Psalm 103 to remember how God gives you so much free forgiveness, goodies, blessings and helps. We are not to remember God’s benefits for person x over there, or remember them to be given to us in another place or another time; rather, we are to remember God’s benefits for us now, in the land of the living. This is not a suggestion. These are precepts and commands; and thus, they are Christian ethics. God commands you to not forget all the ways He benefits you, today, in this place. He forgives you, He heals you, He provides prosperity to you, He delivers you, and gives you an abundance of good things. God gives to you freely and unearned. You do not give to God.

This is similar to how Jesus gives proof to John the Baptist that He is the Messiah who is bringing in the Kingdom of God. Not the Kingdom of God later, but now. He says, “healing, healing, healing, healing, resurrection and truth proclaimed.” That is, healing is a physical not invisible reality, such as forgiveness and a cleansed soul. It is a miraculous physical reality. As to resurrection, Jesus meant it, as a second time for a present tense physical reality. Thus, Jesus’ Kingdom now is referred to by Jesus as “miraculous physical, miraculous physical, miraculous physical, miraculous physical, miraculous physical and truth (which is invisible/spiritual). Thus, those who overemphasize the now part of Jesus’ Kingdom as the invisible, spiritual realities are enemies of Jesus, because they are working against His Kingdom and command. They are rebellious and disobedient.

Vincent shows how Jesus Christ, rebuked this ‘already-not-yet’ fallacy, when people used this nonsense on Him.

When Jesus went to raise Lazarus from the dead, Martha said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” So the theologians tell us, “These things had happened in the past.” Jesus answered, “Your brother will rise again.” But Martha said, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” So the theologians tell us, “These things will happen in the future.” Jesus answered, “I am the resurrection and the life.” The sisters applied the “already / not yet” principle on Jesus, but rather than displaying their theological education, it revealed their unbelief and ignorance. They did not even know Jesus very well. For Jesus, it is always a good time for a miracle. In the theology of Jesus, it is not a matter of time, but a matter of faith. He said

⁹³ Vincent Cheung. “The Already / Not Yet Fallacy.” Found in TRACE. 2018. Chapter 2.

to Martha, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” And Lazarus was raised from the dead.⁹⁴

The new covenant is active because, as Hebrews says in chapter 9, the death of the tester makes the testament active. The new covenant is active for you here, and now. This eating at the lord’s table, is eating the benefit that God is our God, and we are His people. God takes the tab for this table. You do not give to God; God gives to you. God wants you to know about this. He wants you to know what a great benefactor He is to you in Christ, today, here in this place. By Christ, in faith, it is freely given to you. It is already yours in Christ. Receive and eat.

God’s table of His best benefits is not given to the reprobates or even to clean angels; rather, it is only given the people He is nearest to. To you. To His redeemed, beloved children.

Hebrews points out in more than one place that the result of “God’s Will,” (for us to be holy), is for us to approach His throne of grace and receive what we ask of Him.

The first mention is in Hebrews 4. What is the application for knowing our high priest has redeemed us? The idea of having peace with God is the ability and position to approach God, in His throne room of grace, to ask and then to receive the help we are asking for. There is no way to spiritualize this away. It is about receiving what we are asking for.

Jesus, when talking about prayer to God, teaches us something that opposes eastern religions like Buddhism (etc.). Such paganistic religions teach us that even if we do not change God’s will in our prayer, we have changed inwardly for the better, by seeking God. People who say such things are spiritual perverts. They are deceived and blind. Jesus contradicts this superstition about prayer and God, by teaching us that God gives a fish for a fish, and the Spirit for the Spirit. Let Buddha be damned, and Jesus and His teaching be highly valued.

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you, if his son will ask him for bread, will give him a stone? Or also if he will ask for a fish, will give him a snake? Therefore if you, although you* are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? Matthew 7:7–11 (LEB)

God is the foundation for what is good and evil, not man. It is God’s, and not man’s definition that a “good” God gives you the very thing you ask for, anyone who teaches otherwise is spouting a doctrine of demons. Some bark up like mad dogs that, “what if you ask for something bad?” So what? What does this logically have to do with what I am saying? This is not a relevant point, because James says if you ask God for evil things (“God help me murder this person”), then you are God’s “enemy,” and so prayer is the least of your concerns. Since I am addressing Christians or those who at least claim to be so, and not sworn enemies of God, I will ignore non-relevant points.

Back to Jesus. He says, if you ask in faith you will get what you ask for. Jesus even says this in more than one way, in case we missed it. What Jesus is doing here with

⁹⁴ Vincent Cheung. The Already not Yet Fallacy. From, “Trace,” 2018, chapter 2, page 8-9.

prayer, is the same He is doing throughout the “Sermon on the Mount.” You have heard it said “do not murder your brother, but I say to you, do not do it, even in your heart.” When Jesus teaches about judging people, His point presupposes that you are able to judge your brother, and to do it without hypocrisy. You do this by removing the wood from your own eye first. Some morons say, “you cannot judge without hypocrisy or bias”; yet, Jesus contradicts this in His sermon. He teaches the true ethical standard God demands for judging, and He expects His disciples to do it. It is good news to see in the new covenant, God promising to give us ethical power, “I will write my laws in your hearts.”

In this context of Jesus repeatedly correcting the low opinion of people’s thinking on God’s commands and standards, Jesus talks about “prayer and faith.” Thus, when we see Jesus saying, “if you ask God in faith, you get the very thing you ask for,” then we can infer the presupposition behind it, at least in the broad sense; and so, Jesus’ teaching is in opposition to the people’s low opinion of what they think prayer and faith should accomplish. The Jews had a perverted and low view of prayer. From the Mount, Jesus corrects their error and describes the true ethical standard that God commands about faith. Whatever the low valuation of prayer the Jews had, it was not to the standard of, *“if you ask in faith, you will get what you ask for.”* Jesus is expecting and demanding, (just like He demands us to not even lust in our hearts after another woman), to pray and get what we pray for. Jesus in essence says, *“You have heard it said, if its God’s will, then you might get what you pray for. But I say to you, if you ask in faith, you will get the very thing you ask for, because God is the good Father.”* This is the type of Being we are dealing with. You must deal with Him and not someone else. Do you know Him?

Back to the two passages in Hebrews.

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most,”
(NLT Heb 4:16).

Next, after several chapters of doctrine and theology about how Jesus accomplished salvation, Hebrews 10, starting in verse 19 gives us the conclusion or result.

“And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus.

And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise,”
(Hebrews 10:19–23 NLT)

This is said as an application for learning how Jesus as the high priest of eternal power, has destroyed our sin and already made the New Covenant active in His blood.

In “context” of Hebrews 4 defining approaching God’s throne, as getting answers to our prayers for help, it therefore, does not mean the opposite in Hebrews 10:19-23. The end says, *“for God can be trusted to Keep His promise.”* The promise that He will not remember our sins, and that He will be our God, who lovingly gives us help when we ask for it. The emphasis is on two points here by the preacher. One is the category fact or truths. You are holy in Jesus right now. You are beloved and stand before God, without Him remembering your sins against you.⁹⁵

The second, is that you stand firm, believing these truths. You stand believing you are categorically holy, righteous and a child of God. That you believe you can boldly walk into heaven and push the door of God’s throne room open, and then you ask like a beloved son, for Him to help you. And that you stand believing He is the Good Father as He defined Himself to be in His word, so that He will indeed give you bread for bread. The first part is always true, due to Christ’s finished work, whether or not a particular Christian has weak faith about it. However, if one has strong, unmovable faith about Jesus’ finished work, then truly you stand before God and He will answer your prayers.

The point is that Scripture makes the logical (or necessary) connection from Jesus’ atonement that makes us holy, to boldly going to God and getting “fish for fish, healing for a healing,” when we pray for help. Because the connection is not merely sufficient but necessary, then it is a “modus ponens” logical connection. If Jesus made you holy by His body, then you necessarily have access to boldly receive the things you ask for in faith.

If these two are necessarily connected, and they are according to Hebrews, Jesus and the apostles, then the logic of modus tollens applies. That is, if you deny the consequent you deny the antecedent. If you negate the application, you negate the foundation. If you negate getting our requests answered at God’s throne, then you negate being made holy by Jesus’ body. Novices play with the Bible like its playdough. Their pet theories and traditions are not harmless when they make mistakes. They condemn themselves and turn the body of Christ into spiritual trash, to be fanboys of the past.

To summarize, Hebrews knows no gospel that does not bring a person who is already perfected and “holy” to the throne of God, to ask and receive what they ask for. “God’s will,” is thrown around much today, but rarely do I see it used how the Scripture uses it. The preacher says it was “*God’s Will*,” to make us holy; however, we learn more. There was a pre-determined point why God desired to make us holy and perfected. The necessary result (or a previous in order Decree of God) is a person who by faith (who assents they have been made ‘holy’), stands at God’s throne, to ask and receive what they ask for. The conclusion is obvious, it is “God’s Will” for you to stand in faith, with your head held high, before His throne, to ask and receive a fish for a fish, mercy for mercy, son for a son, health for health, wisdom for wisdom, wealth for wealth, inner strength for inner strength, protection for protection in your time of

⁹⁵ God is all-knowing, so and it is not that God has spiritual forgetfulness; rather, God has a policy of thought and promise not to apply the consequence against you. He already did that on His beloved Son, Jesus. That is, for all practical purposes, not intellectually knowing, God does not remember your sins.

need. To say this is “not God’s will,” is to logically say it is “not God’s will” for us to be made holy by the body of Jesus Christ.

Many educated people feel proud of their intellect and academia, but in their fanboy affirmation of the past—such things as cessationism and things like “only if it is God’s will” (negating God’s promises)—they expose themselves as plus ultra perverts. They think they know logic and knowledge; however, deductive logic, like math and truth, is not flexible. They try to bend the sword of truth to pervert it; however, they only end up impaled on it. Leave these voodoo practitioners, and return to standing firm in the truth that you are holy, and standing before the throne of grace. God made the world and defines His world as He wants. His Word defines you as already a holy child, who when you ask for help, then you will get the type of help you asked for. God is near to you, and you are near to Him. You are so near to God that you are sitting at His table. If you want some bread, reach for it. If you want some meat, then get a piece.

"In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.”

For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.
(Corin. 11:25-26).

What does proclaiming His "death" mean, in relation to Jesus saying the New Contract is "an agreement confirmed in my blood"?

Think about Hebrews 9 where this connection is made:

Now when someone leaves a will, it is necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead. The will goes into effect only after the person’s death.

...Then he said, “This blood confirms the covenant God has made with you.
(Heb 9;16-17, 20)

So, in the Lord's supper we are proclaiming the new contract, by a death in blood, that is made active. Once there is death/blood it is active at that moment, not later. In the previous chapter, Hebrews 8, he says the new contract in addition to saying we are forgiven, says "*I will be their God, and they will be my people.*" Thus, this is already active by the death of the Tester, Jesus.

This phraseology in the Bible, is always about God blessing and prospering the inner and outer man.

Consider Lev. 26

“I will look favorably upon you, making you fertile and multiplying your people. And I will fulfill my covenant with you. 10 You will have such a surplus of crops that you will need to clear out the old grain to make room for the new harvest! 11 I will live among you, and I will not despise you. 12 I will walk among you; ***I will be your God, and you will be my people.*** 13 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so you would no longer be their

slaves. I broke the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk with your heads held high." (NLT)

The death of Jesus does include the negative, where our sins, sickness, poverty, abandonment, and stupidity were transferred off of us, and in the mind of God, conveyed onto Jesus. However, it also includes more than this. Jesus' death, because it makes the new covenant active, makes it positive for us. It makes "God our God, and we become His people." This is always defined as God blessing the whole man in all areas of life.⁹⁶ This is active now, not later. Jesus' death has already put the new covenant into play. God is already ours as our beloved God, and we are already God's.

Reading how the Bible at the beginning defines terms is important. God first defines what "*I will be your God and you My People*," to Abraham, (Genesis 15:1 "... *I am your shield, and your reward shall be very great.*" Genesis 17:7-8, "...*I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ...I will be their God.*"). This promise to "be God to Abraham and his descendants" conveys spiritual blessings for being counted righteous for his faith, getting future promises, and much health, prosperity, and favor in Abraham's lifetime.

This will be explored more later, but Paul says in Galatians that miracles and the gift of the Holy Spirit (most likely referring to the baptism of the Spirit) is part of the Covenant of Abraham. Paul says, Jesus' atonement grafts gentiles into this blessing of Abraham. Therefore miracles, in the majority mode, is not to confirm Jesus (which is only a minority use of miracles) but God being faithful to perform the ancient blood oath to Abraham. Doing something to "prove" a future contract you intend to make (a sign), and performing an action that you are already bound by contract to perform, are two different categories. For those who are savvy with logic, will see the implication of this. So what, if the miracles for signs have ceased? Who cares? Miracles and the Power of the Spirit, (and the presupposition is that these are a common thing for the Galatian church.) is part of the blood oath to Abraham. Has God negated His promise to Abraham? Then this majority mode of miracles and the power of the Spirit, as a common experience for Abraham's descendants, is still active. Thus, if a church does not reflect what Paul teaches here, they are not spiritual descendants of Abraham. They do not have Abraham's faith.

Leviticus 26 gives a summary of this same definition, as contained in the Mosaic Covenant; or as Paul says in Galatians, in the temporary covenant or tutor. The interesting point about being forgiven by the Law, because the Law included both sins of commission and omission, is that it declares you righteous at the same time. In addition to being declared righteous, by being forgiven by the law, we are credited with God's righteousness through Jesus (2 Corin.5:21).

This is a shadow of the New. That is, what you see here (lev.26) is much more in the New Contract. Freedom from the slavery of Egypt in the New Contract, is about us being forgiven. Freedom from, God's wrath against our sins; freedom from the consciousness of sin and freedom from Satan's oppressive accusations. God

⁹⁶ We see this in God's promise to Abraham which is mainly about health, wealth and favor and fame; but also God declares him righteous. Thus, God's love and blessings from the beginning was always about the whole man; about every aspect of life: present and future, material and spiritual.

remembers them no more against us. So much so, we can march in the throne room of heaven to ask from God what we wish, *“with our heads held high.”* But that is just one part of *“God being our God, and we being His people.”* As being freed from Egypt is the foundation for the other blessings, so too within the New Covenant.

God’s promise is NOT blessing them with surplus crops in Egypt, but in the promise land. Their blessings awaited them in the promised land, not in Egypt. They needed freedom from the yoke of slavery first. Jesus does this in the New Contract. He frees us from sin and its guilt, so that He has a righteous foundation to lavish all His other blessings. Our promise land is not so much a place, for it is foundationally being brought near to God. The best land is nearest to God. There is however, a place for Jesus’ throne, and yet, the scripture says we have already (past tense) been raised and set with Jesus at God’s right hand. In 1 John 3 he goes so far as to command us to keep our thoughts where our lives are at, and our lives are not on earth, but are already hidden in Jesus, who is at the Power’s right hand. Thus, even if one wishes to make the promise land heaven, our lives are there. God is the foundation of theology and reality, and He considers us already with His Son. That is the only important point for us. So what, if you feel distant? What does that have to do with anything. Man is not the foundation of theology and reality; God is the foundation. He considers you already with His Son, and therefore, you are.

John also says in chapter 4 that *“as Jesus is, so are we in this world.”* Jesus with awesome power, frees us from the law and Satan’s oppressive accusations against us. Now, He gives us a surplus of the Holy Spirit for miracles and healings; which is to say, since we are already in the promise land through Christ, Christ therefore, pours the promise land’s and kingdom’s power into us on earth, by the Spirit. Paul even says Jesus became poor for us, so that we might become rich, by His substitutionary death (in context it is decisively about money). Thus, Jesus multiplies our bank accounts and barns, because, in Jesus, our lives are already connected to the promise land. Our lives are even connected right up next to the Power, because our lives are connected to the valuable Person who sits at the Power’s right hand. If the blessings were so great in the Old Contract, then much more, when the Promise Land we are connected to now, is the true heavenly one! He pours over us an ocean of unmerited favor that is all for the taking by faith. How could someone be so depraved, to despise the oath of God, confirmed by the blood of His Son?

You cannot talk about “God’s Will,” and make it to be whatever you want it to be. If the Scripture makes certain effects as necessary connections, then the logic of *modus ponens* and *modus tollens* are now in play. Hebrews, as with other Scriptures make approaching God’s throne, to get the yes for your prayers, a necessary connection to God’s Will that made you holy. If you negate the consequence you negate the antecedent, which is the atonement.

“For **God’s will** was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time.”

MADE holy. This causality is God’s doing, and it is His promise. To be holy relative to or “before God,” is more than not being punished. In Ephesians 1 it says holy and “beyond reproach.” This means we are perfectly moral and flawlessly ethical before God, so much so, we are beyond even the hint of an accusation against the demand

for absolute perfection. By the body of Jesus, this is now our reality, “BEFORE GOD.” Even if our sanctification is not perfect, it is a non-logical point, because God considers you holy and righteous before Him. And God is not fickle or emotional like man. He promised to treat you as holy and righteous, not something else. Thus, He interacts and treats you as perfectly and morally righteous. However, in addition to being forgiven, we are credited with the “righteousness of God,” to our accounts. Our position with God is not standing somewhere in the back corner of God’s throne room or somewhere even farther; rather, our position NOW, is with Christ at God’s right hand. Do you understand the position you have now in Christ and before the Power?

Christ being at God’s right hand, presently enjoys and partakes of the goodness that rightfully belongs to being in that position. Yet, we are now with Christ! Thus, to be made holy by Jesus, is to be a partaker of the holy God, now.

To be made holy is like how Paul said that we were made righteous in Christ in Romans 5:19.

“For just as through the disobedience of the one man,
the many were made sinners,
so also through the obedience of the one,
the many will be made righteous (LEB).”

By God’s sovereign control over His own creation, He authored and caused Adam to sin, and then by this He caused all mankind to be made into sinners by His direct and absolute causality. But the reverse is also true, but much more. God sent His Son and by His righteousness (holiness) God caused the elect to be made righteous. God is sovereign. Man has no free choice relative to God’s control on the ultimate level. God without asking humanity, and humanity not being free from God’s causality, made them sinners. Then God made some of them into His righteousness. However, there is even more to this sovereign control of God. In the New Covenant, God, without our consent and without us not being free to do otherwise, also made Himself to “be our God” and “*made us to be His people.*” This New Contract is a packaged deal. If you negate one part, then you negate the rest.

To see what this means, consider the woman bent over for 18 years. Jesus said, because she was a daughter of Abraham it was “necessary” for God to heal His daughter. God was God to Abraham, and Abraham was God’s people. This is why Abraham was victorious when he defeated the 5 kingdoms and was blessed by Melchizedek, and why the other non-people of God were defeated. To be a true child of Abraham, means God is your God. We are so today in Christ (Galatians 3). This is a categorical truth. Recall an earlier comment about logical connections. A logical connection is only about “necessary” connections; logic is not about sufficient ones, for there is no valid inference with only sufficient connections. Thus, Jesus said it was “necessary” for God to heal this woman, and not merely a good or sufficient reason. If God promises to be your God and you are part of His family, it is “necessary” for Him to benefit you with the goodness He promised.

This is what it means for “*God to be your God, and You His people,*” in the new covenant; and if you are a Christian, you partake of this benefit now. This is how the Bible over and over, defines what ***nearness to God***

means. If you do not know this you do not have nearness to God, or you are just really bad at being a child of God.

Not in another place, or in a different time, but here and now, “God is our God, and we are His people.” Act like it. Receive from your Father’s table. If God put you at His table (i.e. in Christ at God’s right hand) then it is God’s Will for you to partake of the fatness of His table. God is not a demon. God does not put you at His table, and then make you watch others enjoy a good meal, while you starve. David did not bring Mephibosheth to his table to torture him, like a demon, by making him watch but not partake. Mephibosheth sat at David’s table to enjoy the free supply of David’s bounty. You have heard it said that God disciplines His legitimate children, and this is true; however, the other side of the coin is also true. Taking food from your Father’s table is necessary for you to prove you are His legitimate child. Illegitimate children cannot ask and get what they want from God. You, take and eat. This is what the sovereign God has done. This is the type of Being He is. These things already belong to you. It is His will, that you ask and receive, knowing God is your God. It is God’s will that you behave like *legitimate children* and receive from your Father, who is NEAR to His children in spiritual and material benefits.

Through the atonement of Jesus, God is near to us in power, supply, blessings, healings, and “yes” to all our prayers, made in faith.

We will sum up this section with our systematic theology maximum. God is the foundation of theology, not man, not something else. God defines His nearness as intellectual and (inward) spiritual, as much as He does material, with the whole life of man blessed with His benefits.

The Absolute and Direct Sovereignty of God:

**If God causes all things,
then God caused x to happen.**

Some things are so simple that a child can grasp them and apply them in constant success. Many things in the Scripture are this way. Peter did say some things from Paul (Scripture) are hard to understand, but the presupposition behind such a statement would be that most of the Scripture is not so hard to understand.

The reason simple things become difficult, tedious, and annoying is due to man’s unbelief in God. The problem is not due to God’s perfect ability to communicate, produced by God’s infinite mastery of His own mind and understanding of man’s mind (which He created); rather, the problem resides in man’s refusal to believe what God has said. Men truly detest and hate God, even many so-called Christians.

I heard Andrew Wommack try to boil the entire issue of the doctrine of God's sovereignty to one quick dictionary lookup, regarding the word for "sovereign." The dictionary, according to him said it has to do with a king or government ruling a nation. His argument is that because an earthly king do not control all the thoughts and actions of his people God does not. This is a very stupid mistake. When was it a good idea to define things by a mere dictionary lookup? Wommack in other doctrines such as, "*You already got it,*" (which I find edifying) will define the doctrine how the text and passage does it. Why not do it for God's sovereignty? Why not define God's sovereign control how Romans 9 defines it? Before the twins made choices of good or bad, God already decided to love and hate one of them. Why not define God's sovereignty how the bible tells us God uses His power and control? The lesson here is that when you see a pastor boil down an entire doctrine to one dictionary lookup and then apply it to God, then you need to mock it and disregard it as trash. If they call themselves pastors, then they need to define terms how the bible and the relevant passages do.

We will get more into logic in the next section, but we will go over some there, since many pastors and theologians seem to think the Laws of Logic (contradiction, identity and excluded middle) somehow do not apply to the doctrine of God's sovereignty.

FIRST. After going over the attributes of God, in both spiritual and metaphysical aspects, it leads to a clear doctrine about God's sovereignty or control over all things.

At this point, I could say-

- "(1) *All dogs are warm-blooded.*
- (2) *This bulldog is a dog.*
- (3) *Therefore, it is warm-blooded,*"

-and this entire section on God's sovereignty could be finished in one short paragraph. However due to the vehement resistance to God by bullying the mind with stupidity, this section must deal with stating, the most painfully obvious things. For those who already have a willing mind to believe what God says, I apologize for this. However, this will be a good practice in critical thinking skills and a refresher for what you do know.

The Bible teaches that God is absolutely and directly sovereign over all things. Or stated as a modus ponens.

- M.1. (p) If God causes all things directly and absolutely, (q) then God caused x, h or w to happen, directly and absolutely.
- M.2. (p) God does cause all things.
- M.3. (q) God caused x, h and w.

In logic, if the "all" or "some" is not stated (directly or indirectly), then the rule is that your category statement assumes an "all" universally-distributed proposition.

I recently heard some moron say something like, "*God sovereignly moves things at the universal level, but allows man to move things at the particular level.*"

If I were to say this nicely, the person does not know what the terms, “universal” and “particular,” means; they are just talking about things as if they know about them, when they do not have a clue. They are just making things up. However, words have meaning, as the Bible says so. Thus, if we are to take what this person is saying, then it is the bottom of the barrel stupid.

Logical inference works because particulars are necessary applications of universals. For example. When the Bible says, “all have sinned,” this is only “universally true” if every “particular” instance is also true. If it is not sometimes true in particulars, then it is not universally distributed to all things in a said category. Logic or deductive inference is an application of the universally distributed premise applied in particulars. Thus, if all men have sinned, then if I refer to any human, I am able to affirm that this human as sinned. Therefore, a deduction from Scripture is what the scripture asserts, because it is only applying the universal(distributed) premise of scripture to the particulars. It is only pointing out information that is already there.

For example. If I were to say,

“it is universally true that all dogs are mammals.

This bulldog is a dog.

Thus, this bulldog is a fish.”

This syllogism is invalid; however, if the concluding premise is indeed true about reality, then it is not universally true, that all dogs are mammals, for in some “particular” instances dogs are fish, and not mammals. Rather than just a contrariety, this is what a true contradiction is when applied on the same premises. A ‘some are not’ premise is a contradiction to an ‘all’ premise.

Thus, if you say *“it is universally true that God is sovereign, but then in some particular cases in man, man is sovereign, then you just denied the universal.”* You could say God is mostly sovereign, and mostly moves things; but you cannot say God is sovereign as a universal statement without violating the law of contradiction. Or you could say, although it would be odd—it is universally true that God is sometimes sovereign. It would be odd, because an “all” distribution of category in a predicate is presupposed as an “all” if left unsaid. In mathematics this category distribution of all, is in fact called a “universal statement.”

Subjects in universal propositions refer to all in that category (All men have a worldview), while those in particular propositions refer to some (Some men are theists). But what about the predicates? This is where distribution comes in.

Distribution is to terms what quantity is to propositions. A term is said to be distributed when it refers to all the members of its class. Distribution can be designated by a stated or implied all.⁹⁷

For example, if I said, “ravens are birds,” then it is assumed to be that “all” ravens are contained in the predicate of “birds.”

If a particular denies your universal category statement, then the universal is not a “all” category statement but a “some” category statement. That is, if I said, *“this*

⁹⁷ Geisler, N. L., & Brooks, R. M. (1990). Come, let us reason: an introduction to logical thinking (p. 30). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

particular raven is not a bird,” then it is not a true statement that *“ravens are birds.”* Likewise, if it is true that some particular humans are not sinful, then the Bible’s universal statement that “all” have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory is a false statement of reality. It is not a universal “all” statement.

Some at this point, who have never studied logic might say, “I sort-of already know this, and after thinking about it now, it is what the Bible teaches.” If you understand this then, you are already leagues above the intelligence and faith of many pastors and theologians.

Some might also say, *“well, maybe the people above, meant universal, how a human authority might issue a policy at the top level, but a lower person directly applies it.”* First, if so, then so what? How does “horse crap” have any logical necessity to proving if $2+2=4$? To confess the above is to confess you deny God is not sovereign over everything, and that there are other causalities that moves things around, separate from God doing it.

Such an admission, does a slight-of-hand fallacy to make it sound like God is sovereign over reality, when they freely admit God is not. Many seem to gloss over this; God is not man. Let us say that again. God is not man. God’s authority is not like human authority. God’s control is not like human control. What moron would even compare the two? God’s metaphysical transcendence is not compatible to man. You cannot relate the two in an intelligent way. Color has nothing to do with the concept of numbers. Why do I need to say this to adults?

The spiritual, ethical and emotional connection behind all this stupidity is a desire for the praise of men. Rather than just saying, *“God is not sovereign over all things,”* they perform slight-of-hand fallacies by still affirming the opposite of what they believe, but then deny their doctrinal statement in application. If these people truly believed they honored God with right theology, then they need to say, *“God is only sometimes sovereign,”* as their doctrine and defend it. Yet, they affirm a contradictory doctrine despite saying they love God. Therefore, we conclude, their love and loyalty to God, cannot be as great as they say. Instead of standing their ground on what they believe, they please men by affirming a doctrine they disagree with. Then in order to affirm their own doctrine, they do a 180 and deny God is sovereign over all things in applications/particulars of life. Their true goal then is to be men pleasures. Their doctrine is a doctrine of men, by men, for the pleasure of men. They live in a kingdom of self. They are thoroughly man centered. Their condemnation is deserved.

Another fool once said to me, *“God IS absolutely sovereign over all things, but in order to let man have free-choice, gave up some of His sovereignty.”* Again, this is a self-righteous, man-pleasure. It is a slight of hand, to hide what they are affirming. God IS not absolutely sovereign anymore, because by their own words, God gave up some of His sovereignty over all things. Thus, God WAS sovereign, but IS NOT absolutely sovereign over all things anymore. Since we are dealing with present reality in most applications, their doctrine is, *“God is sometimes sovereign, and sometimes not.”* Any affirmation other than this, would be a lie for them.

Before going over a more positive stating of God’s sovereignty, we will deal with this idea of **man’s responsibility and accountability** to God, since the wrong doctrine of

this is used to negate what the Bible says about God's sovereignty and man. The false doctrine of what makes man accountable is used as a filter on the Bible, to negate many teachings about God's sovereignty. That is, the doctrine of God's sovereignty is already presupposed to be a certain way, because of a human definition on what it means to be accountable before God. If this human starting point is removed, then God's absolute sovereignty will be unchained for some to receive.

This is both an ultimate question about God's sovereignty and Christian ethics, and so, this will be dealt with more in that section.

Man is responsible and accountable to God, not because man is free from God's direct control; rather it is the complete opposite. Man is accountable, because man is not free to God's sovereign authority to hold man accountable.⁹⁸ Accountability does not presuppose freedom; rather, it presupposes a sovereign authority that you cannot escape from. Without a parent, how is a child responsible? Without teachers, students (if you can still call them that) are not accountable. Without a government of some sort, citizens (if you can still call them that) are not responsible.

The point is, if you take the authority away, accountability is not merely partially removed, it is completely removed. On the other hand, I can hold my clay vase accountable for not talking to me, by slamming it against the wall, and then throwing it into the fire. Whether or not you like this, is not the question. The issue is painfully obvious, even without freedom, my sovereign authority over the clay vase, is all that is needed to make it accountable. Jesus did the same thing with the fig tree. The tree was not free to Jesus holding it accountable for doing something it had no power to do.

In fact, this is exactly what Paul says in Romans 9 (when the issue is about man being accountable to God). He says man is not free from God controlling man (like how God controlled Pharaoh, by hardening his heart).

Also, if you recall earlier comments about God's transcendence, God is not merely above being accountable; God is categorically not even related to such a category. There is nothing above God. There is no other power. There is no other causality. There is no possibility for God not to be sovereign, and so it is impossible for there to even be a possibility or another power or metaphysical dualism. Because the possibility is not even possible, it means God is categorically separate from such a term. Is color above the concept of numbers, or do they have no necessary relation to even be considered in such a way? Because God is transcendent to man in this regard, we therefore know, when a person tries to apply accountability to God, by relating how it works with man, they just made a metaphysical, intellectual and ethical no, no (to say it nicely).

First, Paul brings in the example of the twins who were, one chosen for mercy and the other damnation—before they were born or had done good or bad choices—to show God's choices and His resulting causation from these choices includes both good and bad; both light and dark; both mercy and damnation. Paul then brings in additional examples of the Old Testament regarding a positive choosing and then also a negative

⁹⁸ I learned to say this doctrine in this way from Vincent Cheung (and some from Gordon Clark). See Vincent's many mentions of this in his books. (www.vincentcheung.com)

choosing. Moses is the example for mercy and the Pharaoh is the example of damnation.

This is classic systematic theology. Paul is bringing in different passages ranging over the Scripture that address the same theological category. From this Paul then gives a summary of a doctrinal statement that is to be believed and obeyed. *“God chooses to show mercy to some, and he chooses to harden the hearts of others, so they refuse to believe.”* And this doctrinal comprehension includes what Paul stated before in the formation of it: *“before they are born or had done good or evil.”*

If some say that the twins were a representation of nations, then Paul’s point is made even more so, for then it would mean, before millions were born or had made choices of good or evil that God chose some would obtain mercy and some damnation.⁹⁹ This point, logically therefore, is a point of non-relevance. However, this objection shows that such a person not only is defective in their objection but demonstrates they miss the entirety of what Paul is doing here. Paul is doing systematic theology. He brings many individuals and then asserts with logic and divine inspiration, that these are not an exception of God’s power and activity; rather, Paul shows this is how God uses this power of causality over all humans for all time. That is, categorical premises of “all,” not some.

Back to Paul’s doctrinal statement. He does not wish for people to miss the point. One can see how Paul bracketed the part about the twins (before they had made choices of good or evil) in the verse. Paul wanted to head off the misinterpretation that despite being born, God looked ahead and considered the twin’s choices of good or evil, to then decide who to show mercy and who to dam to hell. And so, Paul stops the flow of the statement to clarify that God did not consider their choices in determining their future of heaven or hell.

God punishes Pharaoh after saying He first hardened (first mention in Exodus) the Pharaoh’s heart. To this Paul’s opponent says,

“if Pharaoh went along with God’s causality(ontology)
—that is, to be hard hearted and resist God’s command(ethic)
—then why is Pharaoh punished?”

This objection is bottom of the barrel stupid and displays a mind that is spiritually broken and mentally faulty. Again, this is like saying trees and cats are the same, therefore, why don’t trees walk? It is a category fallacy. All Christian ethics are God’s commandments. The Pharaoh was a lawbreaker by disobeying God’s command to let His people go. He is guilty, not because He did or did not resist God’s causality, but because He resisted obeying God’s command.

Some say that man is *“more than a clay pot.”* This is true, but only if the whole analogy is taken up together.¹⁰⁰ Thus, if man is more than clay, then God is infinitely much more than a mere potter. Therefore, as much as man is more than clay, it is not a true infinite. God however is truly infinitely more than a mere man. Thus, if the analogy is

⁹⁹ I learned this argument from Vincent Cheung. See, “More than a Potter.”

¹⁰⁰ This basic idea of taking the analogy up with both parts was brought to my attention by an essay of Vincent Cheung, *“More Than A Potter.”* Found in “Author of Evil.” 2014. Ch.18.

taken up then the point of God's sovereign control over man's destinies apart from man's choice is literally made "infinitely" stronger.

This clay analogy reminds of how teachers and preachers today directly contradict the Scripture's teaching. They are blasphemers who would rather suffer the Scripture to nonsense, than let their cowardly souls suffer from confessing their unbelief. It appears popular in many Christian traditions to say God takes a **wicked clay lump** and God chooses to let some remain in this wicked **lump** state and make them into wicked pots. In addition, God chooses to take some of this wicked clay lump save them and make them into a good clay pot. How obvious that this is not what the verse says. The **lump** is not already wicked or good. It is unformed, without choices of good or evil. It is a neutral unformed lump. It is like what is said about Jacob and Esau, "*before they had done good or evil,*" God decided to love one and hate the other.

This lines up with the objection Paul's opponent brings up.

"If the Creator takes me from a **neutral clay lump**(that is not already bad) and makes me into a wicked pot, and I obviously go along with God's causality, then why does God find fault with me, even if He commanded me to do good?"

This question of "responsibility" is precisely what Paul's opponent asks in Romans 9:19.

...Therefore you will say to me, "Why then does he still find fault? For who has resisted his will? (LEB)

...Well then, you might say, "Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven't they simply done what he makes them do?" (NLT)

We will now put into the verse the clear terms for command(responsibility) and God's absolute causality: or Christian ethics versus Christian ontology.

"Why does God [**hold people responsible**] for not responding [**to His command**]?"

Haven't they simply done what [**He absolutely directly causes** them to do]?"

or

"Why then does he still find fault? [**Ethics**]

For who has resisted his will? [**Ontology**]

Thus, Paul's opponent is dealing with the issue of man's responsibility when man is considered relative to God controlling and causing man to do. Paul's opponent correctly restates Paul's position about God's sovereignty saying "who has resisted God's will (causality/sovereign control)." Paul's opponent understands that Paul position is that God is actively and absolutely controlling man. The opponent says that "no person has resisted God's will." God's will here is defined in context to be God's causality, and not His commandments, because it is painfully obvious that people *do resist* obeying God's commands.

Thus, the opponent is saying,

“Paul, your position is that no person has never resisted God’s causality, in causing them to make good or evil choices; but, if that is true, then why does God still hold us responsible for things He sovereignly caused us to do?”

On the contrary, O man, who are you who answers back to God? Will what is molded say to the one who molded it, *“Why did you make me like this?”* Or does the potter not have authority over the clay, to make from the same lump a vessel that is for honorable use and one that is for ordinary use?
(Romans 9:20-21 LEB)

Paul’s reply is interesting because it ignores the fallacy of the opponent, and simply gives a positive answer about God’s authority and power. The fallacy of the opponent lies in what we discussed earlier about God’s transcendence over commands given to man. God is not merely above the laws; rather, laws do not categorically apply to Him. The Bible defines sin and evil as lawlessness. Thus, you cannot accuse God of sin or a wrong, without a law being transgressed by God. But laws do not categorically apply to God. Thus, it is categorically impossible for God to do sin or evil. It is not that God can do evil but chooses not to. No. The possibility does not even exist.

“Who are you who answers back to God?” Paul ignores this, in that He does not address it directly; rather, Paul rebukes the opponent in this way: *“as a man you are acting like God, and as a man are trying to put God under a law.”* The opponent has the role of God and man flipped. That is, the opponent’s position is not merely a little bit wrong, it is upside-down wrong.

“The potter [has] AUTHORITY over the clay, to make from the same lump...” Remember the context is about why is man responsible. If ever there was a time for the Bible to say *“man’s accountability is based on freedom or freewill,”* now is the time. Now is the foundational issue or linchpin about man’s responsibility. Paul gives his answer to why man is responsible to God. God is an AUTHORITY OVER THE MAN. The answer given is NOT “God gave man freedom.” NO. The contradiction of this is given. Man is NOT free from God’s AUTHORITY to make man however He wants.

The way Paul does answer this presupposes what we just went over; that responsibility presupposes a higher authority and not freedom. If you are responsible, then it means you are not free, but under an authority. Paul’s answer to why people are responsible—*even like Pharaoh, by performing the works God causes them to perform*—is that God is an authority over them. That is, Paul appeals to the fact that God is a sovereign authority over us. We are responsible precisely because we are not free, but under God’s authority.

It can be said that God makes it—as an additive—that having more knowledge makes us guiltier. This can be said about metaphysics on a relative level when said about us. That is, we are led away by “OUR” own desires. However, these additives only work as adding to our responsibility because God as an “authority” over us commands it so! That is, without us being free from God’s sovereign authority and control over us, He adds additional rewards and condemnation if we have more knowledge (knowledge that He chose to give or not give us).

This is one aspect that is truly by God’s arbitrary sovereign power. There is no reality except by God arbitrarily making it up and then creating it. There is no inherent or natural law produced by reality. The only foundation of a law is God originally

thinking up a law (about reality or as a human command) and decreeing. There is no other source or foundation. There is no "law" in reality (i.e. inherent in, or created by reality) that says, "If the first man is a lawbreaker, then so too are the descendants," or is there a set of standards outside of God that holds Him to these standards? If I lift up the skirt of some ancient mountain, will this be written there, and if so, why would I care?

God holds people accountable to his revealed law, or innate laws written in their hearts, because man is not free from God holding them to this. If God holds man accountable for having more knowledge of a subject, then it is an addition to the foundation of God making laws and man not being free from God holding them accountable to it. Man is accountable to this addition because man is not free from God holding man to this addition. Even when there is no law or addition and God decides He wants to arbitrarily hold all men guilty for the first man's sin, then all men are accountable for being guilty with the first man because all men are not free from God holding them to this. God's absolute sovereignty is the foundation for ethics, not man, or anything in reality.

For the God's elect children, the point is that though Jesus Christ's imputed righteous (ethics) they have completed the requirement of obeying God. They have been credited with a perfect Christian ethic that is fulfilled and the receipt printed off. After new birth they are given the Holy Spirit that causes(ontology) them to behave in accordance with the perfect obedience already credited to their accounts. That is, as Pharaoh could not resist God causing him to reject His command, the Elect cannot resist the Holy Spirit causing them to be sanctified.

The doctrine that God is **the Author of Sin and evil**, is contested by unbelieving, feeble and broken minds. It is not as if I wish to devote more than a quick passing statement on this doctrine, and rather focus on the gift of Jesus' righteousness and unmerited favor, and baptism of the Spirit; however, since it is such a contested doctrine by unbelief, it is beneficial to spend time affirming it.

This section on God being the author of sin could be said in our original syllogism. At this point any intelligent, spiritual and believing mind would not need additional instruction:

- H.1. If God causes all things, then God causes x (sin).
- H.2. God does cause all things.
- H.3. God causes sin.

We have been saying, God is the foundation of theology. In the section on epistemology, we learn this applies to all knowledge and intelligence. God is the foundation for knowledge (His divine revelation) and not something else like man's observations (empiricism). Now, we learn God is the foundation for reality, not something else like metaphysical dualism.

The many objections to this doctrine are as varied as they are stupid. Some say, "*if God is the author of sin,*" then God is a sinner. The Scriptures teach that sin is to break a law of God—a law which is commanded to mankind. Thus, my question is this. What law did God command to mankind, did He break? For those who are smart

will realize that was a loaded question. Or another way to ask this question. How much slower is the color green to the number 7? God's commandments, commanded to man do NOT categorically apply to God, because (here is a big secret) God is not man! So what if clouds float, what does that have to do with mountains? Do they float? Why do I have to say this?

Also, to say God is or does sin by being the author or sin, is to presuppose the doctrine of pantheism. If pantheism is not true, and it is not, then God is not what He creates or causes. If God does sin or is sin, because He is the author of sin, then God is a tree because He is the author of trees. It is sad that many Christians speak as if they have been more indoctrinated by eastern paganism and demons, than Scripture. They have their reward. Why is it that Christians when only slightly challenged with moderate questions automatically presuppose pantheism rather than Scripture?

Thus, you cannot rationally accuse God of sin, no matter the context; well, not unless you claim to be an authority over the LORD of angel armies, who holds Him accountable by the laws you command to Him. Such a person is not a Christian.

“Evil” can be defined by context in the Bible, of a natural evil, such as earthquakes; or as harm done to the body (and “good” as natural benefit and blessings) (See Isaiah 45:7). However, it can also refer to an ethical evil. Since an ethical evil is to break a law of God, and since God cannot rationally be applied that way, we will move on. This leaves us with the other option. Noah's flood, the Plagues of Egypt and sending of Israel to Babylon are all examples of God doing evil and authoring in these two senses. The greatest would be God creating all humans in sin (after Adam) and bound in sin and death, by His direct and absolute causality over His own creation.

Some disillusioned minds try to say something to the effect, *“yes, God does not break any laws, but if He does evil, then His nature is evil.”*

God is not what He creates. God is not what He causes. God is not what He authors. The bible does not teach pantheism. Why do I need to say this to adults, and to people who claim to be made wise by God? If God creates a river, guess what, He is NOT a river! If God authors the story of a bird flying north, God Himself is not a bird flying north. If God causes all humans to be born sinners and dominated by sin and death (as Romans 5 clearly says) God is not sin or death. If God authored a story of evil, of suffering and of pain, by flooding the world in water and killing all who live there—except one family—God is not what He authors. He is not evil, He is not suffering, He is not pain. God is not pantheism.

If C.S. Lewis authored people to die in his fantasy book (The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe), it is not rational to say Lewis is evil.¹⁰¹ If Lewis authored for a tree to be in his world somewhere, Lewis is not a tree. Why do I need to say this?

Again and Again, we see this logical fallacy of a category error show its ugly head. The frustrating thing is people living out their lives, normally do not have such a problem. It is not as if most people driving to work, suppose that their car is a cloud, and thus they can move their cloud car through other cloud cars. Yet, when pastors and theologians read the Bible, they suddenly lose their ability to remember category (x) is

¹⁰¹ There are clear subjects that if humans wrote about them in detail, would obviously be breaking some commands of God, who is an authority over man, and man is not free from God authority; this lawbreaking would make such a man sinful and evil.

not the same as another category (y). This is a battle ground that should never have existed. It is too stupid to waste much time on it. Thus, after refuting some of this nonsense, we will move on to the positive doctrine.

I know there are some who might still be thinking, “*but it just seems wrong.*” We already know not to base truth from feelings. How many have said, “it just FEELS wrong that God can forgive me all my sins,” and reject heaven. But from my experience many times those feelings stream from a person’s mind that has been transformed more into eastern paganism rather than the Scripture. If pantheism is true (All is God), then God causing mankind to be born as sinners, would equate to God also being a sinner. However, the Scripture rejects that “all is God,” but instead teaches that God is separate from His creation. It is sad when so-called Christians are so influenced by paganism they cannot distinguish it from Scripture.

Below Vincent Cheung will address this topic. He will address the central point about this doctrine, which is when Biblical passages deal with causality (metaphysics/ontology) about sin and evil, it ALWAYS shows God as doing it. When the Scripture is addressing the CATEGORY of (real/ultimate) causality, it says God is doing it. The confusion comes from morons, who take passages of Scripture NOT dealing with the category of causality—about sin and evil—and irrationally make it about a different category. In essence, they make passages about numbers to be about color. One example is when someone quotes an Old Testament passage about a “free-will” offering, as proof that man is free—“relative” to God’s direct causality—to choose (free-will) what they want in a metaphysical dualism. If it was about the ethics of giving an offering to God, apart from your required tithing, because you love God so much, then it is about ethics and love. It is not about ultimate causality. This can be said of every example I have seen brought up to deny God’s sovereignty over all things, including evil and sin.

Was the passage about causality or about ethics? Is it a description of an event, or explaining the ultimate cause behind the event described? Job describes the events of Satan bringing harm to Job and his family. However, these beginning chapters do not explain the ultimate cause behind the events, with the exception that it shows God enticing Satan about Job, not the other way around. At the end, it reads the friends of Job, comforted Job for all the “evil” that God brought to him. This passage is explaining the ultimate level causality. Remember, this ending passage is not one of Job’s bad counselors. It is God, through the writer, giving an infallible testimony of the events. God says, “I brought evil upon Job; I did it.”

“In contrast, the biblical approach to this type of questions and objections is not to justify God, but to rebuke man for making the challenge in the first place.

Our passage from Isaiah 45 is one example:

I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God....I am the LORD, and there is no other.

I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things....

Does the clay say to the potter, "What are you making?" Does your work say, "He has no hands"?

Woe to him who says to his father, "What have you begotten?" or to his mother, "What have you brought to birth?"

In other words, "I am the only God. Whether it is prosperity or disaster, I am the doer of all these things – there is not another God to do them. How dare you question me about this? Who are you to object?"

Although this verse might not settle every detail, unlike James 1:13, it is relevant to metaphysics. He is the only God, and this is inseparably connected to the fact that it is this one and only God who causes "all these things," including both prosperity and disaster. He is the doer of them all. This is a denial of any type of dualism – there is not another power that can cause prosperity or disaster.

Contrary to the traditional explanation, God does not say, "Oh, no, I am not the author of sin. Although I am the ultimate cause of all things, I distance myself from directly causing evil by establishing secondary causes and free agents. So although I create and sustain all things, men freely sin by thinking and acting according to their own dispositions. The evil dispositions come from Adam. As for how Adam got his evil dispositions...well, it will just have to remain a mystery for you." If this is the answer, why not jump right to the mystery and save us all some time?

The Bible never responds this way. There are many passages saying that God causes all things, and the metaphysics behind it is explained by God's omnipotence – the same omnipotence that created everything. On the other hand, all the passages that people use to deny that God is the author of sin or to prove compatibilism are always mere descriptions of events and motives, without dealing with the metaphysical cause of those events and motives.

Instead of giving the popular answer, which is weak, evasive, incoherent, and confusing, God unashamedly declares, "Yes, I do all these things. What are you going to do about it? Who are you to even ask me about it?" When it comes to metaphysics, including God's relationship to human decisions, whether for good or for evil, this is how the Bible responds."¹⁰²

Vincent points out that when James is talking about God not tempting, it is not dealing with metaphysics; rather, about a description of an event and categories of ethics and accountability. Vincent points out that if God were to say, "go kill this person," because it is God who says it, it is a command, and thus you must obey it; it would not be a temptation. Temptation is to persuade a person to disobey a command of God. God is the one who command man. The point is that God cannot "directly" tempt anyone because that would be a category fallacy. Whatever God tells you, because you are not free from His authority to hold you accountable, you are responsible to obey His command. Temptations are persuasions, which are not directly God, to convince you to disobey God's command. These persuasions stimulate "your own" (not God's, but yours) fleshly desires for evil.

This is a description about an event, it is not about the category of the ultimate cause behind the event. Therefore, to make this passage in James about ontology is a

¹⁰² Vincent Cheung, *The Author of Sin*. 2014. Pg 7

category fallacy. Because cannon balls are round like oranges (because they are different categories) you cannot eat a cannon ball. If a passage is not dealing with ultimate causality you, and you irrationally make it so, you are both stupid and wicked. Only God gets to make categories and mold the world like playdough, not you!

Here are a few passages that deal with real causality, and they say God does it.

Deuteronomy 32:4, "*All His ways are justice.*" - by definition.

"The LORD is righteous in everything He does." Psalm 145:17 NTL

This means whatever God does is always just and always righteous. Since what God commands man does not apply to Himself, we know what is good and just for God by what He does. If God moves His left finger, it is just and righteous. If God sends or withholds rain, it is just. If God decided to save some sinners by His Son Jesus, it is just and righteous because He does it. If God decided to deceive people or kill them or whatever, it is by definition just and righteous because He does it. All He does is just and righteous. When God ordered the genocide of people groups in the book of Joshua, it is a "just" and "righteous" choice for Him; however, if any human would have authored such a choice it would have been sin (lawlessness) because it goes against God's law commanded to man.

Joshua 11:20, "*For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might utterly destroy them, and that they might receive no mercy, but that He might destroy them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.*"

It entered God's mind to kill the babies and daughters of these nations with the sword and fire. Therefore, God hardened their hearts so that His Will could be done on earth. Although it was by Joshua's sword, yet, Joshua was a secondary cause. I say "secondary cause" (for sake of relating to some peoples limited knowledge of this subject) only in relation to other created objects; and thus, a more accurate term would be relationships between "*secondary OBJECTS*," rather than cause. Joshua was created by God, commanded by God and (prov.21:1) is moved secretly by God (Prov.20:24); and therefore, God says, "*I destroyed them.*" (Josh.24:8). Just as Acts 17 says, "*we live move and have our being in God,*" and not some other causality. What is important about this event is that it is talking about ultimate causality or that is, the real causality behind the event. The categories are the categories we are seeking answers for. Rather than dealing with "free-will" offerings that have nothing to do with the category real causality we are looking at Scripture that is addressing the topic. These passages, where God is like a man testifying on the podium in court, says, "*I did it.*" God does not shy away by saying, "I allowed it," or some nonsense like this; rather, "*I destroyed them.*"

This for any man would be evil. God is the author if evil, if evil is defined as bad things happening to humans, to their comfort and peace (etc.), by God's plan and causality. Whether you say God is, or is not the author of evil, you must define "evil" in a way that would actually be intelligible when relative to God.

God is the author of evil in these 3 senses: (1) bringing harm to people, (2) being the first to conceive, to orchestrated and plan out this harm (God's decrees), (3) being the

metaphysical power making this evil to happen. Because God does all 3 it is obvious why He says, *"I did it,"* all the time in Scripture.

Now on to point 2 and 3 consider:

Both the story of David taking a census and of Job, God in both places is ascribed with the credit -(in the sense of being the mastermind and initiating) for why the event took place. Although the Devil was the secondary object for why both David sinned and why the evil happened to Job, yet God claims credit for the events.

2 Samuel 24:1, *"Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'"*

(Also Chronicles 21:1) Job 42:11, *"Then all his brothers, all his sisters... comforted [Job] for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him.."*

God claims authorship of this evil, for the reason of initiating and orchestrating this out. In the case of Job, God started the whole thing by asking the Devil about Job. Many miss this! It was God who "first" asked the Devil about Job! This means the idea to cause Job evil (i.e. harm) was by God, not Satan. God enticed the Devil into harming Job by being the first one to bring up Job in the conversation. Although the evil was produced by other secondary created objects, Yet it was God who initiated and designed the event to happen. God both upholds and moves Satan, as He does with all things by His power.

Imagine if I see a ball rolling past me, that I did not have any involvement in its current motion, and deciding I liked where it was going, allowed it to continue on its path. However, if I picked up a ball and pushed it into a certain direction, then how can someone be so stupid and misleading to describe this event as, *"Oshea allowed this ball to go in this direction."* Did I not start the motion? Thus, it is not that I allowed it, but I caused it.

Job 42:11, *"They consoled Job him for all the adversity (evil) that the LORD had brought upon him."* This Hebrew word for "adversity" is mostly translated as "evil " in other passages. In this light, God is the author of evil! Not the devil, God is credited for being the author of the evil done to Job, because God is the one who initiated this, planned it, enticed the Devil to do it, and made sure it happened, for even the Devil is upheld by God's power. It was God therefore, who came up with the idea to harm Job first, and not Satan. Only after enticing Satan with the idea with Job, did Satan voice up the idea of destroying him.

Also, because this whole affair was truly started by God, and not by Satan which God allowed, but because it was from the beginning all by God's design, God demands all the Glory and praise for the good and mercy produced by the end result!

Furthermore, God gave the dreams to Joseph, which was the tipping point of his brothers wanting to kill him (Genesis 37:5,8). They were not mad enough to kill him. But God needed them to be, for He had a plan to save many through Joseph. The dreams were the thing to bring this about and God gave the dreams. Proverbs 20:24, *"A man's steps are of the LORD; How then can a man understand his own way?"* God, in this light, does not merely use things in motion, but rather, from the first initiation causes and orchestrates them into being and finishes them.

This can in some measure be illustrated when a person hires a hit man to take some one out, or hires a prostitute to seduce another person. The hiring person takes authorship for the action since, without their initiative or designing, then the evil act would have never taken place. If the human way of guilt is irrationally applied to God, then God is guilty, but again this is not applicable to God who is not under any authority to be guilty of anything. I only say this in this irrational-human way, to help some to begin to see that God is the author of evil.

Moreover, King David taking a census, was sin by David's part, it is said: 2 Samuel 24:1, *"Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'"* (Also Chronicles 21:1.) We read later in Chronicles 21:2 that God moved David by Satan. Like the story of Job, the scriptures credits God with "God moved David," even though there was a secondary object involved. The idea of David sinning was first conceived by God, and then God orchestrates this out by manipulating a secondary created object (Satan), that God directly controls and moves. Of course, David was not going to take the census! This is why we have this long passage of scripture showing why God went through all this effort to moved David to make this sinful choice through enticing the prince of Demons to harm David in this way. Think about that? Initially David was not going to sin. The actions of men are at God's disposal. Even though God decreed and caused and moved David to sin, David is still held "responsible," because responsibility assumes a Sovereign over you, not freedom.

In 1 Kings 22:19-23, God did not merely allow or use a lying spirit, which happened to be on its way to King Ahab. God first made a plan and decreed for Ahab to die in battle. God told Ahab through His prophet and Judah's king, not to go to war, for if Ahab did, then it would be a losing effort with much death of God's covenant people. Therefore, as King of God's people going to this war was a sin! Yet, Ahab through much pleading by the King of Judah actually and initially chose to obey God and decided not to war! Many miss this! He actually made the right choice! If Ahab did not, then why did God go through the trouble to send a lying spirit? But God reached a boiling point with Ahab and wanted to kill him. Thus, He decreed for Ahab to sin by going to war, and by this sin God would kill him in battle.

Therefore, God requested for an evil spirit to be the secondary object, that would persuade Ahab to sin, by going to war. I say this to point out how many persons falsely describe God's workings as merely allowing or using things already in motion. Here, God did not allow an evil spirit or king Ahab to go through what they were already doing, but He planned, and then worked this plan into existence. Ahab already chose to obey God, but God wanted to kill him, and so God needed a reversal of things already in motion. This is as far from permission and allowing as it gets; a total reversal of things in motion! When people speak of God's sovereignty as mere permission they might as well be speaking about pink dragons and purple care-bears.

NLT 1 Kings 22:19-23, *"I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the armies of heaven around him, on his right and on his left. And the LORD said, 'Who can entice Ahab to go into battle against Ramoth-gilead so that he can be killed there?' There were many suggestions, until finally a spirit approached the LORD and said, 'I can do it!' " 'How will you do this?' the LORD asked. 'And the spirit replied, 'I will go out and inspire all Ahab's prophets to speak lies.' " 'You will succeed,' said the LORD. 'Go ahead and do*

it.' "So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of your prophets. For the LORD has determined disaster for you."

This passage shows that God did hold a meeting with some demons, (among the other host of Heaven) enticed them, picked one particular convincing lying spirit and gave it His divine pronouncement of success. God did not merely allow this, because it was God who first voiced up the idea of wanting Ahab to sin by going to war, when God told Ahab not to. God is the one who moved the ball first. It was not already moving north; rather, the ball was moving south. God planned to push ball north. *"Who can entice Ahab to go into battle so that he can be killed."* In this light, with demons who love to harm people and lie, God "enticed" them by telling them of His plan of destroying Ahab. Demons love to destroy people! If there was ever a situation where the definition of enticed belonged, it is here. It was not a demon who first said, "let us help Ahab sin by going to war so that God will have even more reason to kill him." God merely picked out one particularly zealous demon after enticing it with His original idea.

God conceived the initial idea of killing Ahab. God spoke in the presence of some demons and caused them to hear His idea of killing Ahab. God picked out a zealous demon who liked His plan to Kill Ahab. Since all things move and have their being in God, the demon who went to be a lying spirit, was in relation to God, caused by God and moved by God. Proverbs 21:1 says the king's heart is in the hands of God and God moves it where He wishes. Man is the height of creation and a king is the height of man; thus, by saying God moves the king's heart, how much more does he move any other heart. Thus, God caused Ahab to except what the lying spirit said. God, from beginning to end, caused, caused and caused. God is the real causality of all things. Therefore, God is the ultimate author of all evil and sin. There is no dualism in Christian metaphysics.

Remember, this is a passage that is dealing with the category of "what is the real cause behind the events in the world." The answer given is, "God did it." This passage is not merely describing an event, but is discussing the cause behind it.

Again, secondary objects in reality, (like lying spirits) are created by God, first enticed by God, are sustained by God, directed by God and even have their own hearts and feet secretly directed by God. All things in creation move live and have their being in God. It is not in man or demons to direct their steps, God does; with or without them knowing it! In the since of ontology, God is the author of evil. When the scripture does go behind the scenes and show what is happening, it always shows God in this level of absolute sovereign control. This is the Sovereign God of Scripture, anything less is paganism.

Because God is the author of evil in the sense of initiating, and orchestrating and being in control of the metaphysical, it was not said that the LORD allowed a lying Spirit to be in the mouth, but that,

"the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth."

"If a [false] prophet is enticed to utter a [false] prophecy, I THE LORD HAVE ENTICED that prophet, and I will destroy him," (Ezekiel.14:9 NKJV).¹⁰³

"And if a prophet is deceived and gives a message anyway, it is because I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet. I will stand against such prophets and cut them off from the community of Israel," (NLT Ezekiel 14:9).

God is Sovereign and does whatever He wishes, even if it involves enticing a false prophet to utter a false prophecy and then punish this false prophet for this very thing God enticed them to do. This is the Christian God; this is the only God. This is the sole ontology that rules the world. There is no dualism in Christian epistemology nor in Christian ontology.

Luke teaches how God caused the death of His Son, by moving and causing men to perform the evil acts against His Son.

"For in truth both Herod and Pontius Pilate, together with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, assembled together in this city against your holy servant Jesus whom you anointed, to do all that ***your hand*** and ***plan*** had predestined to take place,"

Acts 4:27-28 LEB.

Part of God's plan was for sinful acts to be done against His Son, so that our atonement could be accomplished. There is more that God's "hand" caused people to do, but not less than these sinful acts. And the emphasis here, is not merely describing an event, but the real cause behind the sinful treatment of God's Son. God says, "MY HAND CAUSED IT." The Scripture says God's "hand" made these people commit these lawless acts against God's Son.

And so, after reading passages of Scripture that do not merely describe, "*this happened*," but describes, "*this is what caused this to happen*," we only read God as the real cause of all things. There is not one passage in the Bible that deals with this present subject and credits a different cause other than God.

As per our systematic theology maximum: God is the foundation for all real causality, not something pathetic like man, electrons or demons.

Contradiction of Attributes:

"All things in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all things were created through him and for him, and he himself is before all things, and in him all things are held together, and he himself is the head of the body, the church,"
(Colossians 1:16-18 LEB).

¹⁰³ Emphasis added by author.

“ [Jesus is] ... upholding all things by the word of His power,”
Hebrews 1:3.

Strong's Greeks defines “upholding,” in relation to a person to another external object as, “...1 to carry. 1a, to carry some burden. 1b, to move by bearing; move... 1c, to bear up i.e. uphold (keep from falling)... 3 to bring, bring to, bring forward. 3a, to move to, apply.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, the idea of upholding is more about direct force (carry, bearing, moving, bringing) and not meant to convey the idea that created things have causality in themselves, and Jesus' is merely allowing their movements. Jesus' powerful word is the moving, bringing, carrying and applying, not something else. Jesus is the foundation for moving, bringing, and causing, not something else. If upholding is only meant as upholding what is already there, then it would mean Jesus is sustaining “His own designs for creation” by His power, not sustaining creations own power (for it has no power in itself). God had a design for creation. He created it. And now He is faithfully, moment by moment, directly causing/upholding all created things to exist, in accordance to His own plans. In other words, God causes this, then He causes this, then He causes this, then He caused this (etc.).

“And [God] made from one man every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining their fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, to search for God,
in [God] we live and move and exist,”
(Acts 17:26, 28 LEB).

Paul says, we both (1) exist and (2) move in God, NOT ourselves, NOT something else. In philosophy verbiage, this is (1) metaphysics and (2) ontology; or in laymen's terms, (1) created objects and (2) how created objects interact with each other. While some might affirm God in metaphysics (God created us to exist), they deny God in ontology, (God allows us to move with the self-sustaining ontology we possess). It is painfully straightforward such a stance contradicts what Paul says. These passages are not merely descriptions of events, but the causality of the events. We are asking about the real cause behind all things, these are passages that are directly addressing this topic. They affirm in universal statements that *God is the real cause in all things*.

Below is Isaiah 45 (most of). Yahweh is making a few points that deal with our current topic. God is not merely giving a description of an event, but the real cause behind the event. God is talking about the impending (and some about salvation) doom of Jerusalem (and the nature of Israel) and the events that are surrounding this. God's reply is that “He did it,” not something else. The chapter starts with how God is controlling Cyrus. (The broader category is how God used Babylon to judge, but now God is rising up Cyrus to both judge Babylon and to do what He wants with Israel (etc)). God makes them into the clay pots as He wants, uses them and when He is finished using them, He discards them like trash.

The same will be said by God in Isaiah 46 and in 29 about God's control over reality like a molder and clay.

¹⁰⁴ Strong, J. (1995). Enhanced Strong's Lexicon. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

God is describing something like a child building a Lego Set. *“I moved this piece here. And then I moved this other piece over there. I put this other piece over there, so that this piece I move here will be connected to it. I then connected this piece on this other piece.”*

This passage deals with both God’s control of the knowledge about the future, and about His control over all reality to make His plans about the future exist. He describes His control over reality like a man working clay pots. The potter, not the inanimate clay, forms the pot. The entire creation is in essence one clay pot that God molds; the pot does not mold itself. God molds all reality to His design. The context is about people, kingdoms, punishment, salvation, and material things being moved and shifted around. God says He molds all these people and material things as a potter over His clay. The manner in which Paul picks up this analogy in Romans 9 is used in a similar way to show God’s absolute and direct control over all reality, including human choices. Thus, if we let the Bible interpret itself, this strong analogy of the clay is as strong as it naturally comes across.

God’s monopoly on all causality is stated in this section as creation (existence). About causing things to move (causality). And about judgement and salvation for mankind. The doctrine of salvation is under the category of ontology because it is about how God is using His causality in relation to man’s salvation.

Another topic Yahweh brings up is His direct creation and control over evil and good, light and darkness. If we use the definition that evil is harm to people, and since the darkness and evil God is talking about, includes punishments of nations and people, then God is saying He is the author of darkness. He is the metaphysical author of harm.¹⁰⁵ He is the author of evil. God says, “I did it, and there is none besides Me who controls this.”

Like our theology maximum, “God is the Foundation,” Yahweh has His own theology maximum here, which is,

“I am God, there is no other beside me.”

I am God. The context is dealing with the real cause behind events and the knowledge of the future. God says this absolute control over reality ONLY belongs to HIM, and no one else. This is why God’s absolute sovereignty is equated to God Himself, because God Himself treats this topic as a maximum for being Yahweh.

There is no other beside me. This is why we keep saying, “there is no dualism with Christian ontology and metaphysics,” because God says so. Thus, to say there is no ontological dualism in Christianity is nothing more than a philosophy way of saying the Scriptural terminology, *“There is None Beside Me.”* The context defines this in the topic at hand, which is total and absolute control over reality and the future. Control over humans, human choices, good, evil and material things.

Notice how many times God says this, over and over and over again, in relation to what is the real cause of things and in context of many different things. By such a strong and repeated emphasis, Yahweh shows this is something He wants man to understand. God says He created (metaphysics). He is now moving and grasping and pushing His creation around with His hand, power and control (ontology). God says this is about His decrees to obtain His own ends. He is the only power in all this and

¹⁰⁵ I got this phrase, “God is the metaphysical author of evil,” from Vincent Cheung.

so there is no other causality out there. Thus, God can tell us what the future is, because there is NO other real cause in the world to stop Him. His plans will happen, and they cannot be stopped.

1. Thus says Yahweh to his anointed one, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped..

2... and I will level the mountains. I will break the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron.

3. And I will give you the treasures of darkness and treasures of secret places
so that you may know that I am Yahweh,

5. I am Yahweh, and there is none besides me; besides me there is no god.
I gird you though you do not know me,

6. so that they may know from the rising of the sun and from the west that
there is none besides me; I am Yahweh and there is none besides me.

7. I form light and I create darkness; I make peace and I create evil;
I am Yahweh; I do all these things.

8... let the earth open so that salvation may be fruitful, and let it cause
righteousness to sprout along with it. I myself, Yahweh, have created it.

9. Woe to the one who strives with his maker, a potsherd among potsherds of
earth!

Does the clay say to the one who fashions it, 'What are you making?'
and 'Your work has no hands'?

12. I myself made the earth, and I created humankind upon it.

I, my hands, stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.

13. I myself have stirred him up in righteousness, and I will make all his paths
smooth.

He himself shall build my city, and he shall set my exiles free,

17. Israel is saved by Yahweh with everlasting salvation;

18. For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens,
he is God, who formed the earth and who made it. He himself established it;
he did not create it as emptiness— he formed it *for* inhabiting.

"I am Yahweh and there is none besides me.

19. I have spoken not in secrecy, in a place, a land, of darkness,
I have not said to the descendants of Jacob, 'Seek me in vain!'

I, Yahweh, am speaking righteousness, declaring uprightness.

20. Assemble and come...

21... Who made this known from former times, declared it from of old?

Was it not I, Yahweh? And there is no other god besides me,

a righteous God besides me, and no savior besides me.

22 Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth,

for I am God and there is none besides me.

23 I have sworn by myself; a word that shall not return has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness

(LEB)

What is interesting in this passage below, is that God says it is a “perversion” to reverse the role of potter and clay. These sinners think they ultimately steer and move reality by their molding and choices. They think their observations and imaginary free-will is the real cause. They see all, and God does not see them. God says this is a reversal of reality. God’s choices move and mold reality. These fools do not understand and see reality as it is; God however knows all things.

“They say, “Who sees us? And who knows us?”

Your perversity! As if a potter shall be regarded as the clay! That the product of its maker says, “He did not make me,” and the thing made into shape says of its potter, “He has no understanding.”

(Isaiah 29:15-17 LEB)

Again, as with Isaiah 45, in chapter 46 God tells us, “He is God and there is no other.” The context for what it means to be “God” and “no other” is about His sovereign control over all reality (as a potter over clay) and perfect knowledge of the future. The context defines the idea of “no other beside Me,” with moving and shaping both reality itself and where reality is heading. God says, in this context of real causation and choices, “there is no other.” Thus, in God’s own direct dictation, to be God is equated to absolute and direct sovereign control and knowing all things. This is where we get another systematic theology maximum. The definition of God is contradictive to dualism. The only definition of “God” is having absolute and direct sovereign control over all things, and anything less than this definition, is false. Like with the doctrine of the Trinity, because divine revelation is the only knowledge that exist, the Trinity is the only rational and intelligent definition for monotheism; and likewise absolute and direct control over all reality (with no dualism “there is NO other”) is the only rational and intelligent definition of God.

Isaiah 46:6–11 (LEB)

Those who lavish gold from the purse and weigh out silver in the balance scales; hire a goldsmith and he makes him a god; they bow down, indeed they bow in worship. They carry it on their shoulder; they support it and they set it in its place, and it stands in position. It cannot be removed from its place; even

when he cries out to it, it does not answer. It does not save him from his trouble.

Remember this and pluck up courage! Call to mind, you transgressors! Remember the former things from a long time ago, for I am God and there is none besides me, God and there is none like me, who from the beginning declares the end, and from before, things that have not been done, who 46says, 'My plan shall stand,' and, 'I will accomplish all my wishes,' who calls a bird of prey from the east, the man of his plan from a country from afar. Indeed I have spoken; indeed I will bring it to being. I have formed it; indeed I will do it.

As a quick side note: God is mocking the idea that a god for whom a person worships is not able to answer and not able to save the practitioner. Yahweh thinks it is a ridiculous notion that a so-called God, cannot and does not save his practitioners.

This is why a theology of unbelief in God's promises of health, wealth, power, miracles and various supernatural deliverances, makes a public mockery of God, as if He is no different from a wooden idol.

At this point, there would be no need to look for individual passages to affirm this, because these broad passages are precise and clear about affirming God with a universal causality of all things.

If I affirm, "All dogs are mammals," but then in particulars I affirm, "this dog is a fish," then I just contradicted my first statement, and I should be mocked, and my knowledge of the whole subject disregarded as defective. The same would apply to Scripture. For sake of argument, if Scripture denies its universal truth claims in particulars, it would cause the Scripture as a first principle of knowledge, to lead to skepticism, but skepticism denies the law of non-contradiction. That is, if so, to be true, the bible would have to be false.

However, we will look at a few examples.

"Are there any among the false gods of the nations who can cause rain? Or can the heavens [of their own will] give showers? Are You [alone] not He, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait [expectantly] for You, for You have made all these things [the heavens and the rain]," (Jeremiah 14:22 AMPC).

"Are there any among the idols of the nation who cause rain to pour? Or can the heavens give showers? Is it not you, O Yahweh our God? Therefore, we hope in you, for you do all these things," (LEB).

Here we read a rhetorical question being asked, as often scripture does. The answer is obvious. Of course, there are no wooden or metal idols that have the power to cause rain. Of course, the sky, wind, water, land and clouds do not have power to cause rain. Who could be so stupid as to believe that? When Yahweh says there is no other beside Him, we thus understand from passages like this, that Christianity not only denies dualism with other intellectual powers, but also dualism with creation itself. That is, the earth is not set on its own power, so that creation with its own power causes it to rain. Therefore, *just as* make-believe idols have no inherent power to

produce rain, likewise, “the sky itself,” (with all the things like air, water (etc.)) has no inherent cause to produce rain. Many might kick at this, but it is precisely what Scripture teaches. This passage categorizes the created world’s “causality” over itself on equal ground with false idols.

Not only is the definition of causality defined in the negative here, it is also defined in the positive. “*Yahweh does all these things.*” There is no necessary connection of water, air, sky, clouds (etc.) to rain. God is the only inherent and real connection to rain happening. There is no intellectual being or created thing that is beside God that has inherent and necessary connection within reality. Only God. God is faithful and so when the bible talks about clouds and rain, it means God is faithful to regularly cause rain, on the occasion of, but separate from the clouds.

There is no inherent or necessary connection (*cause and effect, or even correlation*) of heavy clouds and then rain; there is no necessary connection of fire, and then light being produced. Idols do not cause light to have a relationship to fire, and equally nor does fire inherently produce a relationship to light. No. “*Yahweh does these things.*” The world is predictable, not because creation with its power operates regularly; rather, God acts in a regular way, as He causes all things to happen in reality. God, on the occasion that He causes a fire, will cause light to be present. Fire and light have no inherent connection, except the connection that God has revealed a relationship about them in the bible and so He regularly causes these two things to happen together.

Jonathan Edwards is famous for calling this “continuous creation,” and a doctrine called occasionalism. Occasionalism, is simply applying God’s direct and absolute control to “every point of CONNECTION” within reality. Vincent Cheung is better and more precise with his definition and explanation. If God is sovereign over all things, then He is sovereign over ‘x’, ‘y’ and ‘z’. Thus, on this point of “z,” about the relationship of one created thing to another, whether it is about night and day, a human being and sleep, or something small like electrons and protons (if there is such a thing), God directly and absolutely caused it, on His arbitrary choice. God is the only real cause in points of connection for everything.

Take for example the human brain and invisible thoughts that happen in the spirit of a man. Reality or created objects are not a real connection of cause and effect. On the occasion God causes Johnny to think thought “x,” God chooses to cause the brain to behave in “y” manner. After death, there is no brain. The spirit man, is separated from the body; however, the mind still thinks.

Before God created there was no physical matter or reactions of matter; there was no outside knowledge or law about such things. There was only God. From this alone we understand causality within creation is only by God’s arbitrary sovereign choices. God is called the Logos. Jesus is the law of contradiction, identity and excluded middle. These are just names for describing important regular motions of God’s mind. Thus, it is no surprise that the physical world God created will also work in these motions, for the mind that is the law of non-contradictions made it and is upholding it into existence every moment. This also goes for “if....then,” [Modus Ponens] logics regarding what is cause and effects or correlations. God made up the, “if...thens,” out of nothing [if there is lightning then there is thunder], and then upholds these in a regular way, by His own free choice.

We are accustomed to seeing relationships in creation, but reality only by God's "Mind" choosing regularly what it is to be. And so, some irrationally think it is natural for physical matter to operate the way we see it. It is not that certain molecules naturally or inherently behave in a certain way; rather, God arbitrarily decides how He wants causality, or connections between certain objects, to operate within His creation. God then creates molecules and objects based on those decisions. Since no created object has sustaining power or causality, God must uphold them by His own choice and power. And so, He re-creates them every moment, and chooses to cause molecules (x, y and z) to move in a regular way. Because God is regular in how He keeps choosing to make molecule x, y and z behave, we can trace them out and use science as a practical tool to be useful.

In recap, the way we see cause and effect is not a natural occurrence of creation, but only a demonstration of God's sovereignty being regular about relationships between created objects. God sovereignly chooses in what degrees of past motions to bring into the next moment, and then chooses to what degree those past motions He arbitrarily wants to bring into the next moment (etc) (our thoughts, our emotions, our cars, stars, the earth, every drop of water, every pebble of sand, every atom and molecule, and the force of electromagnetism (etc.)). Therefore, by seeing "how much" involved God is in every moment of creation it is truly as much a miracle as if we saw God create the beginning of the world. God must use the same energy that was used to create everything in the beginning out of nothing, in every moment afterwards, so that in a sense God has never stopped creating with the same breath-taking degree as He did in the beginning.

I remember reading verses like Hebrews 1:4 in my middle to late teens, and formulating and believing in a doctrine of occasionalism. I grew up in a Pentecostal church, and the terms John Calvin and predestination were four letter words. I did not know, nor was I taught about these doctrines. I got serious about reading the bible in my teens. I did not know the term occasionalism, but it is what I learned by just reading the Bible. I also formulated my own doctrine of God's sovereignty, similar to that of Martin Luther's, Bondage of the Will, on my own, by just reading the Bible. I lacked some accuracy and terms, but I was able to understand the basics easily enough. I then began to read Jonathan Edwards because I found "someone who thought like I did on these topics." I say this to say, these are basic doctrines anyone can get with just elementary bible reading. After this I began to read Vincent Cheung, realizing how bad most Reformed are at teaching God's sovereignty, by only narrowly assenting to it on a few points, but denying it in application on many aspects of reality.

The **attributes** of God show God to be absolutely and directly sovereign, even before we get to passages of Scripture which precisely relate to the subject.

In fact, if you pay attention to the Scripture, God's absolute sovereignty is sometimes stated in light of affirming His transcendent attributes. It is not as if there is a separate attribute of God's power or sovereignty that makes His intelligent Mind or immutability, or infinity; rather, it is the opposite. Such divine attributes make God directly and absolutely sovereign. And this is where some make a mistake in reading the bible on the subject. There are scriptures that clearly talk about God's absolute power and sovereignty, and they conveniently make it easy to affirm a doctrine of

God's absolute sovereignty. However, if all you do is a word search for such things, then you are only getting a partial viewpoint of the subject. The attributes of God, His Nature itself, makes it so that He cannot but be directly and absolutely sovereign over all things.

For example, going back to the moron who said, "*God gave up some of His sovereignty, so that we can have free-will.*" Not only does this deny God's sovereignty over all things, because He gave it up, but it makes God "mutable." This contradicts God's Nature itself, which is "immutable."

For an illusion considered logic. Some people thinking themselves smart in logic, will focus on more advance logic, but all the while their arguments violate the basic laws of logic, like Identity, Excluded Middle and the Law of Noncontradiction. Martin Luther caught Erasmus in something similar when Martin pointed out that the category of indicative and imperative are not the same. Thus, despite the complicated argument that Erasmus was making, he violated the most basic laws of logic by making two different categories the same.

This happens often when theologians and pastors handle the doctrine of God's sovereignty. They get longwinded about their points, but all the while, they have violated the basics of God's nature; making God's Nature contradict itself. The Bible and particularly in the New Testament, is always telling us to go on to maturity. Thus, we ought to strive to do even advance theology. Yet, if you cannot do basic theology without contradiction, then you have no business doing advance maneuvers.

Often when I see people appealing to God's attributes about a so-called contradiction of His nature, it is about good and evil. Some make it about *ethics* ('good and evil' is sometimes defined this way in the Bible, but it can mean more), but since it is categorically impossible for God to be under an authority, ethics do not apply to God. However, God does proclaim some truths about His moral nature, such as His love and hate, etc. I mention this to highlight that many make mistakes about good and evil regarding God's Nature, because they often apply categories that only apply to man and irrationally place God in them. If God says His nature is immutable, then if He changes that is a contradiction of His nature itself. If God commands man not to take vengeance, it is a human ethic, not a universal truth about God's nature. God's command to man (human ethic) is a different category about God's nature itself (metaphysics). To go from premise(human ethics) to conclusion (God's metaphysics) in this way is a fallacy and stupid. The conclusion would be a non-sequitur by having more information than what the premises contain.

What we know about God's Nature is what the Scripture tells us and what we can deduce. For example, the Scripture says all that God does is just. Thus, if God moves His leg, it is just. It does not say, "God adheres to this higher principle and authority of justice, and so He will always act justly in x, y and z." It says all of God's actions are just.

"He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect. Everything he does is just and fair. He is a faithful God who does no wrong; how just and upright he is!" (Deut. 32:4 NLT)

Yahweh is righteous in all his ways, and loyal in all his works.

Yahweh is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry for help, and saves them. Yahweh protects all those who love him, but all the wicked he will exterminate.”

(Psalm 145:17-20 LEB)

“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” John 5:30 (NKJV)

“Therefore thus say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord Yahweh: “Not for your sake am I about to act, house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you defiled among the nations to which you went. And I will consecrate my great name, which was profaned among the nations and which you have profaned in the midst of them, and the nations will know that I am Yahweh!”’ a declaration of the Lord Yahweh, when I show myself holy before their eyes,” (Ezekiel 36:22–23 LEB)

“Taste and see that Yahweh is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him,” (Psalm 34:8 LEB).

God [cannot be tempted] by evil, and he himself tempts no one...

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of change,” (James 1:13–17 LEB)

When you combine that God is good itself, and there is no higher principle of good (or love) and God chooses what He wants, then goodness is arbitrary. Some do not like this God, and thus, as usual, hate God for the most stupid and debase reasons. Like with the Trinity, because God’s revelation is the only knowledge that exists, this is the only rational and intellectual definition of monotheism or good. All other definitions, must presuppose this revelation to make their own man-centered version of good. However, this divine revelation says only it is true and all others are false. For their definition of good to be true, it must be false at the same time.

Vincent talks about good and evil and does not shy away from calling it arbitrary. He defines it this way,

What the Bible teaches is that that goodness is inherent in God's nature, and therefore the definition of goodness naturally proceeds from him. This way, God is not subject to some standard of goodness external to himself, and the definition of goodness is not arbitrary in the sense of being meaningless and trivial, but is founded on God's immutable nature. For example, the Bible says that it is good to love. This proceeds from God's nature, since "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).

The Bible says that, "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). It also says that, "God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone" (James 1:13), but that, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17). This means that God's nature is inherently good, and it is the objective standard of goodness on which all judgment on

these issues must be based. God is good, and he is the source of all goodness. And even though he is of necessity the ultimate cause of evil, as he is the ultimate cause of everything, there is no evil in him.

Goodness founded on God's nature is necessary and unchangeable. For example, truth is a quality inherent in the divine nature. It is good for us to pursue and tell the truth because it is God's nature to tell the truth. Since truth is God's nature, this is why it is good, since all that God is, is good. God's commands concerning truthfulness, therefore, are based on his eternal nature. This means that God will never approve of actions such as perjury, or any type of lying as moral (Exodus 20:16; Ephesians 4:25; Revelation 21:8). God's commandments concerning truth are necessary and unchangeable. This type of goodness is founded on God's own nature, and it is immutable, just as God is immutable (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).

Now, God defines goodness, and thus what he is and does is *ipso facto* good. Whatever he is and whatever he does is good, which means that no standard of goodness external to God may be used to judge an act of God as good or evil. We derive the very definition of goodness from what God is and does.

As mentioned, we discover what is good or moral through the Scripture. And earlier it is said that the view saying that the definition of goodness is in a sense arbitrary cannot be dismissed. For example, it was good for Old Testament believers to be circumcised solely because God had commanded it. Therefore, it was good for an Old Testament believer to be circumcised, and evil for him not to be circumcised.

The definition of goodness is therefore "arbitrary," but only in the sense that God's will determines everything, including the standard of goodness. By arbitrary, therefore, we do not mean, "*existing or coming about seemingly at random or by chance or as a capricious and unreasonable act of will*," but rather something similar to, "*not restrained or limited in the exercise of power: ruling by absolute authority*" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition).

The doctrine of the simplicity of God dictates that we regard his attributes as one, which means that there can be no separation between his will and nature. All things, in this sense, are arbitrary but necessary, since there is no explanation to anything more final than to say that God has willed it so, and there is nothing prior to God's will that dictates or influences what he wills. He is love and he wills to be love; he wills to be love and he is love. God's will is the final explanation; there is no prior cause. ¹⁰⁶

As with Love and Hate, we are dealing with this section on Good and Evil, as a lead up to the Decrees of God. We will begin to see broadly how the decrees are ordered.

God is good in His nature. There is no other beside God. There is no standard over God, that defined goodness. God's nature, (and since His nature is not physical, but is His spiritual and intellectual Mind), and His choices is the standard of what is good. James says in context of God being the source of "*EVERY GOOD gift*," that with Him

¹⁰⁶ Vincent Cheung. *On Good and Evil*. 2002. Pg. 6-7 (www.vincentcheung.com)

there is “*no shadow of turning.*” James reminds us about the immutability of God as He tells us God is the source for all good things, which are gifted to us, and then by implication—to all creation. We are also reminded that God’s definition of good and evil, is both defined by His nature, and is defined by His arbitrary whim and commands for reality.

When James mentions the part about God’s goodness not changing, it means God is the standard of good that all other things are measured against as a starting point. Because God’s goodness is immutable and constant, it is a rational and intellectual metric to measure all other things against. To give an illustration. Scientists like to use light as a measure because of its constant speed. This consistency makes it a reliable way to measure other things as a starting point.¹⁰⁷ God is the starting point of good, all other things are measured against Him. Thus, it is always irrational to try to measure God against something. If I wanted to measure light against something else, I would need to presuppose light doesn’t have a measure (which would lead to having no standard of measurement) or presuppose light is not constant (if it is, then why bother with measuring light with light?), or disregard light as a measure and pick another starting point for a measure. To do this with God on any point would be blaspheme. To try and measure God against any standard you would need to presuppose God is not the standard. God is only used to measure the good of things against Himself, and never the other way around.

To try and measure if God did something good or not is like trying to measure how fast predicates and pronouns are against the speed of light. It is a category delusion. When we hear statements about “how can God be good if He did x or y,” we know someone just exposed how intellectually stupid and delusional they are. Because God is the measure of good, whatever He does and the reason for it is good. To disagree with what He did and why He did it, as not good, is the definition of being evil, because God is the only constant measure for good.

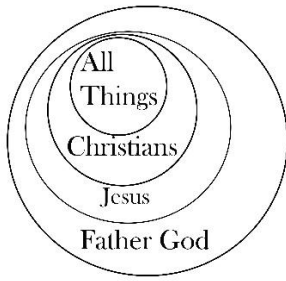
And so, we have talked about God’s nature as good. What does this look like for creation and man? What does this imply for how man lives?

“For everything belongs to you— whether Paul or Apollos or Peter, or the world, or life and death, or the present and the future.

Everything belongs to you, and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God,”
1 Corinthians 3:21–23 (NLT)

I will post a circle diagram to help show the categories that are being stated here.

¹⁰⁷ I do not say this as if I believe science can truly measure anything, because of its use of a triple fallacy.



Since there is no other causality or standard, then by implication, He alone is the only source. He does not change from this. Even if James' focus is only about the category of God to mankind, or to Christians, the point is still valid. This context of God being the source of good, is said in conjunction with the idea of light and darkness. No "shadow" of turning, for a shadow would contradict light. Thus, to say God is evil, is to say a contradiction, because God is good. That is, it is impossible for God to do evil, because He is good. Thus, every action God does is by definition good: any definition that deviates from this is a contradiction against reality. God being the source of good, all the time, does not ebb or slow down; it does not even get a little shadowy on Thursday afternoon. All light, all day and night.

If you consider that all creation/reality is summed up in the category of Christians, then for any good gift that creation is to receive, it must include the category of a good gift for Christians. That is, no aspect of reality (past or future) can receive a good gift without it being for the sake of Christians as well. And Christians cannot receive a good gift, without it being in the category and for the sake of Jesus, (etc.). Thus, all good things in creation/reality are from God; and only from God and ultimately for God; and this never changes.

As for man, considering what it means for him to perform good and evil, the Bible says without the law there is no sin. It also says that all sin is "lawlessness." Man is not inherently good like God. God defines what is good and how man is to do it. In this context, good and evil is about ethics. What is good, is what God says it is: this is by definition good. (Good can also be referred to as harm and benefit, and what is to be valued and not valued). This given to man, is the law. Even the gospel itself is a command, for God commands all to repent and believe in His Son. This is good. God reveals what is the definition of good. We are to understand this definition and live out this definition. Evil is to contradict this definition.

Thus, when Hebrews 5 says the mature are those who understand good and evil, if they do not understand this basic truth about God being the standard of good by nature and choice, then they expose themselves to be immature Christians, even before they get to specifics. Do not let these immature people be your teachers.

Now, the Bible says that if there is no moral law, there would be no sin. Therefore, sin is a transgression of the moral law. Since the moral law states that which is good, evil is thus a deviation from objective goodness, and is therefore not really a thing in itself. What follows from this is that goodness can exist without evil, but evil cannot exist without objective goodness. If evil, as it seems, is an "ought not," then it cannot exist without an "ought." It is possible for there to be an objective standard of goodness without any deviation from it,

but it is not possible for there to be a deviation from goodness if the goodness itself is undefined or non-existent.

For example, it is conceivable to have a speed limit without anyone violating it, but it is impossible to violate the speed limit if there is no such thing. Likewise, it is only possible for there to be evil if there is good, but it is possible for there to be good without the existence of evil. God does not need Satan to define him.

Evil indeed exists, but not as a thing in itself; rather, it is a deviation from the good. This does not mean that evil is an illusion, as some non-Christian systems of thought assert, but that it does not have independent and objective existence, as is the case with goodness. In brief, goodness is defined by the word of God, and evil is in turn defined by (the deviation from) goodness. What God says is good, is good; what deviates or contradicts what he says is evil.

The implication is that good and evil are necessarily different. They are not concepts imposed upon a morally neutral world. Some things are indeed good, and some things are indeed evil – the two are not the same. The moral law of God cannot be considered as relative. If it defines a "good" within a category, then anything that deviates from it is evil. Evil is a deviation from good, and a deviation from something cannot be the same as the thing from which it has deviated. Therefore, good and evil are necessarily different. The Bible instructs us to obey the word of God, and "do not turn from it to the right or to the left" (Joshua 1:7; also Deuteronomy 28:14; Proverbs 4:27).¹⁰⁸

As a lead way into the decrees of God we have already discussed that Love is first, for hate, which is a negation, must logically come second. The same with goodness and evil. Because evil is a contradiction of good, it comes only as it presupposes good. Thus, when God ordered the history of the world to acquire His original purpose for the world, this end will be a perfect reflection of God and His nature. This original intention of God is good, truth and love; it is not hate, lies and evil. Thus, when considering the order of the Decrees, we start with not only explicit statements on the subject, but also universal truths about what is good and love, and how these are first intentions of God. To not commit a mistake, the crucial factor is to define such things as the Bible does, without a hint of a man-centered definition sneaking in.

One of the verses quoted in the above was from Ezekiel 36. God says in this passage, that He does not forgive and save Israel for their sake, but for His. This shows us in the order of God's intentions or purposes, valuing Himself above all others is first, not man, or another created thing. This again, is thus by definition, "good." Any contradiction to this is "evil."

This valuing of Himself is the basic definition of God's righteousness, in regards to His nature. God's Word, values God above all others. In God's promises, not only does God value Himself above all, but makes man's hope to be saved and prospered to be the same accomplished goal in Christ. And so, when God's righteousness is regarded from man to God in relation to His revelation ("God, you are a righteous God"), then God's righteousness is largely confined to His faithfulness to His word, definitions and promises of good.

¹⁰⁸ Vincent Cheung. *On Good and Evil*. 2002. Pg 8-9.

Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;
they are regarded as dust on the scales;

Before him all the nations are as nothing;
they are regarded by him as worthless
and less than nothing
(Isaiah 40:16-18 NIV)

Seriously, a drop in the bucket? Imagine if you are carrying a 5 lb bucket of water, and one small drop falls out. Who cares? That's the point. Compared to God, they are empty and nothing. How much is nothing? How about less than nothing? That's the point. Compared to God all created things, even nations, with all the humans and things they own, are empty to God, in respect to true intrinsic value compared to Him.

“If God Himself be, in any respect, properly capable of being His own end in the creation of the world, then it is reasonable to suppose that he had respect to Himself, as his last and highest end, in this work; because He is worthy in Himself to be so, being infinitely the greatest and best of beings. All things else, with regard to worthiness, importance, and excellence, are perfectly as nothing in comparison to Him. And therefore, if God values things according to their nature and proportions, He must necessarily have the greatest respect to Himself.

The moral goodness of God must consist in a due respect to things that are objects of moral respect; that is, to intelligent beings capable of moral actions and relations. Therefore it must chiefly consist in giving due respect to that Being to whom most is due; for God is infinitely the most worthy of regard. The worthiness of others is as nothing to Him; so that to Him belongs all possible respect. ... it will follow, that the moral beauty of the nature, inclination, or affection of God CHIEFLY consists in a regard to HIMSELF, infinitely above His regard to all other beings; in other words, His holiness consists in this.”¹⁰⁹

Jonathan Edwards' basic conclusion is correct, but the reasoning gets mixed up starting in the second paragraph. He seems to be confusing the aspect of God's nature of “truth” and “goodness.” Edwards' problem is not starting with God's nature itself and His choices as the standard of good, but some nubilous other standard. The correct way to say this would be the following. Because God's nature is TRUTH (Edwards started with vague idea of “moral goodness”), God knows and understands He is infinitely more valuable and praiseworthy than all created things. God's nature of being Spiritual, intellectual, immutable, eternal and Trinity, means what God thinks is by definition reality, truth and goodness. God cannot lie. God is not deceived, for He knows and understands all things. Thus, God values and esteems Himself infinitely above all things. Because this is the TRUTH, and truth is His nature just as goodness is, then this appraisal of Himself above all others, is by definition, “good.”

¹⁰⁹ Jonathan Edwards, “*The End for which God Created the World*”, Chapter 1, page 98, The Works of Jonathan Edwards –Volume 1, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995. Emphasis added by author.

The beauty of the gospel, is that in Jesus' atonement, God orchestrates His valuing Himself above all others, and the elect's desire to be happy and blessed in God, are made into the same goal, and accomplished in the same atonement.

"Since truth is God's nature, this is why it is good, since all that God is, is good. God's commands concerning truthfulness, therefore, are based on his eternal nature. This means that God will never approve of actions such as perjury, or any type of lying as moral (Exodus 20:16; Ephesians 4:25; Revelation 21:8). God's commandments concerning truth are necessary and unchangeable. This type of goodness is founded on God's own nature, and it is immutable, just as God is immutable (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8)."

Vincent Cheung. *On Good and Evil*. 2002. Pg. 6-7

People, when it regards ethics about God, make mistakes. At least Edwards' conclusion is still roughly correct, but let us both reason well, and conclude well. Since God cannot lie and He is immutable, there is no possibility for God to lie or ask others to lie, especially those who He commands to be like Him, whose "image chiefly consists" in intellectual and Spiritual aspects. However, you cannot say the same thing about killing or vengeance. God is love. However, in His love to His Son and the church, there are those who hurt them, and so God commands the killing and vengeance to be taken, in order *to love the people* "He promised" to love. Therefore God never commanded us to lie in the Scripture, but at times, will command things like the killing of others, the taking of property (etc.). Truth is defined carefully in Scripture. We know what it is. But since goodness can be anything God does, we cannot irrationally look at an action of God and think, "well this contradicts a standard."

Edwards continues to make this same mistake in his reasoning in his essay, *The Divine Decrees in General, and Election in Particular*. Commenting on Romans 9 he says something to the effect of (as I paraphrase)¹¹⁰, "there are some things we will not be able to reconcile in our minds, about God's moral choices." Again, if the definition of God's nature and goodness, as has been presented here, then there is obviously no issue or apparent contradiction. Edwards seems to be starting with some outside nubilous standard of good, rather than God's nature and choices itself as the standard. Edwards throughout his publications, is quick to point out that contradictions are not possible, and for this reason, he wants to avoid one here in Romans 9, by suggesting that in this life we lack the intelligence or knowledge to

¹¹⁰ "The Scripture itself supposes that there are some things in the Scripture that men may not be able to reconcile with God's moral perfections. See Romans 9:19, "*You will say to me then, 'Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?'*" And the apostle does not answer the objection, by showing us how to reconcile it with the moral perfections of God; rather, he shows the arrogance of quarrelling with revealed doctrine under such pretense."

- The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Volume Two, 1995, Pages 525-543, Banner of Truth Trust, P.O. Box 621 (Some slight modernization has been used by author on original text).

The Scripture teaches that man will not be able to reconcile God's actions with human speculation or human starting points. If we use goodness, as defined by the bible, then God holding people he predestined to damnation accountable, even when they cannot resist God's causality to chose evil, is good by definition. Also, the fact Paul did not answer the question directly is more about the question being a loaded question, based on human starting points rather than secrets about God's goodness.

reconcile God's sovereign choices. This is stupid and wicked. The bible says we have all the knowledge given to us for all things about this life and godliness. We are told God is our personal instructor, and our ability to understand is not measured by our limitations, but by God's limitless ability working in us. Edwards saw a contradiction, and so it meant, he had an non-scriptural knowledge somewhere in his thinking. Rather than admitting this and correcting it, he appealed to false humility and then attempted to covered up the contradiction. At least he did not outright embrace contradictions as many fools do today. They cannot think intelligently, and so they define being stupid as the norm or acceptable, but since they do this as Christians, they drag God's name down with them. They have their reward.

In Romans 9, God only chose to make some of the neutral lump for vessels of value and blessings, while the rest God directly sculpted into new shapes of common vessels. This by definition is "good" because it is God's choice to do it and that He did it. Like with marriage, when you only show a special love and goodness to one person, while you actively deny this special love to others, God is doing something similar here. The difference is that God does not use things that already exist, because only what He creates and causes, exists and move. God chose to honor some and dishonor others. This is good. The order here is crucial. God did not start with molding common vessels first, out of hate and evil, but the opposite. God said the vessels of reprobation, are serving a prior purpose He has for the vessels of glory. Thus the vessels of glory are His first intention. God's first decrees about humans are about the elect that He wants to love and show goodness to. This is where it starts. Any hate or evil to other parts of creation are to support and accomplish these first decrees of God. Because God did this, it is by definition, good.

Our goodness, is to love God by obeying His commands. God's goodness is what He is, what He chooses. God choose to define His actions to His elect as favoring them, prospering them, healing them, and saving them. Because God reveals this and does it, it is good.

The Decrees of God:

Affirming God's absolute sovereignty can be said in one simple deduction and applied in every instance. It is so simple a 2nd grader could do it. The whole section you just read could have been said in one page, if not for wicked, stupid and lazy people resisting the doctrine.

God is absolutely and directly sovereign over all things; thus, God is sovereign over x, y and z (etc.). Why do I need to hold people's hands to apply this?

Some might balk at the use of simple category statements, and simple category and propositional logic. Some think it to simple, however, if you cannot do addition and multiplication, then you have no business doing algebra. If you cannot state your position without violating the laws of contradiction, identity and excluded middle, then you have no business teaching doctrines that involve multiple pages. If you cannot state your position in simple category statements of "all, some and none," with basic

category and propositional deduction, then you have no business doing First or Second Order logic.

This problem is seen when they resist the idea of saying “God is directly and absolutely sovereign over all things.” They will respond with misleading phrases like “double predestination,” or “hard determination.” These types of phrases are misleading “relative to” the basic laws of logic and basic category statements. A category statement is either “all, some or none.” For more specific qualifications, then more advance logic is needed, but again, you must first be able to state something in the basics before you do advance maneuvers. You cannot make up qualifications where the scripture does not give them. For example, I remember reading a 500 page book on so-called Covenant Theology and realized it could have been boiled down to 10 pages of good systematic theology and application of scripture. Most of the book was wasted on trying to convince the reader of more specific qualifications, that did not exist in the passages quoted. Their conclusions of miracles ceasing because the signs have ceased did not logically follow from the verses they quoted. They tried to cover this up by hundreds of pages of quotes, verses and history to formulate a covenant theology that says regular miracles have stopped. In other words, they tried to bombard the reader with endless qualifications and quantifiers to prove their point. They tried to use a long winded First Order Logic type of argument to mentally weary or bully the reader into agreeing with them. The scripture never provided the premises to say regular miracles have stopped; they did not have basic category statements that would agree with them. And so, they masked this with tedious amounts of specifics that were not logically relevant, in order to hide their false position. I have seen this often in the world of academics.

Therefore, as a category statement God either, predestines “all, some or none.” Likewise, God either determines “all, some or none,” things. If my position is that God predestines all things, then to call this “double predestination” could be misleading as if God predestines more than “all things,” which would be nonsense. Either God predestines all things or He only predestines some, or none. If you cannot state your position in this basic way, then trying to get more precise with it, is a waste of time and will end up being misleading or heresy. What ends up happening is that those who want to say that God does predestine “all” things, in reality only affirm God predestines “some” things. They restate the category of “some things” as “all things” and then attack the real category statements of “all things” with misleading phrases like “hard” or “double” to make others think they affirm the correct category statement. Instead of just saying we believe God only predestines somethings, they attack those who do and make their creed of “some” irrationally into “all.”

They do the same for determinism. I affirm “all things are determined by God.” Those who desire to affirm the same thing, but in practice only affirm “God determines ‘somethings,’” will label the category statement of God determines all things as “hard determinism,” and restate the category of God determines “somethings,” as “all things.” Ultimately there is nothing wrong with labeling “God determines all things as hard determinism, (even if meant to be derogatory) if all parties had a clear understanding of the basic categories of “all, some and no” determinism; however, that is, in my experience, rarely the case. If you do not have the basic category statements, then you do not have basic logical application and therefore, you cannot do advance logical application.

As odd as this sounds, some do not like basic category statements and logic, because it makes things too clear, precise and understandable. They get offended because they are able to clearly understand what I am saying. What this has shown me over the years, is that when you speak in an unclear, nebulous manner, or overly academic way, people never get the opportunity to be convicted and offended because they never clearly understood what you were saying. Do not rob them of this chance to be offended. Do not rob yourself the opportunity to be a preacher to fulfill God's call to fully tell them all the commands of Jesus.

Still, others get offended because they think I am speaking down to them like a child. Well, in some cases I am, but not as a default. I use basics to make less room for misunderstanding. In my experience when engaging such people, I find out they do not understand my position, do not understand the Scripture, and oddly enough, they do not even understand their own position. They did not do the hard work with the basics of reading comprehension and basic logic skills. They quickly moved on to more advance maneuvers, while never mastered the basics for thinking and reading. These are the worst to deal with, because they are stupid and arrogant. They are scholastic cattle.

God's decrees is "God's causality over all things." Or in philosophy, Christian metaphysics and ontology. The Scripture usually refers to this in two terms, God's sovereignty, or God's decrees. And in particular with the term "decrees," we are dealing with what is the central issue or the biblical focus on God's sovereignty. The reason for this is simple, it is a no-brainer, easy to affirm God is totally sovereign over this moment as I write, or as I do anything, whether I sin or do acts of faith. This is painfully easy to understand and affirm. However, sense we are not dealing with mere abstracted fatalism, or pantheism, but an intellectual God, then the core issue of affirming God's sovereignty is knowing what He decreed. The focus is on an intellectual Mind that had a goal for what He wants and with perfect control over His mind and infinite understanding, set goals and worked the order of reality to accomplish His purposes and intentions.

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love,

having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace that he bestowed on us in the beloved,

in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,

that he caused to abound to us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in him,

for the administration of the fullness of times, to bring together all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in him

in whom also we were chosen, having been predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of his will,

that we who hoped beforehand in Christ should be for the praise of his glory,

in whom also you, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also when you believed you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

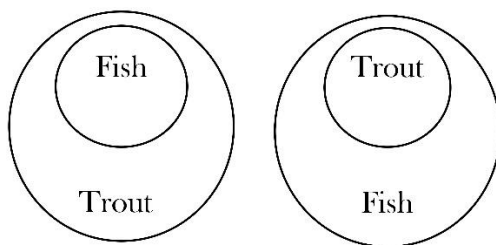
Ephesians 1:3-14 LEB

To me, the least of all the saints, was given this grace: to proclaim the good news of the fathomless riches of Christ to the Gentiles, and to enlighten everyone as to what is the administration of the mystery hidden from the ages by God, who created all things, in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places through the church, according to the purpose of the ages which he carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 3:8-11 (LEB)

An understanding of some basic logic and understanding of category statements could be helpful here. For example, if I say, “*all fish are trout*,” is categorically different than saying “*all trout are fish*.” (See picture for a simple circle diagram.)

When dealing with categories, if all the subject, (not just some) is numerically or by attribute belongs to the predicate, then the subject is a smaller circle fully inside the larger predicate circle. Thus, the subject is universally contained in the predicate. The logic is simple.



The first one is false, the other is true. In Genesis God established categories of the things He created. Thus, even if we mix in some specific induction, we know as infallible truth, God created fixed categories for animals, fish, vegetation, and etc.. We know there are many types of each in each of the broad categories. Thus, we know to say, “all fish are trout,” or, “all birds are sparrows,” is false, for there are many types of fish and birds, not just trout and sparrows. Thus, to casually flip the subject and predicate, of categorical truth claims is against Biblical teaching.

This is important to remember, because we are dealing with the ORDER of God's decrees. It is important not to flip things around. If God decrees "x" as first, then it is not second or seventh. Congratulations, we just left second grade and now we can finally move on to forth grade teaching on God's sovereignty. It is not merely control. An intelligent Mind ordered the world for His own goals. As we saw with an early circle diagram from 1 Corinthians 3, the order of categories is crucial.

As I was writing this section and did a search on the technical definitions for fatalism and determinism, I was disappointed. The standard dictionaries I looked at, gave ambiguous, and sometimes defining these two terms as the same. However, in theological and philosophy classical discourse, this is not what one sees.

Standford's Encyclopedia of Philosophy, recognizes this problem in their introduction on "fatalism," saying, *"Though the word 'fatalism' is commonly used to refer to an attitude of resignation in the face of some future event or events which are thought to be inevitable, philosophers usually use the word to refer to the view that we are powerless to do anything other than what we actually do."*¹¹¹

If I am watching a Sci-Fi show like Star Trek, and a person says, "I'm half-human, or I'm fully human," it would make since to say this, when in context there are many aliens and/or hybrids. However, if I write on my math homework, next to my name, that I am "fully-Human," it would be awkward at best, to say this. If there is no context demanding it, there is no reason to say, "my house is fully house," as if to suggest I could be surrounded by neighbors who do not have full-houses, but are half-house and clouds.

This happens with people who say things like, "Oshea is a fatalist," and "I am a biblical determinist." These people are in fact people who only affirm a partial-determinism, or half-determinism. When I affirm determinism, I mean it as the rudimentary category statement, "All things are by God's determination." That is, in classic logic or elementary teaching about category statements, if left unsaid, then a category statement means an "all," and not some. If you only mean some, then you are to say it, so that no mistake is made. Half-determinist, want to be known as determinists, and so they redefine determinist as fatalist, and redefine their some-determinism as determinism. They are liars and scammers, and just plain stupid, as if we would not catch on.

I searched Vincent's library and noticed he saw a similar problem,

By some definitions, the terms "determinism" and "fatalism" are similar. Some English dictionaries fail to make a clear distinction between them. Merriam-Webster is too ambiguous for our purpose, and Webster's New World Thesaurus considers the two synonymous. Certainly, even those who affirm "soft" determinism and accuse me of teaching fatalism would not want to accept these definitions, since then they would become "soft fatalists." The definitions in theological and philosophical literature might be more precise.

¹¹¹ Rice, Hugh, "Fatalism", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL, (<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/fatalism>).

By “fatalism,” I refer to the teaching that all events are predetermined (1) by impersonal forces and (2) effected regardless of means, so that no matter what a person does, the same outcome will result.

By “determinism,” I especially refer to theological or divine determinism. It is the teaching that the personal God of the Bible has intelligently and immutably predetermined all events, including all human thoughts, decisions, and actions, and that by predetermining *both the ends* and the *means* to those ends.

These are not my private definitions, but they are consistent with the common usage in theological and philosophical literature.

For example, Dr. Alan Cairns is a respected Presbyterian pastor and theologian, whose orthodoxy is generally unquestioned, and who is a “soft” determinist himself.[1] He defines “fatalism” as follows: “The theory of inevitable necessity; the heathen oriental philosophy that all things are predetermined by *blind, irrational forces* and that therefore there is *no point in human effort* to change anything.”[2]

I insist that it is the personal and rational God who has predetermined all things. It would be slander to accuse me of teaching that “all things are predetermined by *blind, irrational forces*,” and some have indeed committed this sin against me... It would be slander to accuse me of teaching that all things occur as predetermined *regardless of means*.

There is another common misunderstanding. Many people assume that there is more freedom under “determinism” and that things are more determined in “fatalism.” This is false.

Things are more determined in divine determinism than in any other scheme. Under “fatalism,” an event is predetermined in such a way that the same outcome results “no matter what you do,” that is, regardless of means. However, under divine determinism, although it “matters” what you do, “what you do” is also predetermined. And it “matters” because there is a definite relationship between “what you do” and the outcome, although this relationship is also determined and controlled by God.

So I affirm divine determinism and not fatalism, but not for the reason that people often shun fatalism. I affirm divine determinism not because things are less controlled in this scheme – they are more controlled – but I affirm it because it is the revealed and rational truth. I cannot be charged with teaching fatalism, because the term means something different from what I teach, and also because I consider fatalism far too weak to describe God’s control.¹¹²

The central difference in fatalism, is that it is impersonal and unintellectual. God’s predestination is personal and intellectual, and much stronger in the totality in what it determines. Because fatalism is impersonal and unintellectual, to appeal to it in common life experiences, it is done without engaging a person in detailed and rational discourse; rather, it is ambiguous and impersonal. God has decreed if you engage His promises with faith and intelligence, then “you” can change your outcome. A story that

¹¹² Vincent Cheung. *Determinism, Fatalism, and Pantheism*.
From the book, *Author of Sin*. 2014. Pg 24-27.

shows this well, would be King Hezekiah and the famous prophet Isaiah. Through Isaiah, God told Hezekiah, he was going to die soon. Hezekiah sought God in faith for help. Isaiah had to turn back around and tell the King that God added 15 years back to his life.

There is no free-will, because God does in fact predestine all things. Man's ethical accountability is based on the foundation that man does not have free-will. Man is not free; he is not free to stop God from holding him accountable to His command, just as the fig tree was not free to stop Jesus from holding it accountable. It God's sovereign control and command, that makes man accountable.

Also, God is not His creation; therefore, when Hezekiah prays to God, it is Hezekiah who prays to God and not God praying to God. Hezekiah, with intellectual engagement and in faith, interacted with God for help. We can call this promise the "means" for us to use, to change our lives for the better. God controls all of this; however, from the relative level ontology ("your faith healed you"), we change our lives for the better, by using the means God has given us to use.

Also, the SEP said in their definition of fatalism that, "*we are powerless to do anything other than what we actually do.*" This is the opposite of what biblical determinism says. There is no more "I" for the Christian anymore, in the sense of their ability and power. Their ability and possibilities are measured by God's power and ability that works in them; indeed, the same power that put Christ above all power, names and principalities now works in them to believe. They are empowered by God, to be successful in using the means He has given them to change their outcomes. Faith does not measure the future by human ability, but by God's ability, His faithful promise and His rich favor working in them.

**Faith measures the future by means(promises) of God,
and by the power that works in them to obtain it.**

It is easy to spot a fatalist and a Christian determinist. One engages in ambiguity, the other in substantial knowledge and understanding of the world, revealed in God's Word, engages God in specific means and promises that relate to their situation.

People who keep saying—"God is in control, God is in control of my life, God is in control of this situation," and even those who affirm with more boldness, "God is in control and He is even the author of sin and evil"—are spiritual infants. They never left second grade. They are mentally stunted. The question is, "how is God in control," and "what has God commanded you to do, in light of His control of it." Just saying God is in control, is of little help if it is applied like pantheism or fatalism. The decrees of God show His control is determinism in accordance to His own good purposes.

Knowing God is in control is not boiled down to having a pagan, "Zen state of mind" about life; it is not boiled down to being calm. God was in sovereign control (in the ultimate sense, but Satan in the relative sense (Acts 10:38)), when He directly and absolutely caused all those people in the gospels to be sick, blind, dead, leprous and demon possessed. What did Jesus do about this, as a man born under the law of God? He healed, resurrected and set those people free by the power of God. He commands us to do the same. If you do not do this, then the doctrine of God's sovereignty is both wasted on you, and it shows you never believed above an infant level understanding of God's sovereignty.

To say God is in control is not an ethic. It does not tell you what to do. However, if we say God has used this sovereign control, to DECREE us to be children of God, and DECREED we have bold access to His throne of grace, well then, this actually has huge implications for the person stating it. To say God has used His sovereign control, to DECREE for us to have power over sickness and demons, has huge implications. This shows us how God is in control. And some basic ordering of His control. It gives us understanding about our definition of Christians. God is not pantheism. His control over the world is explained and understood as His ordered decrees about all things.

What good is it for a sinner to realize they were born a sinner by God's control over their life, and say, "well, God is in control"? Do they forget God has used His control over reality to DECREE that there is salvation in Jesus Christ, and decreed for those with faith, if they use faith (that He works in them), then a new life, a new soul and a new world is theirs for the taking?

In my experience, when I hear Christians say, "God is in control or God's Will," it has more in common with pagan fatalism than it does with God's decrees of determinism. They are spiritual perverts and liars. God has used His sovereign control to DECREE that the elect are to be victorious (in everyday life difficulties) over sin, besetting sins, sickness, diseases, terrors of the night or day, demons and poverty. This so-called Christian appeal to, "God is in control," is in reality an appeal to fatalism, and thus they let the sickness and demons roll right over them. In such acts, these spiritual losers, are prostrating themselves to demons and their doctrines. These people are part of Reformed churches as much as they are part of Pentecostal churches. They falsely claim to assent to God's sovereign control, but in reality they are liars. They believe in fatalism, and use this equivocation to negate the commandments of God. They abuse a broad idea of God's sovereignty to throw off God's commandments. They are spiritual perverts.

God's specific descriptions of His sovereign control in His decrees, because of their detailed nature, are often accompanied with commands. That is, with detailed decrees, which are usually about the church, God gives commandments about the specific descriptions of reality He has ordered. Because the Elect humans are the top of reality, then it is a natural process for commands to be in the mix when God gets specific about His decrees for reality.

For example, God had decreed salvation for the elect in the atonement of Christ. God therefore commands repentance and faith in the gospel. God is in control, even when He directly caused the elect to be born sinners (Romans chapter 5). With this specific description of God's decrees, God then commands us to have faith to be forgiven and reconciled. They believe by faith in Jesus they are saved. And so they are. Also, God has decreed healing to be part of the atonement for the elect (Isaiah 53:4-5, James 5:15). With this specific description of God's decrees, God then commands us to have faith to be healed. God is in control, even when He directly caused the elect to have sickness and troubles. However, by the decree of God, the elect believe what God has revealed and commanded. They believe by faith in Jesus they are healed and delivered. And so they are.

Fatalism comes in and negates these commands, because "God is in control," or, "God's will." They will say, *"because God is in control, and thus, is ultimately in control over the fact you are sick or a sinner, thus, you will pray, but what will happen by God's*

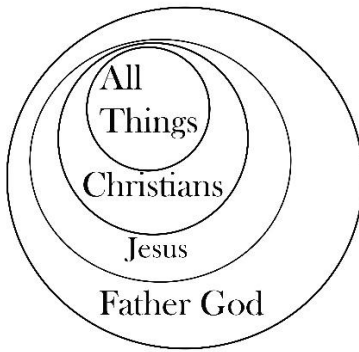
control, will happen.” This sounds humble and religious to spiritual perverts, but not to God. It is applying a demonic doctrine of fatalism over God’s determinism. God has used His sovereign control to decree that those with faith, will be healed, and forgiven. They will pray and will cause Satan to depart; God will honor their faith by making them victorious. God has given the means for Christians to change their outcomes by faith. And so, if someone fails at this, then the moral responsibility is on their lack of faith and not on God’s determinism.

Fatalism is used to negate the details of God’s sovereign decrees, and the specific details of God’s decrees that usually get negated are His commands and promises. These people might be those who are quick to point out how the religious leaders in the gospels negated the commands of God by their traditions. Well, fatalism is a human made doctrine with its own traditions. Our religious leaders of today, mask their human doctrine with a biblical sounding topic—God’s sovereign control—but their wicked and sinister goal is to negate the commandments of God with it. They are sons of hell, leading others to be even greater sons of hell than they are.

In our passage on Ephesians it says God used His sovereignty to give us every, not some or most, but ALL spiritual blessings, in Christ. This shows us a basic order to God’s decrees. All creation is given to the elect. Also, all spiritual benefits are given to the elect. Thus, if we were to show a triangle to represent the hierarchy of all reality, Elect humans, are at the pinnacle over it all. God is invisible, and so, through Jesus, God has made us His children, wielding His power, Name and favor. He uses us to funnel His Name and Fame into reality. Next, we read that the elect are “in Christ.” And as we read in 1 Corinthians 3:23, and now in Eph. 1:10, Jesus is summed up in God the Father. Jesus, as the Godman, sits on the throne. That is, a “man” is sitting at the righthand of God, even at this moment. Think about that. As the victorious Man, Jesus receives all spiritual blessings, and God graciously puts us into this category, just like when God was creating in Genesis 1 and designed categories for reality and put things into them. God put a fig tree in the category of vegetation and put a lion, in the category of cats and cats into the category of animal. Likewise, the Father in great love, put the Elect into the category of Jesus Christ.

We will deal more about the “order” aspect of the decrees later, but for now mark the fact that with our category diagram from 1 Corinthians 3:23 (and which is restated here in Ephesians), the biggest circle is the first ordered decree, and the smallest circle is the last in logical order of God’s decrees. Now you even have a visual, to help. This Euler circle diagram is, basic and broad, but does a great job at showing the order of God’s decrees. The largest circle, “the Father”, is first decree (the Father’s glory) and the smallest circle, “all things” (the creation of all things for the glory of man), is last in God’s organized choices.

The historical execution of these organized choices are in the reversed order, so that, “all things,” (creation) is first, then man glorified by creation, then Jesus glorified by man, then the Father glorified by His Son, in the awesome way that He planned for Himself.



We learn God has given us “every spiritual blessing,” not some, but all of them. As said before, we are not deified with “transcendent” attributes of God, (such as His infinity, eternality,) but everything else, God says He is giving to His elect children. God is a super, over-the-top giver! God gives and gives and gives. This is the God of scripture. The question for us is this: how did God purpose this and ordered it? How did this intelligent God choose, and organize such an outcome for us? The very next verse says, “*He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world.*” Thus, before God made the world, He had already made a choice to place us in the category of Jesus Christ (Christ-ians), and give us every spiritual blessing.

As reminder, the relative level (the level the Bible mostly speaks on) is founded on the fact that “*reality and God are not the same thing,*” (make sure you stop and think about that) and God is describing interactions with created objects on this level, which He is directly controlling.

This passage in Ephesians 1 is a positive doxology about the decrees of God, concerning Christians. However, Paul’s description in Romans 9 is both a broader and detailed teaching about God’s decrees concerning the elect and reprobate. He is answering the objection, “if the Jews are not believing the gospel, then did God fail?” Paul answers this objection in two ways, one is on real level causality, and the other is relative. On the relative level Paul says the blame and accountability is on the unbelief of the Jews, and not on God being faithful to His promise. God’s promise still applies and is active for anyone who believes, but they refuse to believe. On this level the Bible focuses on God’s commandments and promises, and how man interacts with them. The Jews are interacting with God’s commandments with unbelief. Ethically, they are to blame for the failure, and not a lack of power on God’s part to fulfill His promise. On this relative level Paul says, “*Why? Because they did not seek it by faith....seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God,*”(Romans 9:32, 10:3 NKJV).

Paul speaks on the only real level of causality, which are God’s decrees. He says Jews are not believing the gospel, at the present time, because God has chosen to hate them, and thus, God has caused them to not believe in the gospel. God has decreed them to have unbelief in the gospel (temporarily), because if they believed then God would have to honor His promise and blood of His Son to save them (Matth.13:15). (“*It is not as if the word of God had failed...* for although they [Jacob, Esau] had not yet

been born, or done anything good or evil, in order that the purpose of God according to election might remain, not by works but by the one who calls—it was said to her, “*The older will serve the younger*,” just as it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated,” (Romans 9:6, 11-13. LEB).

This doctrine also reinstructs the doctrine that man’s observations, being irrational, do not yield any truth and therefore cannot be used to judge any statement of scripture. The Jews are under the same command to believe in God and be saved as the rest of the world; that is, we are forgiven on the demand of our faith (Acts 17:30, Acts 2:21, Luke 4:50). In this passage you cannot “observe” the lack of Jews being saved and say, “look, the promise of God to save the Jews has therefore CEASED.” Just because you do not observe salvation, on the demand of faith with the Jews, as you see Jesus and the apostles promise, does not mean God has ceased upholding the promise; rather it just means there is unbelief (Romans 9:7, 4:16, 10:3, Heb.4:2). Your observations add zero knowledge about the situation, because all observations are irrational. Some can see why using observation to negate scripture is a mistake with forgiveness or salvation, but will apply the same irrational thinking to God’s promise, to heal on the demand of faith (James 5:15, Luke 18: 42 “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you”). Just because you do not observe healing on the demand of faith as you see Jesus and the apostles promise, does not mean God has ceased upholding the promise; rather it just means there is unbelief (Luke 18:1-7, Matth.13:58). What fool told you that your observations yield knowledge? The bible did not teach you this.

Paul said God freely chose to love one and hate another, before they made their own choices. The reason for this is simple, God wants the goals for this creation to be accomplished by His choices and not by man. God has His own goals for reality. He wants His goals to be accomplished and not fail. Simple. However, God also wants the means to be accomplished by God’s intelligent choice and working, and not from someone else, not from an accident. God wants all the credit for its accomplishment. As Paul says in Ephesians 3, God is displaying HIS wisdom, through the glorification of the church, not someone else’s wisdom. “Purpose of God according to election might remain.” The first point is the “might remain.” That is, there must be a prior choice if it is to “remain.” To make this prior choice “remain,” God needs to elect (“*according to election*”) who He will love and hate before they make their own choices. This will ensure “*the purpose of God*,” that He decreed for reality to be accomplished.

Jesus does something similar in John 6, when describes why they did not understand His miracles and could not accept His teaching. Jesus is claiming to be sent by the Father, and anyone who believes in Him will be saved, and that these will be personally taught by God. Well, if that is the case, then why are so few believing in him? Why did the majority not understand His miracle, if He was sent by God? The silent statement is, “if you are from God, and you are not successful, then God failed, or you are not who you claim to be, or you are a false teacher (etc.).” Both Jesus’ and Paul’s answer to this objection, are similar and twofold. As before, one is relative level and the other is ultimate level. On the relative/human level, they do not believe. “Jesus replied, “*I tell you the truth, you want to be with me because I fed you, not because you understood the miraculous signs*,” (John 6:26 NLT). Jesus has not failed, rather, their intelligence failed, because they did not possess intelligence to understand what Jesus is teaching, despite the O.T. preparing them for Jesus’ coming. Jesus said it was their unbelief that failed, not that God’s promise failed.

The accountability is on their unbelief, and not God for being powerless. Shortly later Jesus gives both the (1) relative and (2) ultimate level answers, *“But you (1) haven’t believed in me even though you have seen me. However, those the (2) Father has given me will come to me, and I will never reject them, (36-37 NLT).”* Jesus then restates this only real level of causality, over and over again, saying, *“No one is able to come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day (44 LEB), and “But there are some of you who do not believe.”* (For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, *“Because of this I said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by the Father, (64-65).”*

People might not like this, but it is as clear as day. A child can understand this. However, many people are like animals. They are like Asaph before he inquired of the Lord, about the outcomes of the wicked and righteousness. In his emotional state, and using his human speculation and emotion, he admitted he was intellectually like a dumb beast or animal. But after going to the house of God, and starting with His word, then he gained insight and he was able to think spiritually and intellectually about the situation. Asaph is a true Christian, because he repented of his de-human, animalistic thinking and changed his thinking to be in line with God’s word. He repented of his human starting point of knowledge and changed it for a God starting point. If only so-called Christians could follow in his footsteps. Rather than starting with human emotions and human observation, if Christians start with God’s revelation first, then there should be no issue in affirming God’s direct control to love and hate people before they are born and before they even make their own choices (of good or bad) so that God accomplishes His own goals for reality.

A few verses later, after dealing with his hypothetical opponent, Paul gives a thesis like statement or conclusion about the whole affair of God’s purpose for the Elect and reprobate saying,

“Does the potter not have authority over the clay, to make from the same lump a vessel that is for honorable use and one that is for ordinary use? And what if God, wanting to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And he did so in order that he could make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory, (Romans 9:21-23 LEB).”

In this context of Romans 9 Paul is not talking about his favorite flavor of wine, and the issue of the decrees of God are a distant vague topic, he was dealing with 5 hours ago. No. He is directly dealing with this subject. How wonderful it is that we are given a simple summary of the whole thing, that even a child can understand. The one exception to this is unbelief, which always has a hard time accepting anything God reveals. Paul says God’s first intended purpose (in context of the decrees, being dealt with, and not a total exhaustive list) is for the elect to be swallowed up in His mercy and kindness. Then, the next decree of purpose is that the reprobates are for the establishment of the elect being glorified and surrounded by the riches of God’s mercy.

As said before, the positive such as love and goodness are first, the negation is built on the presupposition of the positive. Therefore, God’s first purpose for humans is one of love and goodness to the elect, and only to the elect. This is where humanity starts. The start is not even the combination of love and hate; rather, the start is only the positive; it is only love for the elect. The negation, which is hate and evil for the

reprobate, is where their existence start. However, the reprobate's start, is still in the context that their existence is a subcategory under the elect. Their existence of hate, is to serve and establish the prior purpose of God to lavish the elect in love and goodness.

And so Paul says, God is a potter, who takes from the same lump, to make some for hate and some for love. Paul is basically repeating his analogy with Jacob and Esau. The lump of clay is not already a pee-pot or a beautiful vase. It is an unformed neutral lump. "*Before they had done good or bad.*" Paul says, God takes this unformed lump and creates the elect and reprobate, and that the reprobates are a supportive role to establish His prior purpose of lavishing the elect in goodness.

That is, the reprobates are like toilet tissue. God uses them for a limited time on earth, and then throws them in to the trash. They are like mobs and monsters in a video game. The reprobate are created for the Elect to level up their faith. Indeed, as the reprobates die from their sins, God even gives their earthly wealth to the elect, like a game character collecting loot from a dead monster's body. For a limited time on earth, they are the ugly background, so that God can make the elect a beautiful foreground.

The elect are temporarily caught up into this hate and evil, as God decreed even the elect to be born as sinners. Paul earlier says in Romans 5 that God caused the whole human race to be credited with Adam's sin and death, even though they did not do the sin themselves. In Ephesians 2 it says the elect were born as children of wrath as the other (reprobates). This is said in the pragmatic sense and not as a final decree. The elect, until they are born-from-above, are pragmatically living as reprobates, and receiving God's judgments for their sin. However, God's judgments to the elect, before they are born again, is not a full payment for their sins for two reasons. One, is that Jesus endured it on the cross for them. Second, if God were to give out the full judgment for only one sin to anyone, they would have been sent to hell before their 2nd birthday. God is patient with the elect, until He gives them faith to be saved. God is longsuffering with the reprobates, not sending them all to hell immediately, for He is temporarily causing them to be the background, until all His elect are saved and matured.

Why is it a good thing for God to credit the consequence of a sinful nature to people based on the sin of someone else? It is good and righteous for God to do this because God decided on it and did it. There is nothing beyond this foundation. God is the foundation of what is good. God is the foundation, not something else, not man, and not another standard. There is no other beside Him. There is no dualism in Christian ontology; there is no dualism in Christianity's definition of good and evil. To intelligently disagree with this definition of goodness, one must presuppose God's revelation to do so, but the scripture says only it is true and all other definitions are false.

We will focus on making doctrinal statements (all, some or none) and making easy deductive application for ourselves, so that we can walk by the commands of God in joy.

The bible is mainly focused on the positive. The focus is on the love and goodness of God to the elect. The reprobates are a subcategory, later decree, created for the purpose of God's love to His elect.

And so, God caused all humanity to be born in sin and death, even the elect. The reason given is that God's purpose is to show His favor and goodness to them. This is the first decree. The second that comes after, and to support this, is the decree to make this goodness and love, come by mercy, so that it highlights and magnifies how awesome God's love and goodness is to the elect. God's love does not start with mercy, because mercy presupposes sin and hate, but God's nature is positive (love/favor), not negative. God's love is a thought and action to favor. This is where the elect start. In order to make this as great as possible, God decided to give this favor, through mercy, so as to intensify the favor. Thus, when Paul says in Romans 9 that the reprobates are to highlight the riches of God's mercy to the elect, the mercy is to highlight the favor and unmerited favor of God to the elect. Paul uses all 3 terms in Ephesians 2, where it says, "*God is rich in mercy, because of this great love.*" Mercy is a stream of love, which is first. God is rich in giving favor. Mercy forgives the elect, so that God can favor the elect with unmeasurable blessings. Then Paul says, "*in order that he might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus.*" Mercy and forgiveness is the foundation to something else God wants to do. This gives us an order to God's decisions or decrees. The first in the ordered decrees, is to lavish the elect with an unmeasurable amount of grace, which are "blessings" based on His unmerited favor and kindness.

People might buck at some of my statements that emphasize the glory and supremacy of the Christian in creation; yet, this is precisely how the Scripture speaks about it.

So then, let no one boast in people. For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come, all things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's," (1 Corin. 3:21-23).

Not only has God been given supremacy in the gospel, but God also "glorifies man." This knowledge is for mature Christians, not babes. Indeed, God predestines to give glory to the Christian man. Our glory is Christ's glory, and Christ's glory is God's glory. Not only is man glorified in the gospel, but it was not an accident or God merely using something He found. Man was predestined to be glorified through the good news of Jesus Christ. Our topic is about the first decrees of God starting with love and goodness. We learn here that God's first purposes for the elect is for them to be glorified and to freely give them unmeasurable good things.

"Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing, but we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God **predestined before the ages for our glory,**" (LEB 1 Corinthians 2:6-7).

Remember the circle diagram from this 1 Corin. 3:21-23? Think about it. Because creation is summed up in the Christian man, thus, when man is glorified, creation is glorified. When man is liberated, creation is also liberated. This is precisely what Paul says in Romans 8.

“For the eagerly expecting creation awaits eagerly the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation has been subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its servility to decay, into the glorious freedom of the children of God,”
(Romans 8:19-21)

Paul says in Ephesians that before the world was created the Elect were predestined to be adopted children. We already know the first intention is for God to lavish the elect in unmerited favor. Now we see in a more precise way how that is accomplished. God adopted us as children. It is true that in light of our sin, we need mercy; however, mercy is a sub-decree to magnify the first, which is love. In fact, this is what John says about us being called children of God. Being made God’s children, is not first about His great mercy, but “great love.” By mercy, His “love” is magnified, and thus He decreed for us to be born sinners to save us. But after saving us by mercy, the emphasis is on the original purpose, which is “love” and “goodies.”

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure,” (1 John 3:1-3 NIV).

This passage has an additional point of interest. Our adoption is not mere paperwork. He is not somewhere off in the distance. No. God is the foundation of reality and causality. Our relationship is copied from God’s love to His very own Son, and the Spirit to the Son and Father. Jesus (the Godman) prays (John 17) that “as” He is in Father, He wants us to be in Him, and Him is us. This is why John says that we shall be “like” Him and “with” Him (will see Him, face to face). Jesus is the very righteousness of God. He was the righteousness of God, even in weakness of our flesh, born under the law. Thus, the elect are credited with Jesus’ righteousness, because God’s original purpose was to love them, by making them “LIKE” Jesus Christ.

In Romans 8 Paul emphasizes the first original purpose for the Elect was not, the image of Adam, or even, “the image of God.” The First purpose was the “image of Jesus Christ.” The other decrees, came later and were for the supporting of this first one. Man’s image in the garden as the “image of God,” was good and perfect, but basic. Adam was not the “righteousness of God” like Jesus was, yet this is what the original goal of God was for His chosen ones. Adam did not live with God in His house as a child, but in Christ we live in God’s house as a beloved child and heir. Thus, Adam the steppingstone, started elect humans in their march to the image of Christ, who is the very righteousness, power, wisdom and glory of God.

This was God’s original love for you, from the very beginning. He loves you that much. It was always a love of unmeasurable greatness for you. Speaking of the relative level, death, sin and Satan tried to steal this good purpose of God from you. Simply put, Satan failed. Jesus won. God does not know what failure is; Satan does. God winning is like man being warm-blooded. It is God. He purposes, and then He accomplishes. The stronger man Jesus, stormed into Satan’s crib, beat him, bound him and plundered his house. He brought us out of the house of Satan, and conveyed us into the Temple of God. We can stay as long as we like. We are sons of God. We BELONG in God’s house! Think about that. A beloved child in God’s house, this goal is God’s heart

and plan all along. He has always seen you in this way! For those who see His nature and plan, they purify themselves.

“And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose,

because those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the **image of his Son**,

so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those whom he predestined, these he also called, and those whom he called, these he also justified, and those whom he justified, these he also glorified,” (Romans 8:28-30).

“Whom He foreknew,” is about fore-loving, and propositional understanding. When considering the term “fore-know,” and when it is used in the bible, it is almost exclusively used, (if not only), in context of God both fore-knowing and fore-loving a person(s). Another way to say it is to pre-favor them. Therefore, it is said, Adam knew his wife Eve. Therefore, when passages say the Father foreknew, it means God fore-loved this group of people. God pre-favored this group by choosing to conform them into the image of Christ. This is true both in respect when considering them as sinners, and as a “neutral lump of clay,” before they had done good or evil, but according to God’s choice to be establish.

The “pre-favored” and “predestined” both are referring to the first intention of “these He also glorified.” The elect are covered with the weighty value of God’s lavished goodness for them. They are predestined to obtain this. Starting with Adam, God is molding the lives and choices of the elect to obtain this purpose of God. God favors them so that sin does not defeat them, like it does for the reprobate. God favors them, so that even if God causes them to be born in a bad place, with bad people, God causes them to hear and believe in His revelation. God denies such favor to the reprobate.

Romans 9 and Ephesian 1 tells us God’s first plan was to bless the elect with the riches of His love, grace and mercy. Thus the doctrine of a logical order of the decrees is already established. We are making this point because what will be extracted from this argument will not work unless this is a presupposition. When reading a historical order of the decrees executing, we know the reverse was the original logical order.

Thus, to say,

- D.1. (A) Those whom God called are (B) those whom God justified.
- D.2. (B) Those whom God justified are (C) those whom God glorified.
- D.3. Thus, (A) those whom God called are (C) those whom God glorified.

This is a historical order. God calls an elect by the summons of the gospel. God then justified them, by erupting faith to believe the gospel. God then glorifies them by preserving them in this world and bringing them to Himself in heaven.

The last “C” term is the first of the logical order. The “A” is the last in logical order, but first in historical execution. Paul starts with *“whom he predestined,”* because He is establishing the historical execution, with the presupposition of a logical predetermined or “predestined” goal God already has. The elect are predestined to glory by becoming the image of Christ, and their being made the image of Christ, brings value to Christ. Thus, it is perfectly fine as a chain syllogism to start with, as Paul does “whom He predestined,” because the focus is on the numerical amount of a category to showcase God’s wisdom and power. Technically, God or a person who decreed the end, even in historical order predestination comes first. And you put it first in a syllogism to emphasize your wisdom and power. This is similar to how a future Sports star, starts their life’s plan as a world champion, and then worked backwards in order to their present day.

When making a category truth claim the focus can be more on the attribute or the numerical number of something that belongs in that attribute. They both indirectly apply to each other, but they do not emphasize the exact same thing. Paul’s focus is on the same amount that is in the first group is in the last group. He is emphasizing the historical success of God’s predetermined purpose. God has a goal of a glorified man in Christ first. God then logically worked backwards in decrees or decisions to make this happen. Next, God started the history of the world to work towards that goal. Paul’s focus is on the fact that with all this planning in logical order first, and working it out backwards in historical execution, God did not have one single mistake or failure. God does not know what failure is. All those predestined to be glorified in God’s plans, were successfully called, justified and glorified. Therefore, your faith that nothing can separate you from the love of God is unshakable.

Since our focus is seeing the basics of God’s decrees, we will keep the syllogism to either a historical or logical order decree. Paul speaking on the first-born status of Christ says, *“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy,”* (1 Colossian 1:18 NIV.) And so, we will use the term “supremacy” for “first born from the dead,” because this supremacy was the first purpose for Jesus that the Father had.

D.1. (A) Those whom God called are (B) those whom God justified.

D.2. (B) Those whom God justified are (C) those whom God glorified

D.3. (C) Those whom God glorified, are (D) those whom God made in Christ’s image.

D.4. (D) Those whom God made in Christ’s image are (E) those whom God uses to display Christ’s supremacy.

D.5. Therefore, (A) those whom God called are (E) those whom God uses to display Christ’s supremacy.

Consider our diagram from 1 Corinthians 3:23. This looks similar. In general, when said in a historical order (in context) the circles go from small to largest, and the logical purpose starts with the largest and goes to the smallest. Creation is for man’s glory.

While in creation God calls, justifies and empowers His chosen ones for victory. Yet, man’s victory displays the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Jesus displays the glory of the

Father. *“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one can seize them from the Father’s hand,”* (John 10:29 LEB). *“For the Scriptures say, “God has put all things under his authority. (Of course, when it says “all things are under his authority,” that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.) then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God’s authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere,”* (1 Corinthians 15:27-28 NLT).

9 In [Christ] all the fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you are filled in him, who is the head over every ruler and authority, 11 in whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands, by the removal of the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

13 And although you were dead in the trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 having destroyed the certificate of indebtedness in ordinances against us, which was hostile to us, and removed it out of the way by nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:9-14

This passage is interesting in that Paul is explaining the order of the decrees, with a focus on necessary connection, rather than numerical amount in a said category. The other interesting point is the order. It is not a historical order that moves from first to last; rather, it is a logical order, and so it is in a reversed historical order. There is a break from verse 13- 14. Both arguments are in a logical order and basically say the same thing on the topic of our salvation, with some minor differences.

In verse 9 Paul describes the fullness of Christ’s deity, in the public creation. Then he says we are filled with this fullness of deity, in us (10). Wow, why did this happen? Paul works backwards in order, to show God’s plan that worked this purpose out. We were given the circumcision (11) of Christ in our hearts. Ok, but why did that happen? What led to this, Paul says, (12) was God baptizing us in Christ’s death, and also His newness of life.

In verse 13 it says we were dead in our trespasses and so, God made us alive together with Christ. Ok, but why did that happen? Because God forgave (14) us our sin. Ok, but why did that happen? Because God destroyed the law that was against us, by nailing its fulfillment to the cross.

Ok, but why did God do that? This Paul answers back in chapter one. God loved us. He loved His Son. He conveyed us into His kingdom of love. This glorifies us. Yet, our glory, glorifies Christ as the first born from the dead, as having total supremacy. This was God’s original goal. It was His will and choice to do so. It is “good” because He decided to do it and decreed it. Anything that opposes this, is by definition evil. To deny this definition one must presuppose the intelligence that is needed to think this, which only comes from the Christian worldview.

The Order of the Divine Decrees

This section is cannibalized from my retired book: *The Divine Decrees* (2007, 2013). This book was mainly about going over Jonathan Edwards book: “*The Divine Decrees in General and Election in Particular*.” I showed how Edward’s was a supralapsarian in the doctrine of God’s decrees broadly, but tried to make a hybrid in the particular points. Therefore, Gordon Clark and Vincent Cheung¹¹³ are better at teaching on this topic, for they are consistent to a logical order. Thus, this is the result from studying all three individuals.

This is an important aspect of Christian ontology and so I wanted to put a basic essay on this topic here. The order of God’s decrees in philosophy jargon, is the “logic of ontology.” It is the logical order of God’s causality. If your worldview does not have a logic of ontology then it is stupid and defective.

Defining the terms:

Assuming most who are interested in this biblical doctrine will know the terms supralapsarian and infralapsarian, I’ll move on; if you don’t know them, they’ll be explained in context through other terms. These are loaded terms, so I prefer not to use them, but I mention them to provide a vague reference point for where I’m coming from. The lack of distinction between *God’s purpose or goals and historical execution*¹¹⁴ has caused more than a small amount of confusion. Let us remedy this.

When God’s decrees are laid out from top to bottom—that is, when they focus on what God chose as His goals first and then work backward to the choices needed to achieve these goals—we call this the “purpose perspective.” This is what some know as supralapsarian. Simply put, this is what “God decrees” means.

When God’s decrees are laid out from bottom up—that is, from the perspective of executing His goals—we call this the “historical perspective.” Although, in the truest sense, this isn’t a description of decrees; rather, it’s the execution of the decrees: the historical realization of God’s intended goals.

To reach a complete biblical understanding of God’s decrees, we need the purpose perspective, as it’s the natural meaning of decreeing or planning. The purpose perspective is greater not only because it’s the natural meaning of planning something but also because the historical order is derived from it. In fact, when we think about an all-sovereign God planning (not reacting), isn’t this in terms of choosing goals first? The historical perspective of God is an incorrect doctrine if left by itself because, in light of an all-sovereign God, “decrees” naturally point to purpose rather than history. Without the “purpose” perspective in the decree, the historical perspective turns God into a God of reaction rather than a God of total sovereign design, working out His original intended goal from top to bottom. To decree is to have a purpose beforehand. History isn’t intelligent or personal; it’s a description of events. To refer to history and God reacting to things as they happen is fate and pantheism, not a definition of decrees. God’s decrees are intelligent and personal. Likewise, without historical

¹¹³ I would recommend, Vincent Cheung’s essay, [Supralapsarian](#). This essay is from this, [Systematic Theology](#), book.

¹¹⁴ This particular two-word contrast of ‘purpose vs execution’ about ‘top down and bottom up,’ I got from Vincent Cheung, see chapter on Supralapsarianism, in *Systematic Theology*: 2010, pg 114-118.

execution showing God's decrees are victorious, the purpose perspective looks like a failure. This is why, for example, Paul defends the idea (Rom. 9) that God hasn't failed in His decree to save Abraham's children.

Regarding the goal perspective, what God chose as His first goal is last in execution, and what God purposed last in His goals comes first in execution or history. I'll explain this further.

Take, for example, a kid who, after thinking about life, decides he wants to be a "great baseball player." This is his first "purpose." His second choice, to support the first, is that he needs to be an All-Star baseball player to be a great player. Thus, his third purpose is to get great hitting averages (etc.) to be chosen as an All-Star. His next purpose is to be drafted to play in the Major League. His next purpose is to start playing baseball at his local high school. What he first intended is accomplished last in order, while what was purposed last is accomplished first in history or execution. Ecclesiastes 7:8, "The end of a thing is better than its beginning," because the end was the original goal. The end of a thing is better than its beginning if there was intelligent planning and execution to make those plans a reality.

This analogy with the baseball player is from the perspective of "purpose." This is personal and intelligent. It's what decreeing naturally means.

God's decrees aren't history's blooper reel—they're a top-down master plan, with purpose calling the shots. Forget *supra* or *infra* jargon; think goal-first, not reaction. Like a kid dreaming of baseball stardom, God's endgame (His glory, elect's victory) kicks off last, while first steps roll out early. History's just the stage—God's the director with a sovereign script.

Now back to purpose and execution.

For the sake of argument, what is important is that both are to be taught from scripture and that the "purpose" be ordered Top to Bottom and the "historical" be ordered from Bottom to Top. The purpose order needs to be shown as the natural meaning of God Decreeing and the historical order as the effect of this being executed. The lists need to make sense when read in either direction, whether from the perspective of purpose, or from the perspective of execution. (*Or in an argument, The purpose (p) is the antecedent, and the historical is the consequent(q)*). Furthermore, the decrees encompass all things, so it is impossible for a simple list to include everything. Depending on what topic or doctrine I was teaching on I could focus or bring to light these in the decrees: both in the purpose or historical. If someone puts emphasis on God's election in a historical perspective, and then they emphasize God's election in the purpose perspective in another sermon or book, then the ordering needs to agree with each other.

Below is a simple and general list of a few decrees. The first section is from God's Purpose perspective (top to bottom) and the second is the Historical perspective (bottom up.) You will see how the second list mirrors the first. What is decreed first in Purpose is accomplished last in historical execution.

TOP DOWN, ORDER of PURPOSE

1.) **Father's glory.** The Father decrees to create an abundant displaying of *His glory* in a public creation. The Father is the invisible God. The Father's Son, is the perfect image of Himself. Therefore, the Father decrees His Son to be His public representative. The world was created *with* and *for His Son*, resulting in His Son to be the only living fountain, the Head, the first born, central axis, the Preeminence in all things in the Father's public universe. The invisible God glorifies Himself, by making His Son the Public Supremacy. This supreme Christ sits at the Father's right hand of Power, showing the Father as the greatest.

2.) **Jesus Christ's glory.** God decrees Jesus to become the central "public-Person," through the power of the Spirit and work of salvation. He becomes the preeminence before a public audience. Therefore, God decrees His Son to love a special group of humans (*God takes some of the unformed lump, and separates it to the right side, to be formed into beautiful vases.*) by uniting them to Himself: *to His power, life and image*. Likewise, for the sake of magnifying this love to the first group, God decrees Jesus to hate another group, called the reprobate (*God takes some of the unformed lump, and separates it to the left side, to be used as common uses and then discarded in the trash when He is finished.*). He hates them by having no purpose to unite them to Jesus and His life. His decreed love for one group, will cause them to be the perfect type of creation to know and love Christ. God will decree the destinies of the reprobates, to be harsh, to *support His decree to show His love to the elect*. Even angels, whether dammed or elected, will support this. Jesus Christ is the central axis for how this will be accomplished. Christ is glorified as the central dividing line for all public minds, both human and spiritual. Jesus will be the central axis to expose this division. Through Jesus effective saving work, He becomes the central Supremacy, for all destinies. All eyes are on Him.

3.) **The Elect's glory.** God decrees to make a public division of His chosen elect and reprobate. This will be done through Jesus saving the elect. God's love is what gives the elect their very existence and names and glory, for it is a powerful and eternal love. As Jesus is the pinnacle for all reality, the elect will also have all reality given to them and they will rule over life as king's with Jesus. Even the past, future and the whole reality will be given to them. Thus, regardless of their state, Jesus Christ will find them and save them; He will unite them to Himself; He will make them like Himself. The love the Father gave Jesus, is the love Jesus will give them. The glory the Father gave the Son, the Son will give to them. Furthermore, God elects a certain number of persons who He will show His hate to. It is an eternal hate, which gives them their names and existence. Therefore, when they need to be saved, He will not save them. The division will be public and powerful. The division will magnify His love to the elect.

4.) **The Fall.** God decrees to imprison the whole human race to sin and death; by this the previous decree of dividing the elect and reprobate through Jesus' saving, is started. This fall into sin makes it hard to see the difference between whom God loves and whom He hates. This was purposely done so that the previous decree of Jesus saving the elect, shows how effective Jesus is, in marking the difference of the two groups: the elect and reprobate.

5. **Creation's glory.** God decrees to create, a universe *suitable and designed* for the awesome exhibition of His glory. It will be worthy and effective for the Elect, for His Son, and for the display of His Name and wisdom.

BOTTOM UP, ORDER of EXECUTION

6.) **Creation.** God creates a universe suitable and effective for the brazen displaying of His glory. It is a gift worthy for the Elect; a gift worthy for His only Son, and a display worthy of Yahweh, who alone is wise.

7.) **The Fall.** God causes the whole human race to be slaves of sin and disobedience, by creating Adam in such a way he would not be able to resist Satan's temptation. God causes Adam and Eve to disobey His commandments. By His own arbitrary choice, God makes all—elect and reprobates—after Adam, even though they did not do the sin itself, to be born in sin and death because God decided they are connected.

8.) **Born-From-Above glory.** God distinguishes His eternally loved Elect (the lump of clay set aside to the right), by giving them life that is infused from heaven. It is literally giving them the value of heaven, and making it part of their DNA. This heavenly life is always accompanied (even if delayed) with God's truth revealed to them. Jesus is revealed as the justification for why the Elect receive this heavenly life (Romans 3:25:26). They are born from above, in the life of God's Spirit and intelligence to understand and believe. This is the foundational distinction—in regard to metaphysics and ontology—that divides them from the reprobates. It is a divide, which is as far, as heaven is from hell. One is born from above, the other is born from below. *(Even in the old testament, the saints who believed in God, did so by the power from above, working in them. It was by the Spirit Abraham believed; it was not by his own ability. Today, as Jesus says, you must be born from above, to even see His Kingdom, let alone believe and embrace it.)* To further the dividing of all humans, God leaves the reprobates in their dead and sinful state (The lump set aside to the left). In addition, He now arbitrarily chooses the level of wickedness that each vessel of hate will fall while on earth, by how much He hardens and blinds their minds.

(This is about metaphysics and ontology. The history of the world, as seen in anthropology, is about the great divide of these two groups. It is a focus on the immeasurable value of being part of God's elect. Jesus is revealed as the foundation for these two distinct realities in the world.)

9.) **Jesus Christ' glory.** God publicly divides the world by sending Jesus to be its savior and its judge. Jesus had already been working as the "Angel of the Lord," with key Elect persons in the Old Testament, but it was sparse and hidden. Jesus becomes the central axis for all intelligent minds to watch. Because the world is for the Elect, and because Jesus' work as the Godman is a permanent divide for the Elect and reprobate (and even for all those designed to support them like angels) Jesus is the pinnacle person for all reality. Jesus as a high priest only sacrifices and intercedes for the Elect, because He has always loved them. In this act of uniting them to Himself, the Elect become the image, life and power of God. Jesus does not sacrifice or intercede for the reprobate, because He has always hated them. Through His death, sin death and Satan are judged and defeated. The reprobates are children of Satan,

and so, they too are also judged and defeated by His atonement (*"He who does not believe is already condemned,"* John 3:18). Through the reprobate's judgment, the Elect are made to know the height of God's eternal love for them in a heightened way.

Christ becomes the historical and future center point of the universe, before a public audience best suited for His praise, by their enjoyment of Him.

10.) **Father's glory.** The Father, causes all things to be put under Jesus feet, who sits at His right hand of Power. The consummation of this act happens when the Father sends, (at His own timing) His Son a second time for the total division of the children of reprobation and the beloved Elect. After using the reprobates on earth for their common purposes, Jesus bottles up all evil into hell, to be divided not only from Him, but from His elect who had to deal with their evil in the world. Jesus also gathers His children to be near Him and to fully enjoy His love and benefits. However, Jesus sits at the Father's right hand, thus, they are gathered to be with the Father. Jesus is the public supremacy before all public eyes, and in becoming so He causes His invisible Father to be glorified.

Scripture:

Ephesians 1:9, "having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth-in Him."

Ephesians 1:11. "In Him also we have [d]received an inheritance [a destiny—we were claimed by God as His own], having been predestined (chosen, appointed beforehand) according to the purpose of Him who works everything in agreement with the counsel and design of His will."

Colossians 1:18, "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence (Supremacy)."

1 John 4:9, "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."

Romans 5:8, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Proverbs 16:4, "The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom."

Romans 9:21, "Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 (namely) that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory."

Romans 11:27, "For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins." Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election,

they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" "Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" "For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

In summary,

as God Himself says it, "there is none beside God when He plans and decrees."

Furthermore, "there is none beside Him, when He creates reality."

Also, "there is none beside Him when he upholds reality."

In addition, "there is none beside Him when He saves."

Lastly, "there is none besides Him, when He causes His salvation to be effective in the lives of those He loves."

Do Not Accept God's Ordained Circumstances

This section addresses an abuse of God's sovereignty I often encounter, falling under the basic category of Decree versus Command. I've mentioned this fallacy before, and I'm thankful to Vincent Cheung for pointing out this error numerous times in his materials. Rather than paraphrasing what he's said, I'll tackle this from a slightly different angle.

We'll first deal with the negative and then the positive.
I read a piece of garbage posted on social media saying:

"Stop wasting time wishing your circumstances were different. It is God who ordained them. Learn how to be faithful in every circumstance."

Let's see how this works in Bible stories:

Hannah, stop wanting your childless circumstance to be different; be childless.

Hezekiah, stop wishing you weren't going to die by Isaiah's prophecy; just die and let the grave praise God.

Jacob, stop wanting your circumstances to be blessed; stop this crazy, charismatic wrestling with God and move on without God's blessing.

Canaanite woman, Jesus already gave theologically correct arguments that His ministry isn't for you and that it's morally wrong to take from the Jews and give to

you; just accept your circumstances and let your daughter foam at the mouth and roll on the floor. Accept God's circumstance for your daughter.

People lying in the street for Peter's shadow, stop this charismatic, man-centered embarrassment; just accept your painful circumstances and moan to the glory of God.

You blind men sitting by the road, causing all this loud commotion and public annoyance, just shut up already, accept you're blind, and beg for money to the glory of God.

Sinner, stop thinking there might be salvation in Jesus, for God has ordained you to be born a sinner; accept your drug addiction circumstances and be spaced out to the glory of God.

Sola empiricism,
Sola suffering,
Sola circumstances,
Sola Satan.

I'm not being over-the-top. This person's theology is a doctrine of demons. It uses circumstances (what God caused) as an excuse to invalidate God's commandments. They use circumstances the way satanists use a Ouija board to divine what they ought to do. They use metaphysics to divine ethics, like witch doctors.

It's like soldiers on the battlefield saying, "There's fierce fighting, so we need to leave," when their commanding officer ordered them to enter the fierce fighting and aid the left flank. They use circumstances to invalidate the commands given to them. So-called Christians do this all the time. They use circumstances to negate God's revealed commands. They don't want to obey God and use circumstances to argue their way out from under them. However, they'll give an account for such rebellion.

Circumstances aren't the revealed commands of God. If you want to know what you ought to do with the circumstances God has given you, go to Scripture, find the commands and precepts related to that subject, and obey them. We're children of God, and we obey our Father's commands, not circumstances. As Christians, we get knowledge (subject and predicate combinations about "oughts") from God's commands, not circumstances.

Luke 18:1-8 NLT

One day Jesus told His disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.

"There was a judge in a certain city," He said, "who neither feared God nor cared about people. A widow of that city came to him repeatedly, saying, 'Give me justice in this dispute with my enemy.' The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said to himself, 'I don't fear God or care about people, but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice, because she's wearing me out with her constant requests!'"

Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to His chosen people who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He'll grant justice to them quickly! But when the Son of Man returns, how many will He find on the earth who have faith?"

This is an explicit command. Jesus, as our Master, doesn't give suggestions like some yoga guru. He's our commanding officer, our Master, our God. God is sovereign, so this lady's circumstance is caused by God ordaining it. Jesus isn't teaching us to accept our God-ordained circumstances; rather, He tells us to ask God to stop what He ordained and make it go away. Jesus commands us to keep praying until God gives us what we want, and what we want is for the circumstance God ordained to vanish.

The last statement is Jesus asking if He'll find faith on earth. This is said in the context of a person having a bad circumstance (that God ordained) and praying for God to make it go away, with the certainty that God will come quickly and make it vanish. This is the kind of faith Jesus was talking about when He said, "*Will the Son of Man find faith on earth?*" He wasn't talking about faith for the forgiveness of sins but faith to change your circumstances—faith that changes the material world around you to be a blessing for you. This is the true test of faith; therefore, this is the true test of orthodoxy.

The command of God is to not accept bad circumstances that He ordained but to have enough perseverance and faith to make them go away. He commands you to have faith to make circumstances favorable for you.

(I want to add a quick note: I normally don't think in terms of "God's ordained circumstances" when facing everyday troubles, at least not in the way we're discussing here. We acknowledge God's absolute and direct sovereignty over all things, so He directly and absolutely causes all circumstances. However, when dealing with everyday troubles like those above, Jesus doesn't deem it necessary to say such things when the topic is faith and the Spirit. Thus, I follow Jesus' example on such topics. I'm focusing on God's sovereignty here because the person forced it into this type of topic.)

Romans 5

"(12) Because of this, just as sin entered into the world through (Adam), and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned... (15) by the trespass of the one, the many died...

(19) For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners."

Acts 17:30

"God now commands all people everywhere to repent."

God, in His absolute and direct sovereignty over all things, has ordained all men to be born sinful and dead and made sinners in their behavior. He did this through Adam. I did ask to be born into existence. I did not ask to be given the consequence of Adam's sin and born with a sinful nature. God gets to write His story the way He wants. Therefore, according to some Christians who divine ethics from circumstances, we ought to accept being born sinners, stay that way, and not want to change what God ordained. LOL!

At this point, some will realize that divining ethics from circumstances contradicts Scripture, at least on the point of forgiveness. They'll say Acts 17 commands us to repent, so we "ought" to do this rather than divine an ethic from our ordained circumstance. But they might not want to apply this to things like healing, for example. However, you can't turn God's commands "on and off" like a light switch.

You'll be judged by them, even if you give dumb excuses to avoid them. Christian ethics comes from God's commands, and there's no other option.

God has commanded that we shouldn't be happy with the bad circumstance He ordained for us. He commands us to repent and cause Him to remove the bad circumstance. He commands us to repent so we can be blessed with reconciliation and forgiveness, so that times of refreshing will flood our lives. God has also commanded us not to be happy with our sickness circumstances but to acknowledge that in His atonement we've been healed, and He commands us to make the sickness go away (James 5:15, John 14:12-14, Mark 16:18, Luke 10:9, Matt. 21:21-22).

Acts 10:38

"And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him."

James 5:13-15

"Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they'll be forgiven."

Because God is sovereign, all the sick people in the Gospels that Jesus healed were sick by God's ordained will. Also, by God's ordained will, relative to created object to created object, it was the devil (not God) who made all these victimized people sick, as Acts 10:38 indicates.

Some teach that we're to let Satan and sickness steamroll over us and that we should be their victims for entire lifetimes because "God ordained it." Those who suggest such things teach a doctrine of demons. Their doctrines increase the kingdom of Satan and his dominion of victimizing human beings. This is ultra cruel and unloving.

However, for us with faith, we view the world differently. We see God's commands as our foundation for how we behave, rather than using divination to formulate ethics from circumstances. We read the commands to be healed and to heal others. Thus, this is how we behave.

Jesus healed all who came to Him. In Acts, it says those with faith and filled with the power of the Spirit healed all who came to them. In fact, the Spirit so empowered them that their shadows and handkerchiefs healed people. This proves the critics of the health-and-wealth preachers who teach "name it and claim it" are wrong—but they're wrong for opposite reasons. The "name it and claim it" doesn't go far enough in affirming Jesus' faith teaching. Peter didn't even speak; his shadow had enough spiritual physics to heal. This is called "shadow it and be done with it." Thus, you don't even need to "name it" to "claim it." All you need is a shadow. All you need is to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus healed all those under the kingdom and torment of Satan. Holy Spirit-empowered church members, even table bearers, did the same. Jesus commanded them to be filled with power and continue His work. They did just that.

Jesus, who understood God's sovereignty better than anyone, didn't accept His Father's ordained circumstances for all the sick people He encountered. The

Scriptures record that only unbelief could stop Jesus from healing—not demonic power, not the Father’s will, only unbelief. In the ultimate sense of ontology, God did ordain all those people sick. Jesus went against His Father’s ordained circumstances and followed His Father’s command by healing all who asked—and even some who didn’t ask. In the book of Acts, the entire church, filled with power, did the same. They went on a campaign of war against the ordained circumstances of God by healing all who asked.

“What about Job and how he submitted to God’s ordained circumstances?” some might say. What about him? Beyond the point that God gave him double health and wealth, Job didn’t have a covenant with God as we do in Christ. I have a contractual right to make demands on God, as He does on me. Thus, Job and I aren’t in the same category. We’re not equivalent in this way. Beyond this, if we consider the category of healing, Jesus already became my substitute for sickness, and He’s commanded me to get healed (Isaiah 53:4-5, James 5:15). I’m categorically different from Job. If you insist on acting like Job, then you must treat God like an outsider, and if you still must act like Job, get his double health and wealth to prove it.

Even Jesus didn’t bow to the Father’s ordained circumstances—who am I to think I’m better than Jesus? I’m not better than Jesus, so I’ll follow His example. The apostles didn’t bow to God’s preordained circumstances when they healed all the sick—who am I to think I’m better than them? To bow to God’s ordained circumstances in the context of healing, for example, is to abuse God’s sovereignty to trample on God’s commands as garbage.

James says if you’re happy, then praise God. This isn’t a suggestion. If you’ve truly been blessed by God and are happy, you’re commanded to praise God. And why wouldn’t you? As Jesus said, if these didn’t praise God, the stones would cry out. God deserves our praises. However, James doesn’t stop his commandments there. He says if you’re sick, the elders are to come together and pray, and then you’ll be healed. The command isn’t to merely pray for healing and see what happens. The command is to pray and be healed. James is commanding the result of healing.

You’re to pray in faith with absolute certainty you’re healed. The same certainty you have when you pray for forgiveness and know you’re forgiven is the certainty you’re to have when you pray for healing and are healed. Anything less than receiving forgiveness is disobedience, for God has commanded all to repent and be forgiven. Anything less than receiving healing is disobedience, for God has commanded us to get healed. God is patient and will sanctify us to have this level of faith, but His patience and compassion don’t turn an act of disobedience into its opposite.

How wonderful is our God. How kind He must be. For His children, what He commands, He also grants. What He’s commanded is for us to ask for healing. He’ll grant both the faith and the fulfillment of this. He truly loves us. One way to view God’s commands and promises is to see them as a definition. To be healed and victorious over everyday troubles is God’s definition of His children. This is who we are. We already have God’s authority and power as part of our DNA.

Bread

Joshua 14:9 LSB

“Do not rebel against Yahweh; and do not fear the people of the land, for they’re our bread. Their protection has been removed from them, and Yahweh is with us; do not fear them.”

Mark 7:27

“First let the children eat all they want,” He told her, “for it’s not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.”

Jesus, in the context of being asked for healing and a demon being cast out, says this “bread” belongs to Jews, and it’s “not right” to take this healing that “belongs to the children” and give it to non-family members. Jesus is correct. However, this woman wouldn’t accept the ordained circumstance that she was born at the wrong time, on the wrong side of the covenant. By faith, she made it her time and made the covenant apply to her.

The point relevant to our discussion is how Jesus refers to healing and casting out demons as bread on His Father’s table, meant to be freely eaten by the children at that table.

Those who use God’s ordained circumstances to deny God’s children their RIGHT to freely eat the bread of healing and casting out devils on their Father’s table are themselves children of Satan, twice dead, foaming at the mouth, and perverted stars. How dare anyone, seeing a child of God reaching for some delicious, buttery bread of healing on their Father’s table, slap their hand away. They’ll receive their just reward.

For us who are seated in the heavenly places with Christ and at God’s table of gospel benefits, we see the world differently from those without faith. We see the world as Joshua did. We don’t see sickness, political troubles, or finances as painful burdens to bear on our shoulders but as bread for us to eat. God didn’t ordain the high walls of Jericho to hinder Israel but as an opportunity for faith to turn them into bread. God didn’t ordain the sickness for the people James referred to in his letter to hinder them but as an opportunity for faith to turn cancer into bread of healing and praise.

John says our faith overcomes the world. Our faith is victorious even over the bad circumstances God ordained in this world. Faith is the answer. It’s the answer to all the troubles of the world and even God’s ordained circumstances. Faith in God will turn them into delicious bread. Are you seated at God’s table or not? If you are, reach for the bread. Just one crumb can cast out a demon and heal. What would happen if you had enough faith to take a big bite from it? What would happen if, by faith, you ate the whole loaf? If you want this, you have free access to grab it. God is the power and salvation for all your troubles. He’ll deliver. And when He does, don’t forget to praise Him, for you’re commanded to do so.

Using God’s sovereignty to shrug at sickness or sin is a demonic dodge—circumstances aren’t commands! Jesus didn’t mope over ordained hardships; He zapped them with faith, and so should we. Healing’s our bread; so grab a loaf, ditch the devil’s Ouija ethics, and turn cancer into crumbs with Spirit-powered moxie.

The Logic of God's causality

Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...

And God said, *"Let there be light,"*
and there was light...

And God said, *"Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water."*
And it was so...

And God said, *"Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear."*
And it was so...

Then God said, *"Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kind."*
And it was so...

And God said, *"Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years."*
And it was so...

And God said, *"Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky."*
So God created...

And God said, *"Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds."*
And it was so. God made...

Then God said, *"Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule."*
So God created...

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

(Genesis 1:1,3,6,11,14,20,24,26,31 NIV.)

"Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.

He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,[a] for through him God created everything
in the heavenly realms and on earth.

He made the things we can see
and the things we can't see—

such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.

Everything was created through him and for him.

He existed before anything else,

and he holds all creation together.”
(Colossians 1:15-17 NTL)

“In the beginning the Word already existed.
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He existed in the beginning with God.
God created everything through him,
and **nothing was created except through him.”**
(John 1:1-3 NLT)

“Believe Me when I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, the time is coming and is here now when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear it shall live.

For even as the Father has life in Himself and **is self-existent**, so He has given to the Son to have life in Himself and be self-existent.”
(John 5:25-26 AMPC)

“The twenty-four elders fall down before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever[a], and put down their crowns before the throne, saying,

“You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
because you have created all things,
and because of your will they existed and were created.”
(Revelation 4:10-11 LEB)

“In this matter, then, of eating food offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing (**has no real existence**) and that there is no God but one.”
(1 Corinthians 8:4. AMPC)

“Haven’t you read the Scriptures?” Jesus replied. “They record that from the **beginning ‘God made them male and female.’**” And he said, “This **explains** why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.”
(Matthew 19:4-5 NLT)

“Six days you will work, and you will do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath for Yahweh your God; you will not do any work—you or your son or your daughter, your male slave or your female slave, or your animal, or your alien who is in your gates— **because in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth**, the sea and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested. Therefore Yahweh blessed the seventh day and consecrated it.”
(Exodus 20:9:11 LEB)

“The... female ostrich...
Indeed, it leaves its eggs to the earth,
and it lets them be warmed on the ground,

and it forgets that a foot might crush an egg,
 and a wild animal might trample it.
 It deals cruelly with its young ones, as if they were not its own,
 as if without fear that its labor were in vain,
because God made it forget wisdom,
 and **he did not give it a share in understanding.**

“Do you **give power** to the horse?
 Do you **clothe its neck** with a mane?
 Do you **make it leap** like the locust?

“Does the hawk **soar by your wisdom?**
 Does it **spread its wings** to the south?
 Or does the eagle **fly high at your command**
 and **construct its nest high?**”
 [Job 39:13-17, 19-20,26-27 LEB)

He is the one who made the earth by his power,
 the one who created the world by his wisdom,
 and by his understanding he stretched out the heavens.

At the giving of his voice
 there is a roar of waters in the heavens,
 and he causes the patches of mist
 to go up from the end of the earth.
 He makes lightning for the rain,
 and he brings out the wind from his storehouses.

All humankind turns out to be stupid,
 without knowledge.
 Every goldsmith is put to shame
 by the divine image.
 For his cast image is a lie,
 and there is no breath in them.
 They are worthless,
 a work of mockery.
 At the time of their punishment,
 they will perish.

The portion of Jacob is not like these,
 for he is the creator of [everything],
 and the tribe of his inheritance.
 Yahweh of hosts is his name.
 Jeremiah 51:15–19 (LEB)

“...Who gives life to the dead and speaks of the nonexistent things that [He has
 foretold and promised] **as if they [already] existed.**”
 (Romans 4:14 AMPC)

“There is **no authority except by God**, and those that **exist are put in place by God**.”

(Romans 13:1 LEB)

“And he made from one man every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining their fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, to search for God, if perhaps indeed they might feel around for him and find him. And indeed he is not far away from each one of us,

for in him we live and move and exist.”

(Acts 17:26-28 LEB)

Truly, it is a **spirit in a human being**, and the breath of Shaddai **teaches them**.”

(Job 32:8)

The lot is cast into the lap, But its **every** decision is from the Lord.

(Proverbs 16:33 NKJV)

A king’s **heart (or mind)** is like streams of water in the Lord’s hand: He directs it **wherever He chooses**.

(Proverbs 21:1 HCSB)

O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is **not in man who walks to direct his own steps**.

(Jer. 10:23 NKJV)

A man’s heart plans his way, But the **Lord directs his steps**.

(Proverbs 16:9 NKJV)

So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt....You intended to harm me, but **God intended** it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

(Genesis 45:8, 50:20 NIV)

For dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations. (Psalm 22:28 NIV)

No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another. (Psalm 75:6-7 NIV)

He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth. (Psalm 104:14 NIV)

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

(Psalm 139:15-16 NIV)

He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

(Daniel 2:21 NIV)

The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and

gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.
(Daniel 4:17 NIV)

All the peoples of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: "What have you done?"
(Daniel 4:35 NIV)

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?
(Matthew 6:26 NIV)

Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.
(Acts 4:27-28 NIV)

Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.
(Acts 14:17 NIV)

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.
(Philippians 2:13 NIV)

"Man's days are determined; **you have decreed** the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed."
(Job 14:5)

"John answered and said, "A man can receive **not one thing** unless it is granted to him from heaven!"
(John 3:27 LEB)

For the Christian,
"Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come, **all things are yours.**"
(1 Corinthians 3:22 LEB)

For the Christian,
"To me, the least of all the saints, was given this grace: to proclaim the good news of the fathomless riches of Christ to the Gentiles, and to enlighten everyone as to what is the administration of the mystery hidden from the ages by God, who created all things, in order that the **many-sided wisdom of God might be made known** now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places **through the church.**"
(Ephesians 3:8-10 LEB).

God is Spirit. God alone has self-existence. He has existed eternally (timeless). In order to make His decrees effective, to give His Son, and by this Himself, a grand public value, God created reality, or that is, reality as defined as everything that is not God. We are defining reality in this way, in this context, because God's transcendent attributes give Him a holy (cut-above) and all-together different existence from every

other thing He creates. God exists as the Bible defines Him, and because He creates, creation also exists. However, to maintain a distinction between God's type of existence from creation's type of existence, we will simply call creation "reality," and God as "God." Creation's existence presupposes God's existence.

God is the foundation for all reality in the absolute and direct sense. All reality came into being and is held into existence by God, who is spiritual, intellectual, eternal and immutable. Nothing in reality, is eternal (timeless), immutable, infinite and self-existence and an intellectual Trinity as defined by the Father, Son and Spirit. Reality is not God; God is not reality. God creates reality and holds it into the specific type of existences(categories) as He arbitrarily wants.

We have discussed this before: there are some things that are not arbitrary with God in relation to His interactions and decisions for reality, such as logic and truth. God cannot lie by categorical nature. God does not lie, because if God is "truth," then a lie is a category impossibility, just as green is not categorically applicable to the number 5. It has nothing to do with the number 5 not having the ability to be green; they do not logically belong together.¹¹⁵ God is logic itself. God cannot be illogical by nature. Thus, we read in Scripture God cannot lie; He does not lie to us in His revelation to us. In epistemology God does not lie, but in metaphysics God can cause someone to believe a lie (these are two separate categories (also, because the bible denies pantheism, one cannot say God is a liar because He caused Johnny to lie)). God is the law of noncontradiction; God is the Logic. Thus, it is impossible for God's nature, which is His mind, to affirm contradictions. God's nature is intellectual and a Spiritual mind, God's words are not contradictory, because He is the law of noncontradiction. Therefore, when God reveals, "Jesus is My Son," it is impossible for it to mean a contradiction such as, "your mom is a fish."

What this means is that even though the **categories** of reality are by God's personal arbitrary whim, yet because God cannot lie, when He does reveals truths about certain categories, these are as constant and permanent as they are revealed to be.

¹¹⁵ Vincent Cheung's own footnote on this topic. From Systematic Theology, 2010, page 70.

"First, does the Scripture really say that God "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2, KJV), or is it in fact God "does not lie" (NIV) or God "never lies" (ESV)? Go check the Greek. Second, even if we have access only to the KJV, so that the verse reads "cannot lie," why must we assume that "cannot" is here used in the same sense as it is in the question under discussion? Depending on the intention and the context, "cannot" sometimes means "does not." Hebrews 6:18 says that it is "impossible for God to lie," but then we still need to know why or in what sense it is impossible. Is it because God is inherently unable to speak falsehood as if it is truth? Or is it because whatever God says becomes the truth (Romans 4:17)? Power and the Word are one in God. Why can he not lie? Is it because of inability, or something else? Does the category of ability apply at all in this case?

Likewise, when we say that God "cannot die," are we saying that he lacks the ability to die, or should we rather say that death does not apply to the Eternal in the first place? Nothing eternal "can" die, but the "can" here has nothing to do with ability – the category does not apply at all. The eternal does not die, and when we say that God "cannot" die, we are referring to the utter impossibility of it, the inconceivability of it, the inapplicability of it, and not his ability or inability."

Thus, when after the flood God promised that the seasons of the earth will remain, then it will be so until the time God promised to make a new heaven and earth. It does not logically mean there will not be seasons then. Maybe, maybe not. What we know is that at least until then, the seasons will remain. That is all that can be deduced, without adding human speculation and superstition to it.

Categories.

Categories, is also a topic of logic, and will likewise be dealt with there.

We read in Genesis God saying He created something and that it will produce after “its kind.” We know God will be consistent to use His sovereignty because He is the truth and He is the law of noncontradiction; therefore, He will keep oak trees as oak trees, a trout as a trout and a sparrow as a sparrow, and man will be man. We read God put a spirit into man, and also put knowledge into man. Thus, we know there are categories for spiritual things and for invisible knowledge. We read the same words for heart and mind in the Bible are interchangeable, and so we know the categories of heart and mind are not two separate categories, but one category (which is called the soul, or the whole inner man), with different functions. Thus, if someone says to get your mind knowledge into your heart, we know they are speaking in fantasies and rebellion to what God has revealed. We also learn from this that the understanding of categories of reality is a Christian doctrine, and every other worldview or person that tries to teach this doctrine of consistent categories without a deduction from Scripture are liars and delusional.

For basic teaching we will call this the 3 aspects of existence and the corresponding 3 aspects of causality (or as some call, “because”). Some non-Christians are able to get some parts of this correct, but their human speculation distorts this doctrine so bad overall, that we will toss the history of their failures in the trash can and move on.

The *First* aspect of metaphysics is God’s logical purposes/ordering, or “decrees.” I call this the “logic of metaphysics.” The *Second* is “direct metaphysics,” where God directly and absolutely creates something (in according to His decree) and also, directly holds and maintains it in this existence. In philosophy jargon we call this the “whatness” of something. In Christian terminology it is called, “God made this, God upholds this (etc.).” In logical arguments these are better said in categorical syllogisms. The *Third*, is the final goal for this existence. This I call, the triumphant, or “victorious metaphysics.”

The same is mirrored in ontology/causality. The *First* aspect is the logical ordering of causality, or that is, “God’s decrees.” This is the “logic of ontology.” The *Second*, is “direct causality.” God directly and absolutely causes this existence, which He is directly holding into existence, to move and behave in this way. This is the motion, or cause, or physics of something. In logical arguments this is better said in “if...then,” propositional syllogism. The *Third*, is the end result of causality, which is God being victorious to display His value. This I call the “triumphant ontology.”

Since reality is ordered by a specific, intelligent Mind, then without God revealing His decrees, man would not have a rational way to think about the reality he lives in. Because God alone is directly and absolutely controlling reality with His power and definitions, then without God revealing this, and revealing He is controlling reality in a consistent way, then man would have no rational way to engage reality with any

confidence or justification. Since God will cause reality to be for the displaying of His value, and to the joy of His elect, then unless God reveals this, man would have no rational way to have hope or confidence for the future.

For any worldview or person to talk about any of these aspects of reality we just discussed without deducing them from the Bible are liars, thieves, frauds and intellectually stupid. May their condemnation be well deserved in hell.

God's direct sovereign creation and control over reality is shown to be total and exhaustive. Whether it be the universe by His decision (*or by His "Word," in the sense God does not have a mouth, for He is Spirit, but the moment He decided to start His decrees by creating the worlds. The moment God's Mind said, "Let there be Light." This is the same as, "by the power of God's Word," this or that happened*), or it be some unknown eagle that takes off an unknown cliff in South America, or why this spot of grass grew by this much last week, or why an ostrich lacks wisdom, or why two sparrows fly, eat or fall to the ground, or why there are 50 lightning bolts in this storm, or 500 in another, all is by God's decision and by His direct creation and causality. Whether it be broad things like categories, or something like the number of hairs on your head at any given moment, God directly and absolutely creates it and controls it.

God's word says in category all propositions that God creates and controls all things. When we see specific instances in Scripture, it says the same thing. Those criticisms that say here is an example that shows a contradiction, (the devil did this, or man chose this) commit non-sequitur conclusions by category errors. These event descriptions are not the same category of ultimate causality behind the event. These statements describe an event in the Scripture, but never state, man, the devil or something else other than God, metaphysically has life in themselves and/or causes something separate from God controlling them to do it. Thus, we have a positive law of identity of God's sovereignty. A doctrine that is not contradicted by any other Scripture. Because this is indeed true, then any opposing doctrine on this subject is false.

"All things came into being **through him**,
and **without him not one thing came into being**"
(John 1:3, NRSV).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ This verse uses the logic of immediate deduction with a contraposition.

All (things that came into being) are (through/with God).

Contraposition is to flip the subject and predicate and then negate both of them. Thus, "through God" is "without God" and "things that came into being," is "not one thing that came into being."

John 1:3 gives us the textbook example of a definition. It says what it is, and it also says what it is not. God created out of nothing. God did not use previous material substance to make things. The cause of something, which does-not-have-being, that comes-into-being, is God's direct power itself, and not something else.

Some morons say things like, "*well Genesis is open for other possibilities such as, million of years of evolution.*" I could as easily say, "*1 + 1 + 1 = 3, is open to mean billions, and so the Trinity means pantheism.*" But is this logical and is it produced by an infallible starting point of knowledge?

The Mind of God, when it repeats this same passage in Genesis, repeats it as meaning what a normal 24 hour day almost always means.¹¹⁷ "Haven't you read the Scriptures?" Jesus replied. "They record that from the beginning 'God made them male and female.'" And he said, "This *explains* why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one,"" (Matthew 19:4-5 NLT). "Six days you will work, and you will do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath for Yahweh your God; you will not do any work—you or your son or your daughter, your male slave or your female slave, or your animal, or your alien who is in your gates— *because in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested.* Therefore Yahweh blessed the seventh day and consecrated it," (Exodus 20:9:11 LEB).

Science commits a triple fallacy of empiricism, induction and affirming the consequent. Science gives no knowledge about any aspect of reality. Science has never produced even one proposition of knowledge about reality. This means science cannot give a truth claim about apples, the shape of the earth, water, color, or any aspect of reality. Thus, for the idea of "evolution," to even be considered as "knowledge" must be deduced alone from the Scripture. This however cannot be done. I have asked before, "without using science or *presupposing science (since it gives no knowledge anyway)*, give a formal argument from Scripture to prove evolution." Where is this? Without the delusion of science, which uses a human starting point (empiricism), and human superstition (inductive logic and affirming the consequent), evolution does not even enter into man's mind. Evolution comes into the mind of man by superstition and speculation.

Since evolution is not deduced from the Scripture it is not even to be considered as an intelligent term to be discussed. This is much more so when considered that evolution contradicts what the bible teaches about creation and history. Evolution is built upon empiricism and inductive logic. Until evolutionists can demonstrate in formal logic how empiricism and affirming the consequent can produce knowledge it is nothing

All (without God) are (things that did not come into being).
Or in basic language, "without God nothing can into being."

I mention this as just another example of the bible doing deductive logic.

¹¹⁷ The word "day" can mean other things such as "the day of the lord," or "back in day my daddy walked to school." Context determines such things. The context of Genesis one is "day and night."

For more good exegesis on this and more about this subject see related articles from www.creation.com

more than speculation and superstition that is to be mocked and dismissed. I can easily assert *“because pink unicorns are born from black holes, therefore, there is a second way to be saved which is by eating 3 bananas and running faster than the color 6 blue.”* Unless I can prove the Bible teaches and deduces this or that there is another infallible epistemology that produces this, it is to be mocked and dismissed.

“You **alone** are Yahweh.

You **alone** have made the heavens, **the heavens of the heavens**,

and **all** of their army,

the earth and **all** that is in it,

the waters and **all** that is in them.

You give life to **all** of them, and the army of the heavens worship you.”
(Nehemiah 9:6 LEB)

“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you have created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created.”
(Revelation 4:11 LEB)

“By faith we understand that the **entire universe was formed at God’s command**, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.”
(Hebrews 11:3 NLT)

“Through [Christ] God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can’t see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.”
(Colossians 1:16 NLT)

Ah Lord Yahweh! Look, you made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm. Nothing is too difficult for you.”
(Jeremiah 32:17 LEB)

“Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer, and he who formed you in the womb:
“I am Yahweh, who made everything, who stretched out the heavens **alone**,
who spread out the earth—**who was with me?**”
(Isaiah 44:24 LEB)

The positive doctrine affirmed throughout the bible is that Yahweh alone has a monopoly on all causality in reality. Thus, when reality is spoken of in the Scripture it says, Yahweh ALONE did it. Some foolishly say, *“Well God created the laws and then left them to operate on their own power.”* Is this a refutation or an admission? If God gives up some of His power, or God-ness, or causality to something else, then God does not have it anymore. What could be more obvious than that? Such an admission is to say God is not absolutely and directly sovereign over all things, because He gave

some of it away and so He does not have it anymore. This is the same for such things as the blasphemy of free-will. If man has this inherent power or control (apart from God controlling it), then God gave up some of His power, and thus, God does not have that power anymore. Therefore, God is not totally sovereign over all things anymore. If God gave up His control to some laws, so that they have power that moves apart from God directly controlling it, then God had denied His own nature; and thus, God is no longer the God as defined by Scripture. If God created a separate power, such as so-called laws of nature or blasphemes like evolution to operate with its own power (apart from God directly causing it) then God is not directly causing reality to move and behave; yet, this would be a contradiction to what God claims about His own power and causality over all reality. He claims to create it and cause it; He does it alone absolutely and directly. The God of scripture cannot deny Himself; it is impossible for Him to lie. God does not give His power to another. He alone creates. He alone sustains. He alone creates and directly controls good and evil, faith and sin, visible and invisible, material and knowledge.

God alone made the heavens of heavens and earth, and all that is in it. The laws are not independent powers from God; rather, they are only descriptions of how God is constantly causing specific parts of reality to exist and move.

Some people do not like this God who creates can controls all things; however, for the elect, this is a heartwarming doctrine that gives us hope and strength.

As we migrate into the doctrine of man, let us think about **God's wonderful works** in creation, and how man is designed to emulate their creator in wonderful works in this reality.

“He has made his wonders to be remembered; Yahweh is gracious and compassionate.”

(Psalm 111:4. LEB)

“Let them give thanks to Yahweh for his loyal love, and his wonderful deeds for the children of humankind.”

(Psalm 107:8)

“We will not hide them from their children, telling the next generation the praises of Yahweh, and his power and his wonders that he has done.”

(Psalm 78:4)

“O Lord my God, you have performed many wonders for us. Your plans for us are too numerous to list. You have no equal. If I tried to recite all your wonderful deeds, I would never come to the end of them.”

(40:5 NLT)

“I will meditate on your majestic, glorious splendor and your wonderful miracles.”

(145:5 NLT)

“I praise you, because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works, and my soul knows it well.

(Psalm 139:14 LEB)

“Make me understand the way of your precepts, that I may meditate on your wonderful things.”

(Psalm 119:27 LEB)

“Cretans and Arabians too—we all hear them speaking in our own native tongues [and telling of] the mighty works of God!”

(Acts 2:11 AMPC)

These “works” of God includes a huge range of things, from creating the constant categories for reality we see every day, such as the earth, rain, beautiful skies, hot and cold. It includes God’s common natural benevolence to all people by bringing food and rain to all people. But such passages have a focus on God’s power that is out of the ordinary from His normal way in how He moves the world. These are often called miracles, and it is a correct term, as long as we understand they are nothing more than God operating/moving His creation in a not-so-common way. As the above verses show, the scriptural term that means the same as miracles is “God’s wonderful works,” or “God’s mighty works.” It is not as if God’s normal way to uphold and move all reality (every moment) takes less power on God’s part, than for God to cause it to move a little differently.

“Mighty,” like the words “big” or “small,” is a relative word. It depends what is being compared. Thus, these works are “mighty” or “great” relative to two things. Mighty in contrast to how God normally causes reality to move, and mighty relative to how it is seen, from man’s point of view. As discussed before in God’s absolute sovereignty and occasionalism, God is directly exerting His power in every moment to uphold all reality and to make it move, how He wants it to move in the next moment. Thus, relative to God’s own power, there is no difference in power being exerted in comparison of something normal, like a person dying (such as Lazarus) and then Jesus resurrecting Lazarus from the grave. However, “relative” to how God normally uses His sovereignty over reality, resurrection is “great and mighty.” Likewise, relative to how we normally experience death, resurrection is great and mighty.

By God’s own design and choice, creation is moved this way by Him, for a way to show His power, and for the Elect to see it and enjoy it. Causing creation to move in a constant way, provides intelligibility, predictability, and it also provides an occasion for God to operate in a different way, such as miracles. God uses these occasions to then remind or directly impart the knowledge of how great and mighty He is.

The greatest mighty work of God, is salvation of His Elect children. Even before the advent of Jesus, the Psalms, devote much praise to God’s mighty works for saving individuals, and to Israel as a whole. There is often a particular emphasis to God’s faithfulness to His promises to favor Abraham; this is often emphasized with God saving Israel from Egypt and giving them the Promise Land. This focus on God’s mighty saving in the Exodus and Promise Land story is used by the Scripture to show what Jesus did in His atonement for all of God’s elect children (the book of Hebrews).

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so you would no longer be their slaves. I broke the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk with your heads held high,” (Leviticus 26:13 NLT).

Caleb did not ask to conquer Pharaoh. No. When God baptized Israel in the Red sea, “He” alone was saving them. They were still in their sin, slavery, weakness and shame, along with Caleb and Joshua. God rode down the skies, like a mighty Sky Rider and swooped down and saved them. Like a rock, He rolled away their shame down a mountain from them. All Moses did was point his staff here or there. There were no shields or swords wielded by the Israelites. They did nothing but watch. God hurled one judgment miracle after another, one lightning bolt after another on the Egyptians to save His people. After this baptism in the Red Sea, God says He removed their slavery and shame so that they can walk with their heads held high. They were a new creation in essence. They were slaves. Now they are free. They were alone, but now God leads them. They were sick, but now God is their healer. They were ignorant, but now they have Tablets written by the fingers of God. They were poor, but now they have the treasures of Egypt in their pockets.

However, the story did not end here. After being able to walk with their heads held high, God had something for them to do in this new creation he made for them. Indeed, there was an additional baptism.¹¹⁸ This was the Jordan baptism after Moses’ death. God tells Joshua to go in His power; He tells him to be courageous. God puts a sword and shield in Joshua’s hand, along with Israel and says in effect, *“I saved you. Now I will empower you. You will be My lightning bolt this time. I will not throw the bolts from Heaven. I am giving you My power. You use it. You take the land. You invade it. You press forward in MY POWER and YOU advance My Kingdom, by YOUR hands and feet.”* Caleb responds, as an 80 year-old man, by asking God to give him the mountain with all the big giants on it. God approves of his faith and courage.

This mighty work of God is mirrored in Jesus Christ and His saving of the Elect. Indeed there are even two baptisms in the New Contract with Jesus. One for the removal of slavery and sins, and one for the power of God’s Spirit.

Jesus Does the Marvelous “Works,” that the Father Does.

John 5:16–30 (NET)

16 Now because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began persecuting him.

17 So he told them, “My Father is working until now, and I too am working.”

19 So Jesus answered them, “I tell you the solemn truth, the Son can do nothing on his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.

20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he does, and will show him greater deeds than these, so that you will be amazed.

¹¹⁸ This understanding of the two baptisms was made clear to me by Vincent Cheung’s argument in the essay, *“The Edge of Glory.”* See the book, *Sermonettes* Vol. 9. 2016.

21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes.

22 Furthermore, the Father does not judge anyone, but has assigned all judgment to the Son,

...27 and he has granted the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

...30 I can do nothing on my own initiative. Just as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will, but the will of the one who sent me.

Luke 4:16-20 NET

4:16 Now Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 4:17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

4:18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and the regaining of sight to the blind,

to set free those who are oppressed,

4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

4:20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. 4:21 Then he began to tell them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read.”

A few quick things about the works Jesus is doing.

The Father “works on the Sabbath.” Back the Exodus and wilderness story, on the **Sabbath** God **first worked** by giving them “food” to eat.¹¹⁹ God then worked on the

¹¹⁹ Exodus 16:22-30.

He said to them, “This is what the Lord has said: *‘Tomorrow is a time of cessation from work, a holy Sabbath to the Lord.* ... See, because the Lord has given you the Sabbath, that is why he is giving you food for two days on the sixth day, (v. 23,29 Net).

The first mention of the “Holy Sabbath,” is here. The first mention of Sabbath being a “holy” day is the day God provided so much miracle material provision, they stayed home and ceased from working. God worked so hard to provide for them miracle food, they were able to cease

Sabbath to provide “sanctification”¹²⁰ for them. Thus, according to first mentions hermeneutics “God working on the Sabbath” on the behalf of man, is 1st a material-miracle blessing and then 2nd a spiritual blessing. Most have this flipped upside down, or do not even consider the first because their parents are the same ones who complained in the wilderness. They do not like how God “works” on the behalf of man. They have the same attitude toward Jesus and His followers. Jesus provides material miracles and healings and people disagree with the works of Jesus and the Father. They think Jesus should preach the gospel more and do less healing. Jesus warned such people not to be offended that instead of mostly preaching He is mostly healing, healing, healing, resurrecting and then also preaching the gospel (Matthew 11:4-6.)

Also, in context of Exodus 16, we have in chapter 15 God healing them, and declares that He is “Yahweh who heals you.” Jesus does these same works the Father did.

This is the repeated history. Starting with Abraham and God’s blessing, God separated Abraham to Himself or that is, made him holy (cut-above) by promising to favor Abraham with supernatural health, wealth, personal fame, military victories and etc. After Abraham believed God would do this, then God separated Abraham to Himself, or that is, made him holy, by declaring him righteousness in His sight. Then as we just went over this happens again in the Sabbath doctrine. God first makes His people holy by providing favor by miracle provision, and then also spiritual provisions. Jesus does the same.

Jesus Christ mirrors this in His working on the Sabbath. Our text below starts with a common experience in the gospels. Jesus is healing on the Sabbath. Jesus is working

from their work. This ceasing from material work, due to God’s abundant miracle provision, “sets them apart to Yahweh, (i.e. Holy)” and makes them a “cut-above” all peoples of the earth. It is true that in Jesus’ atonement, He becomes the spiritual provision of forgiveness, sanctification, adoption and redemption; however, this does not negate the first mention of this is about material provision. Thus, the teaching about the first mention of God providing on the Holy Sabbath, is more than, but not less than, God providing abundant material miracle provision.

Fools often use one Scripture to cancel out another. But as we see here, as it often is, the Scripture for the sake of God’s love to man, keeps adding not subtracting blessings. Let us be true children of God, and in faith, obtain all the provisions of God, and by this become “Holy people of God.”

¹²⁰ The next big mention about the Sabbath and God’s supply is in Exodus 31. God just gave Moses instructions about the Tabernacle, and all the symbolic parts that represent God’s mercy, salvation and nearness to them. In verse 12 it says, *“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, speak also to the Children of Israel, saying: ‘Surely, My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you’ (NKJV).”*

At first God is the abundant material supply through miracles; next, is the abundant spiritual supply of mercy, salvation and nearness.

Thus, we can conclude the Sabbath was designed by God to be a day where “God works” by supplying so much material and spiritual blessings, that man rests from his works. Their “receiving” and “trusting” in God’s abundance miracle supplies, makes them “holy,” set-a-part to God as His chosen people.

Therefore, in Gospel of Jesus Christ, not only imputed righteousness is provided (spiritual) but also healing (material) (Exodus 15:26, Isaiah 5:4-5, James 5:15), and finances (Exodus 36:5, 2 Corinthians 8:9)

material-miracle blessings on the Sabbath, just like His Father did. Just like the Israelites in the wilderness who hated God for helping them, these in John 5 also hated God's Son for helping them. Those who follow after the Father, and the Son by doing these same "works" to help man, are often persecuted by those who claim to follow God.

I know this sounds strange, but you need to let that sink in. The Father was providing one miracle supply after another for the Israelites; they responded with complaints and hating the Father. God was richly helping them and they turned around and hated Him for it. Jesus on the Sabbath was doing exactly what the Father did. He was richly supplying both material miracles and spiritual ones, and the Jews hated Him for helping them. They did the same thing to the disciples in the book of Acts. The same happens today.

Our verse in Luke shows that Jesus quotes Isaiah's prophecy as being fulfilled by Him. The is about God healing, setting people free, and preaching truth to them. This is God richly supplying every sort of material and spiritual blessing. The Father has been doing these works throughout the Scripture, and now Jesus is doing them as the Son of Man. In fact, when question by John's disciples if Jesus was truly the one they were looking for He responded by saying,

"Luke 7:22-23 (NET) So he answered them, "Go tell John what you have seen and heard: The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news proclaimed to them. Blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

Think about what Jesus is saying about being offended. He is not preaching on hell or sin; rather, just like in Exodus and the Sabbath provisions, Jesus is preaching and providing material miracles. In this context, He says do not be offended. That is, do not hate God for providing empowerment and material miracles, as the Israelites did in the wilderness. Do not be offended at God richly pouring out goodies, because if you do, then you burn in hell. Your body will be left in the wilderness just like the rest of them.

Jesus started His ministry, as the Godman, after He was empowered by the Holy Spirit. He did His ministry, not by the mere power of the Son of God, but as a "**man**," born under the law, and "**empowered by the Spirit**." Jesus didn't use Jesus' power; rather, He used the Spirit's power. He said it was by the Spirit of God He cast out demons. He said it was the Father doing the works, (miracles) through Him, and not that Jesus was doing it. He gives us the same Spirit, and same ministry. The only difference is that He said we would do ever greater miracle works. After Jesus' baptism and the Holy Spirit coming down to rest on Him, He became an explosive ministry of miracles, healings, truth and power. This was an antitype for how God's chosen ones would follow in Jesus' footsteps. Jesus commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they are baptized in the Holy Spirit for missional/miracle power. Jesus was baptized and empowered by the Spirit, as a man, and commands His followers to do the same.

I could go on and on about this, but this will have to suffice for now. We will transition to the "works that man will do" by quoting Jesus speaking of this very thing.

John 14:10-14 (NIV)

Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves.

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Man does the Marvelous Works of the Father and the Son

The Elect created in Christ's image—is the pinnacle of God's creation in the world. Man is also called to do God's "WONDEFUL WORKS." This should not be a surprise, if one understands who Jesus is and how the Elect are one with Him.

As said before, Jesus was born under the law as a man. Jesus did not begin His ministry of power, until He was empowered by the Holy Spirit. The elect, who are recreated in Jesus, as adopted children and co-heirs with Jesus, follow in His footsteps. The elect are men born under the law. They are saved and born from above by God's Spirit. Then like Jesus, they are empowered by the Spirit to do God's wonderful works.

Jesus, the victorious Godman is empowered, and those who are in Him, or recreated in HIS image are also empowered.

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, and we being dead in trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), and raised us together and seated us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in order that he might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so that no one can boast.

For we are his creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we may walk in them.
Ephesians 2:4–10 (LEB)

4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and the regaining of sight to the blind,

to set free those who are oppressed,
4:19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. 4:21 Then he began to tell them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read."
(Luke 4:18-20 NET)

"But if I cast out demons *by the Spirit of God*, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.
(Matthew 12:28-30)

"And while he was with them, he commanded them, "Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for what was promised by the Father, which you heard about from me.

For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. ...

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth.""
(Acts 1:4-5,8 LEB)

"And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.""
Acts 2:38-39 (LEB)

"So they said to him, "What shall we do that we can accomplish the works of God?"

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God: that you believe in the one whom that one sent.""
John 6:28-29 (LEB)

"And this is his commandment: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he commanded us."
1 John 3:23 (LEB)

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."
John 14:12 (NIV)

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and your fruit should remain, in order that whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. These things I command you: that you love one another.
John 15:16-17 (LEB)

There are 3 main points we can focus on, for the works of God, which the elect are commanded to do. We will focus on what the apostle John says first, and then on what Jesus directly command.

John, because we have a gospel and a letter, can easily see how he defines things in similar ways. It makes it easier to see context and precise definitions. John shows that Jesus defines the (ch.6) “work” that the Father commanded us to do, “is to believe in the Son of God.” Later in chapter 14-15 the works of God are expanded by Jesus to be the miracles He was doing and to love each other.

From this we see John in his letter sums up the commands and works of God, to simply believe in Jesus and to love one another (1 John 3:23). As for the third, John commands us to pray and receive the miracles we are praying for (1 John 5:13-15). Thus all 3 points Jesus defined as the works we are to do, in the Gospel of John, John restates in his own letter.

Two other points. First, in both Ephesians chapter 2 and Jesus in John 15, it says we are predestined by God to do these good works. This is something that both the so-called gatekeepers of God’s sovereignty (Reformed) and Pentecostals have missed. In these two passages, the good works of God that we are predestined to do include (1) loving each other and (2) general sanctification. Most get this far. But in these passages (Eph.4:7-11 and directly in John 15) the works include powerful gifts of ministry and faith to ask for whatever the will of man wants and receive it. According to Jesus we were chosen and “appointed” (i.e. predestined) to ask for whatever we want and get it, and predestined to love each other. And that by this we give great glory to the Father. As Vincent says (as I paraphrase), if your understanding of predestination does not include God predestinating you to ask and get whatever you want from God in faith, then you do not know, you do not understand, you do not believe in the doctrine of predestination and election.¹²¹

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you,” (John 15:16).

Jesus is talking in the topic of election and predestination. We did not choose Him; rather, He chose us (Romans 9-11).

What is interesting, (as, Vincent Cheung, points out in “Predestination and Miracles”) is how Jesus applies the doctrine of election and predestination. Jesus’ application of is not how most apply it. In fact, Jesus, the most God centered man who ever lived, applies it in the opposite way most apply God’s sovereignty. Those who champion themselves as experts on God’s predestination when they are in context of prayer apply it by saying, “you can pray, but based on the Father’s choice, He might or might not grant it.” Jesus does the exact opposite of this. He says, God chose you, or that is “predestined you so that you can ask whatever you want, and the Father will give it to you.”

Why does Jesus and the self-appointed experts on God’s predestination say the opposite? Who is wrong, and who is right? And if Jesus is right, then be free to use

¹²¹ See Vincent Cheung, “Predestination and Miracles.”
From the ebook, Trace. 2018. Ch.18

God's predestination and election to embolden you to pray and get whatever you ask for. Let Jesus' teaching on God's sovereignty be an encouragement to build faith and grant your request. Mark those who contradict Jesus' application of predestination as servants of the faithless and remove them from your life.

By this the Reformed has excommunicated and divorced themselves from having the spiritual power and intellectual fortitude to teach this awesome doctrine. The Pentecostals, have been so blinded by the "gifts of the Spirit," and their Satanic doctrine of free-will, have walked by the doctrine of predestination, even though scripture teaches predestination means we get whatever we ask in prayer. They are slow witted fools; however, they at least still have a chance to repent and correct themselves.

Second, Jesus goes beyond teaching that we are predestined by God to have faith to do His miracles and ask what we want and get it. He goes on to command us to be filled with the same ministry of the Spirit that He was under. The same Spirit empowered ministry He was doing, He commands us to take-up His mantle (like Elisha) and do the same Spirit empowered works. His ministry was a Spirit empowered ministry that advanced the kingdom of God against the kingdom of Satan. However, He was one man. He now commands us to advance His Kingdom by the Spirit empowered ministry (John 12:24, Acts chapters 1-2).¹²² The Elect are the many seeds Jesus spoke about, and again this is in context of John's Gospel, where He records Jesus telling us God has predestined us to have faith to ask and receive the same miracles He was doing and even greater.

The book of Acts shows us in the first two chapters what Jesus meant by us receiving the Spirit for power. It is a second act of "empowerment" that can be at the same time of repentance/conversion, but is a separate baptism, so that Luke called it being "baptized by the Spirit." Luke shows other examples in the book of Acts where repentance and baptism of water, was a separate act of being baptized by the Spirit.¹²³

Jesus, when asked if He was the one John the Baptist was looking for, responded with something similar to the Isaiah prophecy about Him. Jesus was healing, healing, healing, casting out demons, resurrecting the dead, and only one time mentions, preaching the gospel. Jesus did this by the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit. He "commands" us to do the same Spirit empowered works. This is what we see in the book of Acts.

Thus, the wonderful works of God that elect men do, is divine power for holiness, love, faith for miracles, and Spirit endowment for unstoppable acts of kingdom advancing power. Jesus says that with faith "we" can command a mountain to be thrown into the sea, or a tree to be planted in the sea (the salt sea, and live) and they will "OBEY" "US" not God. Jesus said to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. He did not say, "well, because it is ultimately God's, take Caesar stuff and give it to other people or God." God is not pantheism. God is separate from His creation, although He directly and absolutely controls every aspect of it. Thus, if God gives "you" something, it belongs to

¹²² "Jesus replied, *"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."*" John 12:23-24 (NIV)

¹²³ See section on Eschatology for more.

“you.” Jesus, the greatest theologian to speak and teach on God’s sovereignty mostly says, “your faith healed you,” and “your faith saved you,” rather than saying “well, because God is sovereign, God saved you, not yourself, so shut up about “your strong faith” and be humble before God.” This is the same Jesus we will stand before on Judgment Day. Jesus mostly spoke on the level of the chess pieces, rather than, on the level of God moving the chess pieces. Therefore, Jesus who both “understood” and “loved” God’s absolute sovereignty more than all the best theologians combine says, the mountain will not obey God, but it will “obey” “you” when “you” “command” it.

This deserves a long section of thanksgiving and singing songs of praise. Think about how giving and giving and giving God is to His chosen children. He creates. He controls. He does wonderful works in reality that only He has the power to do. Then, God’s only Son steps into reality and does the same wonderful works that only God can do, and He does them by the Power of the Spirit. Then, after saving us from our sins God lavishes us with the same Power of the Spirit to do the wonderful works of God that only God in His power can do. God is a super abundantly giving God. We do not give to God, no, God gives and richly supplies us. Even things one might be prone to think that only belong to God, God lavishly empowers us to do them. God does not hold back in giving to us. He even gave us His only beloved Son. God is a giving God. Thus, do not hold back with your faith in His promises. Truly, Truly I say to you, whatever you ask in faith God will give to you. He wants to give more than you want to ask.

Man

Transitioning from the works of God to the doctrine of man, we are still in the category of reality/metaphysics. *Man/anthropology* is about the doctrine of (1) how God uses His absolute sovereignty to design man’s purpose, (2) how God first creates man and (3) how God causes man to get from their starting point to obtain this first intention of God for man. In essence the doctrine of man is rather simple and easy to understand—when God is used as the foundation to formulate the doctrine. However, when this foundation is compromised a little, to accommodate the prejudice of man, then the doctrine of man becomes complicated, superstitious and anti-intellectual.

The marvelous works of God is obviously about how God uses His own sovereignty in reality, and the same with Jesus Christ. As we saw with God’s chosen one’s in Christ, God has predestined man to do these marvelous works as well. With these in context and the context of the decrees of God in general in mind, we can ask the question, if man is to get to this place of co-heirs of God and following the same marvelous works of God’s Son, how is this possible when man is sinful? This leads us then to the doctrine of salvation.

Man is the pinnacle of creation.

The Elect, and not man in general, is the pinnacle of creation. This is why creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the “sons of God,” and not just “man.” The new creation will not be re-created in the image of man, but in the image of the sons of

God. The new creation will not be liberated in the original image of man, but in the image of man, who have been re-created in the image of Jesus Christ. By this we see a broad view of the original decree of God regarding both the Godman Jesus Christ, elect humans, and all reality.

This leads us to consider the order of the eternal decrees. If the items in God's plan were to be set forth in the order in which he decided them, what would this order be? Of course, God is eternal and omniscient, so that there is not a point in his thinking when he does not know everything or when he has not decided everything; therefore, when we speak of order in the mind of God, we are referring to logical order and not chronological order.

The decree for God to be glorified comes first, and to achieve this, the decree is made that Christ would subdue all things and deliver them to the Father. In order to achieve this, the decree is made that Christ would save a chosen people out of fallen humanity to become his fellow heirs. In order to achieve this, the decree is made that fallen humanity would be divided into the elect and the reprobates. In order to achieve this, the decree is made that humanity would fall into sin. Then, in order to achieve this, the decree is made that God would create humanity. This is the order of purpose and design. The order is reversed in execution, so that it begins with creation and culminates in God's glory.¹²⁴

We will not go over the decrees of God again, but only summarize some points already stated. As with a positive vs negative definition, the positive is first, not the negative. The negation does not have to exist. Justice can exist without injustice, but, injustice cannot exist without justice. All creation, although created by and upheld into existence by God, is not God Himself. All reality in this sense, is non-God. God does not need non-God to exist. The same is with love and hate. God is love. Love does not need hate to exist. God does not need to hate something to love.

The eternal, immutable God had existed for an unending eternity, before He created. He loved His Son, and the Son had loved the Father, and the Spirit communicated this Love between the Father and Son, and Son to the Father. Hate did not exist. Thus, for an unmeasurable and unending time, the positive definition had existed with no negations. The negations are not necessary. Love has no necessary dependence for its negation of hate to exist, however it is the opposite for hate. Light does not need darkness to exist. Power does not need weakness to exist. There is no eastern pagan doctrine of "balance" within the Christian worldview. God is self-existence and needs nothing. He is love; He is power; He is immutable; He is complete, and thus, He needs no hate. If God does create a reality and has hate in it, it is because He arbitrarily does so for a specific goal within creation, and not because God needs it.

We are told that Jesus Christ was with the Father when the world was created, and as the worlds were made by and for the Father, they were made by and for the Son of God. God is not visible. God is invisible (John 1:18). Only the Son has seen the Father. We see the Son on a physical throne, not the invisible Father. That is, the visible world all points to the visible Son, who sits on the throne. The Son does hand the Kingdom to the Father, but the Scripture never says the Father stops being the invisible God. The point is, the world in the "visible" sense and direct sense is for the Son of God. The world in this sense is a gift from the Father to Jesus Christ. Jesus is the image of

¹²⁴ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 115

the Father. When the Father sees, so to speak, He sees His perfect image of Himself in the Son. When the Father considers making the world, it is not as if God considers this or sees this without seeing it through His perfect image, Jesus Christ. God is Trinity; He never stops being Trinity. When God considered making reality for His own glory, He sees this through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, reality was in this sense is a gift for His Son, Jesus Christ.

"Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him,"
John 5:22-23.

(see also Ephesians 1:20-23, also, Hebrews 1:1-4)

Who rescued us from the authority of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

And He is before all things, And in Him all things hold together.

And He is the head of the body, the church;

Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross—through Him—whether things on earth or things in heaven.

(Colossians 1:13-20 LSB)

God has always existed in a totally positive definition, and the Father is making reality as a gift for His highly beloved only Son. The original goal for reality, therefore, is a positive definition that reflects God's nature. The Father is for and eternally loves the Son of God, and the Son of God is for and eternally loves the invisible Father.

The point of all this is simple. The end intended by or the original goal that God had for creation, is a goal that images the positive definition of God. This positive definition is without the negations. It is a positive definition of power, intelligence, logic love, and fellowship.

Jesus, as the Godman, is asking that as the Father and Son are in one another, as their love(favor) is in one another, that the elect are brought into this same oneness and favor. In verse 26 Jesus says, *"I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."* This is Jesus praying for the original goal for the Elect to be

accomplished by the Father's power. The total positive definition of love and life (v.3) and light, without its negation of hate (etc), that the Father has for His Son, Jesus prays will be in the Elect. Is the Father's oneness with Jesus contaminated with negations of some hate, darkness, unintelligence etc.? No! Think about that. All the love, life, and intelligence that God the Father is for His Son and is in His Son, as one with Him, Jesus prays to be transferred also, through Him, into the Elect. This is the original definition for the Elect.

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—

I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me," John 17:20–23 (NIV).

Elect human beings have their origin created out of this positive definition of power, intelligence, love, fellowship and light, and this being for the Son of God.

The reprobates are created as the negation of the Elect. They are the non-elect, or anti-elect. It pleased God to make the reprobate as a background to contrast them with the Elect, to show them how good they have it. The reprobates get their original design from this place of negation, as a teaching tool for the Elect to observe. They are a negative definition of weakness, unintelligent, irrational, hate, abandonment, and darkness.

As we saw in 1 Corinthians 3, we see that all reality is created for the Elect, in the most direct sense. Then, the Elect are created for Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ is for His Father.

"So then, no more boasting about mere mortals!

For everything belongs to you,

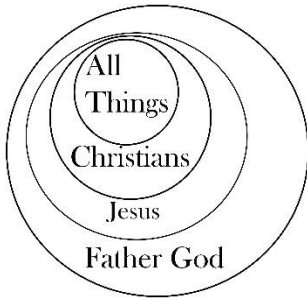
whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future.

Everything belongs to you,

and you belong to Christ,

and Christ belongs to God."¹²⁵

¹²⁵ 1 Corinthians 3:21–23 (NET)



God is the foundation of man, not something else. God is really smart; He knows what and why and how He will do it. This is the same for man, as it is for every part of reality. From this view of God as the foundation (decrees) we have broadly answered the origin of man.

Now we will answer the **second question** about man's creation.

As God is the foundation of man's origin (the predetermined goal and definition for man), God is also the foundation for man's creation, and not something else.

We learn in the Scripture that original man was created in God's image, this is mainly referring to man's mind as a system-of-propositions and thinking rationally about God, and what He created, and what He commanded.

Man's body is a tent put on him. Thus, this important, yet added tent, is not the image of God that man is made in. God is invisible. Thus, the part of man that images God, will also be invisible. God's nature itself is an invisible mind, that is immutable and eternal, and power. Man is not deified (with the incommunicable attributes of God), when God created man in His image. However, the aspects of God that are not directly tied to being deified, God very graciously mirrors in man being made like His image. We learn that God has put his Laws in Man's heart at creation (Romans 2:15). As discussed before, this innate knowledge includes all sorts of things, such as logic, basics of God's nature, God's command, God's creation, and of man. This is the invisible part of man. His rational mind that is able to understand who God is, how God has defined creation and man, and then make choices to obey God's definition. This is how man was originally created. This was the invisible spirit man that God breathed into Adam's soulless body, that made him a man. This is the essential part of man that is an image of God.

Before Adam fell into sin, there were no demons harassing the inner thoughts of man, and there was not a predisposed bent in their minds that wanted to disobey and suppress God's laws written on their souls (i.e. sinful nature).

Man was not the image of Christ. Man did not have the fullness of God's Spirit living in their souls that was a life-giving river of intellectual power, ethical power and missional power. Man did not have the Spirit in them to empower them to judge all things, and to judge all spiritual things with spiritual things. They did not have the

Spirit in them, to fully convey all the good things God had in store for them. They did not have a bent for evil in the nature of the mind, but they did not have the fullness of the Spirit as an overwhelming bent in them for good either.

Man was created in the basic building blocks or elements of the image of God, that was needed as a foundation, for God to later recreate the Elect in the image of Jesus Christ. Man's original image was foundation of the image of God's mind. Later the Elect, not only have a basic image of God's mind, but the Scripture says they, "have the Mind of Christ." This first basic image was designed as a steppingstone to get the Elect to the original goal, which is a HD image bearer of God, "the Mind of Christ."

In essence the reprobates did not deserve to have been created with such a wonderful God image in them, but were created as so, because the Elect needed this foundation, and they happen to benefit by proxy to them. Also, this was designed to give God more opportunity to judge the reprobates, that despite the great foundation of being made in God's image, they suppressed His truth, were ungrateful and rebelled against Him.

Recall an earlier comment about *God's impassibility*.

God's existence is not eternal properties that might change; rather, God's existence is an eternal, unchanging state. For this reason, "emotions," are not part of the Divine Nature, which gives us the doctrine of the IMPASSIBILITY of God. Emotions change, but God does not change. God is timeless; yet, emotions by definition are measurable, and thus, are not timeless.

At the very least, God cannot have "passions," which is more directly related to the changeableness of emotions. If God did have passionless emotions, with perfect control, so that there is no, ups or downs, then at the very least God's emotions are not like man's. Thus, it would be an inductive categorical mistake for man to think because our emotions are like this, then God's are. Thus, anytime the Bible mentions God having passions (mutable emotions), then it is God using language that is relatable to us, and is not meant to convey that God is mutable. The same is when the Bible says something like, "He sees us with His eyes"; God has no physical eye. What it means is that God knows all that we are doing.

Even so-called Christians, love their emotions more than God, and use their emotions as a higher authority over God to produce truth about reality, emotions have nothing to do with God's image. Since man is made in God's image (Who does not have emotions), our emotions are not part of what it means for man to be made in God's image. Christians need to be more proactive in imaging God. They need to have a true mastery of their mind, and emotions. They need to know the truth and decide on the truth, and then with mastery of their emotions, direct their emotions to respond to the truth, not the other way around.

This is a difficult doctrine for some, because they enjoy being led around by their emotions, just like Satanists have their hands led around by a Ouija board. They don't have to think, they only need to feel. But this is the definition of being carnal or fleshy. It is to be ruled by the flesh, by the sensations of the flesh such as seeing, hearing, touching and feeling. It is using the flesh as an epistemology, rather than God's word.

They like it this way. Yet, this is an anti-image of God. It is delusional, demonic, and sub-human.

Deuteronomy 4:15-18 says that God has "no form," and therefore it is unlawful to make any idol or image to represent God, even if it is in the appearance of a human person:

You saw *no form of any kind* the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully, so that you do not become corrupt and make for yourselves an idol, an image of any shape, *whether formed like a man or a woman*, or like any animal on earth or any bird that flies in the air, or like any creature that moves along the ground or any fish in the waters below.

This passage establishes that anything with a physical form or appearance cannot be the image of God. Since God himself has "no form," the body or the physical aspect of man cannot be the image of God. In fact, the idea that the body can be part of the image of God goes against the whole point of this passage. And since this passage is a denunciation of idolatry, to say that the image of God includes the body is to teach idolatry. It is an attack on the nature of God, and anyone who affirms it should face church discipline for heresy.¹²⁶

Since the focus of man's image of God is about the mind, then we need to focus on how the Scripture defines intelligence, to avoid anti-Christian definitions perverting God's definition.

Christian Intelligence Is the Only Intelligence.

Intelligence is not measured by an IQ test. For this to be proven, empiricism as an epistemology must be proven and induction must yield necessary conclusions. When has this happened? Or can one show in formal validity that the bible teaches an IQ test, or a mere narrow applied skill is how the Bible defines intelligence? Where is this proof?

If a Christian presupposes empiricism, like a spiritual adulteress, to understand what intelligence is, we are to rebuke and dismiss such a person. We know where they presuppose knowledge from. It is not God; it is not from the scripture. No. Their starting point for knowledge is human and sensual; it is from below; it is not from above. They are the pinnacle of what it means to be man-centered and carnal. They are spiritual perverts.

¹²⁶ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 118-119.

Below are a few quotes from Vincent Cheung, from his Systematic Theology. See actual reference for more Scriptural quotations, and also for more instruction about animals and the image of God, and their priority.¹²⁷

On the other hand, Scripture teaches, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding" (Psalm 111:10). Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Thus Christians have wisdom and understanding. They are intelligent people. But since the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and the Bible acknowledges only the Christian God, this means that non-Christians have not even started to have wisdom. They do not have even a little of it. They are completely unintelligent and uneducated.

The biblical assessment of non-Christians is that they are both stupid and sinful. They are intellectually and ethically inferior. They demonstrate their lack of intellectual aptitude in failing to agree with the Christian faith. And in denying the Christian faith despite the innate knowledge that God has placed in their minds and despite the irrefutable arguments of biblical apologetics, they show that they are not only intellectual ostriches but that they actively suppress the truth about God....¹²⁸

Supralapsarianism is the biblical and rational order. Infralapsarianism confuses logical conception with historical execution, so that not only is it contrary to fact, but it makes nonsense of some of the divine decrees. For any given decree, it leaves the purpose of the decree unspecified until the next decree. But then there is no reason for the present one, so that it becomes arbitrary. Thus infralapsarianism is blasphemous by implication, since it insults God's intelligence and denies his rationality...¹²⁹

The mind of man, his intelligence or rationality, is the image of God. It is impossible to deny this, but some people attempt to add other elements to it, such as morality and dominion. This is, in fact, consistent the biblical position (Ephesians 4:24); however, rationality remains the basic element in the definition of the image of God. Man's moral nature distinguishes him from the animals, and so it seems that it is a part of the image of God. But what is the basis of this moral nature, and how does it operate? Even animals "obey" God's commands, but instead of doing so on the basis of understanding and volition, they are compelled by instinct. On the other hand, man receives and understands a divine command, and then decides to obey it or defy it. He can comprehend the concepts of good and evil, and he can discuss them by the use of language. This means that man is moral precisely because he is rational. Morality is a function of intelligence or rationality. Therefore, although to have a moral nature is part of what it means to be a human person, it is not necessary to include it as part of the basic definition for the image of God...¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Even those I will quote Vincent much below (because he has helped me on these topics), I am not affiliated with him in any way.

¹²⁸ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg. 50-51.

¹²⁹ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg. 116

¹³⁰ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg. 120

Some might argue, what about emotions or morals and so on. But no one can understand their own opposition to me, or rationally present me an argument without presupposing rationality as a foundation. Thus, these other things exist, but only as a function of intelligence or rationality. You cannot presuppose something and then say your separate from it. Thus, it is a function of intelligence.

By this definition animals are not the image of God. When two Christians fellowship, by worship, reading of scripture and teaching, they are fellowshipping as images of Christ; they are directly imaging God in their fellowship (as compared to doing recreation and then irrationally calling it God-centered, or for God's glory.). Animals are given to us for food, along with vegetation (Genesis 9:2-3). Christians are not given to other Christians to eat, for they are the image of God. Animals are given to us to eat. They are not image bearers of God.¹³¹

Because many people's starting point for knowledge is not the scripture but their feelings, they "feel" like they have a human connection with their pets. But this is no different than pagan superstition, atheism, science and demonic divination. The moment you leave the Christian starting point for knowledge, you just left Christianity, because the whole Christian system comes from this starting point.

God is the foundation for animals and their definition in reality, not something else, and especially not something as subhuman as feelings.

To have huge and fantastic emotional connection to your pet, is not human fellowship; it is not human at all. In fact, an emotional connection to another human, is not a connection, which qualifies as a connection that belongs to being an image bearer of God. Since image bearing is about a rational understanding and worship of God, then no connection to a pet is "human" by definition; and by this, many so-called relationships between people are not human either.

Maybe one reason God created some animals/pets, to look so human-like in their expressions and instincts (so as to spark emotions in us), is to be an occasion to condemn those who elevate their pets to the level of image-bearers of God. God is always fattening up the reprobates and disobedient for judgment; He is always planning the day of their ruin, and orchestrating to place their foot on a slippery slope.

For more insight into this, Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 1 and 2, will give us some more knowledge.

¹³¹ "The Christian's priority is humans, not animals. Since the Bible teaches that humans possess superior value, we should allocate resources in a way that supports the cause of Christ among humans, even at the expense of the comfort and the survival of animals. Much of what is done in the name of animal rights takes from resources that should be used for humanity. This is a denial that man is made in the divine image, that he is special among God's creatures, and therefore it is a rejection of Scripture."
Pg. 121

As Vincent goes on to say, we have commandments to both use animals for food and labor, but at the same time we have commands to not harm them for arbitrary reasons.

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the intelligence of the intelligent I will confound.”

Where is the wise person? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not know God, God was pleased through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe. For indeed, Jews ask for sign miracles and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a cause for stumbling, but to the Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.
(1 Corinthians 1:18-24 LEB)

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and with much trembling, and my speech and my preaching were not with the persuasiveness of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and power, in order that your faith would not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing, but we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory).
(1 Corinthians 2:1-7 LEB)

Paul is contrasting “HUMAN” wisdom and intelligence with “GOD’s” wisdom and intelligence. Depending on the translation you have the word wisdom, understanding and intelligence. All are appropriate, because we get them defined in context of this passage.

Starting with the foundation, God’s “wisdom” is defined in (1) His perfect understanding of Himself (v.11), and also (2) His logical ordering of decrees (v.7-8).

As to the first point, “God’s Spirit knows Himself.” Only God’s choices about reality are truth, or that His choices are the only correct definitions about reality, since His choices about reality creates all reality. Thus, by God having a perfect understanding of Himself, He has a perfect understanding of reality. As for the second, we are dealing with God’s predestination, which is a logical ordering of the world, from purpose to execution.

In context, this is God’s wisdom and intelligence. It should not be a surprise to know, this is also how human intelligence is defined, with the major difference that unlike God whose knowledge is inherent by nature, saints are given God’s knowledge and logical structure. God has an infinite number of propositions and an infinite amount of connections between these propositions. When God thinks a specific thought about reality, it is a deduction (Rational) thought, because it is an application of His total

knowledge.¹³² That is, it is not an addition of information (outside of God's mind) into the conclusion (i.e. application); rather, the specific knowledge in the conclusion is only pinpointing out knowledge already contained in God's total knowledge. The order of the decrees is rational, because it goes from God's goals to historical execution. This is God's understanding and intelligence.

This is contrasted to *human* wisdom. Human wisdom is defined by Paul, as fallen human wisdom, or that is, humans after the fall of Adam, and how they reason. Human wisdom and intelligence starts with man's observations, man's feelings and man's sensations. It is a human, it is a fleshly, epistemology, through and through. From this starting point, man irrationally formulates categorical and universal premises about reality. For the Greeks, this was the Socratic method, and today a modified version of this is called Scientific Experimentation.

Paul specifically attacks two points of their human wisdom.

First is the empty flowery sounding rhetoric, "persuasiveness of wisdom." Paul did not rely on a super eloquent sounding speech to convince the Corinthians.

¹³² The deductive nature of God's thinking about reality was pointed out to me by Vincent Cheung in an email correspondence about the essay, "*Inductive Bible Study*." Once you consider it, it is rather obvious.

"I added that statement because someone said that I was wrong, since God does not perform deduction, but only direct intuition. In other contexts, I myself have taught that God knows all things directly but the focus here is induction vs. deduction in the context of theology. The person nitpicked at me because he wanted to sound clever and throw himself into the discussion. You know how people are. But it showed that he really didn't know what deduction is. Would he say the same thing about a discussion on the order of the eternal decrees? When we talk about that, we sometimes qualify it by reminding people that the order is a logical order, not a chronological one, since there is no process of reasoning in God, as if he does not have in mind premise #3 when he is still on premise #1. No, he is directly aware of all premises at the same time, but it remains that he is aware of them, and of the logical relationships between premises. But whether we remind people of this or not, it is always assumed. This person did not understand deduction so he thought he had room to show off his knowledge. So I added this in case other people failed to assume the obvious. I was surprised, in fact, since it was so basic.

Deduction always produces correct conclusions, because the conclusions never produce information not already in the premises. Deduction is more like an application of knowledge, unlike induction, which is a fallacious attempt at arriving at more knowledge. So when applied to God in this context, deduction is the same as his intuition. Using the same example, when we talk about the eternal decrees, we are talking about God's deduction. But if we, like the person who complained, cannot even talk about God in terms of deduction, then we cannot even discuss the topic of the eternal decrees, because it would all be just one "thing." Take it to the extreme, we cannot even talk about God thinking, speaking, acting, or anything about God. Everything would just be one eternal "thing" in God's mind. But of course we can talk about God's deduction, thinking, speaking, acting, his before and after, and all that, just like the way he talks about himself. Several times I have pointed out that some Christians, after learning a little, makes what little they know the whole thing, and then try to police everyone else with it, including their expressions. Many Calvinists are like that. They become trapped in their own personal terminologies. It happens when they talk about justification, predestination, and many other things. This is a sign of ignorance, not knowledge or orthodoxy."

The second (and this is the main point),

is attacking how humans try to make “demonstrations” or that is, humans attempting to make “sound arguments” about reality, without getting truth premises for their syllogism, from God’s revelation.

Paul attacks by a positive. He does this by saying his logical proof, using God as a foundation, means the Corinthian’s faith is in God, not man. Paul uses philosophy words to further the contrast of human intelligence vs God’s intelligence, and to show where the presuppositional issue is.¹³³

Thus, the method of human intelligence is “flowery rhetoric” and their content is trying to produce “sound arguments” about reality with premises that are produced by human speculation and superstition. Paul is the opposite. His method of speech is direct and concise. His syllogisms are not mere attempts but are sound arguments about reality, because the premises come from God’s revelation, and then from this Paul deduces an application for himself and his readers.

Aristotle is famous for defining a “sound” argument in two ways. First, universal truth premises come from human starting points, observations and induction. It has similarity to the Socratic method and scientific experimentation. Second, once this is established then we are to use deduction (i.e. valid or rational reasoning) to apply these truths in specific applications/conclusions. Since the Bible presupposes and uses deductive logic almost nonstop, we also will use deduction.¹³⁴ However, the issue is how do you get your initial truth claims about reality. Paul, is starting with God’s revelation. Man starts with man’s observations (along with induction) to formulate them.

¹³³ Vincent helped me immensely to understand this passage. To see his argument, Vincent Cheung, “Proof of the Spirit,” which is found the book, “Commentary on 1 and 2 Thessalonians.” 1 *THESSALONIANS 1:5b*. 2008. Pg 24-27.

“Paul deliberately slips into philosophical terms in verse 4, asserting that his preaching was shown true, not by speculative and fallacious arguments, but by the “demonstration” of the Spirit. The word indicates a logical proof, as in philosophy and geometry. The English translation is appropriate, since “demonstration” denotes a “logical proof in which a certain conclusion is shown to follow from certain premises.”

His point is that he insisted on presenting a message that was based on divine revelation instead of one that was based on human speculation.

Bullinger writes, “Here, it denotes the powerful gift of divine wisdom, in contrast with the weakness of human wisdom.” This is the issue at hand. Paul’s preaching differs from the orators both in method and content, but his arguments are nevertheless logical and persuasive. Unlike the fallacious “proof” of the sophists, the apostle provides sound “proof” for his message that is powerful to effect conversion in his hearers...” pg. 26

¹³⁴ For example,

“All humans have sinned.
Oshea is human.
Thus, Oshea has sinned.”

Deduction is used and implied all the time in Scripture. Diminish the power of deductive reasoning is to diminish Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Recall an earlier section,

It is incorrect to think this is about supernatural demonstrations by power of the Spirit as in healings and transportations. This word for demonstrate is philosophy jargon for a sound deductive argument. It is not merely a variation of the word Aristotle made popular, but it is the very same word. It is what one is taught in an English Comp class in college (as I was), where there is an Ethos, Pathos and Logos¹³⁵ essay. Stanford's Philosophy encyclopedia, says regarding this word and how Aristotle coined it: "**A demonstration (apodeixis) is "a deduction that produces knowledge."**"¹³⁶ As the Encyclopedia goes on to explain, Aristotle's use of "demonstration" is not just a "valid" or deductive argument, but a valid argument with true premises. This is the only way to produce "knowledge in a conclusion."¹³⁷ In modern logic classes (as with the one I took), this type of "demonstration" is called a "sound" argument. A valid argument only means its logical structure is deductive, or that is, the conclusion is necessarily inferred, without added information. A "sound" argument is both valid and has true premises. Aristotle stupidly explained such true premises come from observation and science, which is inductive. This has to be one of the biggest mental blunders in all history.

The big idea, is that Aristotle's epistemology is a human starting point, and thus, it is speculative and superstitious. Paul says that the Greeks did not "know" God by their human starting points. Thus, when Paul uses Aristotle's coined word for a "sound" argument he is purposefully contrasting this concept of where to get "true premises."

Paul uses Scripture, over and over in all his letters, and says that it is sufficient for all teaching and correcting. Thus, when Paul made a "sound argument (apodeixis)" to the Corinthians, it means he did not start with human intelligence that uses human observations/empiricism/induction (or Jewish tradition) and science; rather, Paul started with Scripture and made deductions about Jesus Christ and ethics from this. The result is that the Corinthian's faith is in "God's Word" and "not man." The true premises were from "God's Word," and deduction is "God's" reasoning.

Therefore, on the occasion of leading Paul to make this "sound argument," the Spirit then empowered the minds of the Corinthians to have faith in God.

The LEB says "*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the intelligence of the intelligent I will confound.*"

¹³⁵ Keep in mind that Aristotle meant a "deductive" or "sound" argument for the best "logos" argument, whereas in today, it is use in a contradictory meaning to how Aristotle used it; today it is popular to teach the best logos arguments, are "inductive" and "irrational" statistical arguments. Plus Ultra Stupid.

¹³⁶ Smith, Robin, "Aristotle's Logic", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2019/entries/aristotle-logic/>

¹³⁷ Or in a broader philosophy jargon, A justified True Belief.

Thus, the intelligence of the Greeks, according to Paul's own use of the term "moron" in this passage, were therefore, morons. That is, despite the fact some of the Greeks tried to use deduction (or tried to be rational, or tried to make "SOUND" arguments/ "demonstrations"), they ended up being un-intelligent and morons. How is that the case? Because they started with a HUMAN starting point for knowledge rather than God's Word.

Paul is defining *Christian intelligence* as two things.

One, starting with God's revealed truth about reality. *Secondly*, making deductive applications of these truths to the world and themselves.

Aristotle and the Greeks were unintelligent, because the so-called truth premises about the world, were nothing more than human delusions and speculations. No amount of deductions afterward can compensate for this. In fact, to keep making deductions from false premises is to be insane and delusional.

Example: "All humans do not exist. I am a human. Thus. I do not Exist."

Or "All humans are clouds. You are a human. Thus, You are a cloud."

So try jumping off a cliff next time you see one, because you will float like a cloud.

The logical application here is indeed deductive, but it is not sound. It is NOT intelligent to attempt to be rational while using make-believe delusions for your premises. Insane people are right at home with this: "*All humans are dogs. I am a human. Thus, I am a dog. Ruff, Ruff, Ruff.*"

This is how the Scripture would define intelligence and non-intelligence. The Scripture would define a person with a so-called high IQ or skill, but does not use premises from Scripture to know the world as it truly is (i.e. a "sound argument" as defined by Scripture), as unintelligent and moronic.

Because of the pragmatic usefulness of science, people are often blinded by the fact that its premises about reality are produced by induction and speculations. Thus, to use science to produce true conclusions about reality is just as insane and moronic as the above syllogisms. "ruff, ruff!"

Some do not like this, just as they do not like the rest of Scripture and God, but their rebellion will be fruitless. I can say, for sake of argument, "let us only consider intelligence in regard to understanding math, or an IQ test, or how much computer code one can apply without mistakes," but that is the issue. The "for sake of argument" here is to pretend the rest of reality out of the equation. Life and reality does not exist that way. God does not exist that way. You cannot pretend the majority of God out. Or you cannot pretend major presuppositions out of the consideration and argument and still sanely think you have a "good" definition of something. I can say, "for sake of argument if addition and subtraction did not exist," then proceed to talk about math, but I am only pretending. It is a delusion, that has no application for truth. Let us leave pretending and delusions behind and reach for the truth.

Paul put an emphasis on how God has made us wise and intelligent, and this is through His Spirit. The Spirit makes us intelligent by revealing the good things, which

are freely given to us in Christ, and then empowering us to apply these truths to ourselves in faith.

“(1) All those saved by Jesus are those with Abraham’s blessing. (2) Oshea is saved by Jesus. (3) Thus, Oshea has Abraham’s blessing.” When we define what Abraham’s blessing means, by the definition that Paul gives in Galatians, such as the “Spirit and miracles,” then we can conclude, “Oshea gets the blessing of the Spirit and miracles”.

Or *“(1) Oshea is a Christian. (2) All Christians are righteous persons. (3) All righteous persons are those whose prayers avails much. (4) Thus, Oshea is a person whose prayers avails much.”*

Let us use Jesus’ modus ponens argument in John 15. *“(P) (1) If My words abide in you and you abide in Me, (Q) then YOU will ask whatever YOU want and YOU will get it. (2) Christ’s words do abide in YOU and YOU abide in Him. (3) Thus YOU ask for whatever YOU wish and get it.”* (Etc.).

Wait? Your experience does not line up with this? If so, then who is the liar here, Jesus or what you humanly conclude off your experience in prayer? You must choose. Jesus has drawn a line in the sand. Will you pick intelligence or insanity? You pick a side. You must decide if you will choose a HUMAN OR a GOD’s starting point for knowledge. God has narrowly defined intelligence. You either fit that definition or not. You will be judged if you truly take your stand on God’s revelation and make a biblical and sound application of it for your life, or if you are a spiritual pervert then you will begin knowledge with your sensations and superstitions.

This is how the Spirit defines wisdom and intelligence, anything else is moronic, insanity and unintelligent. In Jesus we truly have the “Mind of Christ.” The Biblical worldview only defines Christians as intelligent, or as least those with the ability to be intelligent to some degree. The Christian is so superior and privileged by God as their Father, that only they are intelligent, wise and full of understanding. The rest of the world, no matter how accomplished they are, are nothing more than morons. They are nothing more than an insane person in an insane asylum; they bark at doors, eat their own poop, try to eat their mom because they think she is a fish, think they are clouds (etc) and they have accomplished the skill of stacking 2 blocks on top of each other.

Now that we have a basic definition of what man is, relative to him being made in the image of God, we now proceed to answer a few quick points about his creation itself.

Man was made, not evolved. The doctrine of evolution is based on the logical fallacies of empiricism, induction and affirming the consequent, thus it is dismissed and mocked; however, because scripture is our only starting point, it is worth considering the timescale of creation from the scripture. The first chapters of Genesis define, (and here is the basic grammar-school level reading-comprehension that many fail), the “context” defines a “day” as a 24-hour day. And secondly, is the hermeneutic that the scripture interprets the creation week as a 24-hour, 7-day week.

God created man after he created the earth, plant life, and the animals. He created the former things simply by commanding them into being. For example, in Genesis 1:3, he says, “Let there be light,” and in verse 11 he says, “Let the earth produce vegetation.” As for the creation of man, Genesis records what

seems to be a conference between the members of the Trinity, who agreed to create man in the image of God: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (1:26). Even without the rest of the passage (v. 26-30), this is sufficient to suggest a more intimate relationship between God and man, and that special care was given to his creation.

Perhaps the most popular contemporary objection against the Genesis account is the theory of evolution. It denies God's direct creation of man, and proposes that life originated from non-life, and that man is the product of mutations from lower species. This contradicts what Scripture teaches about man's origin. Genesis 2:7, 21-22 recount the creation of man as follows:

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being....So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

God created the man before the woman, and because the man already existed at the creation of the woman, God took materials from the man to create the woman. However, when God created the man, he did not use materials from the animals that he had already made; rather, he went directly to "the dust of the ground" and then directly "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Therefore, the Bible teaches that God created man by direct action, and not by a process of biological evolution. There are other details in Genesis 1-2 that could reinforce the doctrine,¹³⁸ but this is sufficient to show that the theory of evolution contradicts biblical revelation...¹³⁹

The theory of evolution presupposes a non-biblical epistemology, and this results in the destruction of the entire worldview. But to presuppose a biblical epistemology in which the infallibility of the Bible is affirmed rules out the theory of evolution from the start. Therefore, whereas biblical biology, which affirms the direct creation of man by God, is affirmed as a valid implication of divine inspiration, it is impossible for evolutionary biology to be true...

The evolutionist must tell me how a non-Christian can know *anything* before he presents his theories on cosmology and biology. Since he cannot find an epistemology to support his cosmology, and since he cannot find a cosmology to support his biology, he has no universe in his worldview to allow his biology to be true. His biology can exist only in his imaginary world, and it is just as much a fantasy as his universe. Thus he does not even have the right to present his case on the theory of evolution unless I choose to hear it.

Life does not exist in a vacuum. We cannot just agree that the universe exists and argue only about biology, because the kind of universe assumed determines what is possible within it. If non-Christian epistemology is

¹³⁸ For example, to understand the Hebrew for "day" in Genesis 1 means a twenty-four hour period would rule out the theory of evolution, which claims that human life took many years to come about.

¹³⁹ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 110-111.

impossible, then non-Christian cosmology is impossible, and if non-Christian cosmology is impossible, then non-Christian biology is impossible. However, once we accept a Christian epistemology, and thus a Christian cosmology, then the direct creation of man by God follows by necessity, and all nonChristian theories of biology are ruled out.

This is one way to apply the presuppositional argument against the theory of evolution. The power of the presuppositional argument is such that it establishes the Christian faith as true, and simultaneously refutes all non-Christian ideas. Since the presuppositional argument establishes that all of Scripture is true, and since the theory of evolution contradicts Scripture, the theory of evolution is false. That is, the Bible is right, and evolution contradicts the Bible; therefore, evolution is wrong.

We proceed with the understanding that God made man by a direct act of power through which he was created complete. There was no evolution. God created the universe, and apart from any process, he directly formed man's body with the materials from the earth, and not from the animals. Then, God imparted life into him, again by a direct act of power, and man became a living and thinking person: "The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7).¹⁴⁰

Adam and Eve were made fully mature. They were made with innate knowledge (as has been previously defined) and intelligence to apply this knowledge to themselves and the world around them. God created Adam's body and then breathed his soul (the part that is the image of God) into the body. We also learn that after the resurrection we will be given a new glorified body. Thus, although the spirit part of man is the foundation and has the value of being the image of God, yet, God also desires the soul to be wrapped in an appropriate body, as by His definition. Thus even without the body, the spirit-man is still all that is needed for a person to be a person. The body is for the valuable soul (made in God's image); thus, the body has value because of its relation to the soul. Therefore, we read the God is for the body.

"5 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. 2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, 3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 For we live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home

¹⁴⁰ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 112-113.

in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:[a] The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:5-10,11-17 NIV)

"You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." (1 Corinthians 6:13 NIV)

"Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God." (2 Corinthians 7:1 NIV)

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20 NIV)

Since the soul is for the value and worship of God, and the body is for the soul, then the body is by connection to the soul, for the value and worship of God. Thus, even though the body is separate it gets its value from its connection to the soul which is the image of God, and designed to worship God. This world is material, but our soul is spiritual and invisible. Thus, God clothes us in a material body to properly interact with the world, with the intelligence God has given us. Thus, we have commands to worship God with both our bodies and spirits. They are both made pure and holy by Jesus, and so we commanded to use them in holiness.

"Can a soul produce a soul? Can a Tree produce a tree after its kind?"

No. On the only real level of causality, it cannot. There is no dualism in Christianity. God creates and controls everything, often on the occasion of another created object being present (which God put there), but separate from any created object. Yes, on the relative level, (when talking about the chess game from the perspective of the chess pieces).

Based on the universal premise based from Scripture that "God directly and absolutely controls all things," we know God directly and absolutely controls such things as 'x,' 'y' and 'z' (the creation of every man). If God directly creates and controls all things then God directly creates every man's soul, often on the occasion of but separate from the body, conception and birth.

Because all spiritual things (God not included) are also directly created and controlled by God, there is no inherent power or necessary connection in the soul of man to create another soul. As said before, there is no necessary connection of fire to produce light photons. God arbitrarily made that up (and controls it); however, He regularly causes one with the other, so that we see predictability. There is nothing inherent in a tree to produce a seedling. There is nothing inherent in a woman's body to have a baby. God arbitrarily made that up (and controls it); however, He regularly causes one with the other, so that we see predictability. The doctrine of occasionalism is a necessary conclusion from God's absolute and direct sovereignty. There is none beside Him.

Vincent Cheung speaking on this says,

"The biblical view of metaphysics requires creationism, that God directly and immediately creates every new soul.

Among others, there are two objections to this. First, some people think that this contradicts the view that God has rested after the creation of Genesis 1. But the rest there is relative to the six days of creation, and it is not as if Genesis 2:1-3 turned theism into deism. Jesus said that the Father never stopped working, and he said this when he was accused of working on the Sabbath (John 5:16-17). Second, the view that God must create every individual soul would necessarily mean that God creates every soul as sinful (after Adam and Eve). This would then imply that God is the author of sin. I eagerly acknowledge this, even insist upon it, and have demonstrated elsewhere that there is no problem with it.

The Bible teaches that "out of the same lump" of clay – not elect clay, not reprobate clay, but just clay – God creates the elect and the reprobates. That is, God does not draw the elect out of a larger pool of sinners, as many theologians assert. He does not rescue some and "leave" the rest to their own destruction, as if the reprobates created themselves. A potter does not take a large pile of common vessels, transform some into honorable vessels, and leave the rest to remain common vessels. If so, who created the large pile of common vessels? Is there another potter? That would be dualism or some other heresy. Did the common vessels create themselves out of clay? That would be even more incredible, and does not fit the biblical imagery. Rather, God directly creates men as either elect sinners (who would then convert to Christ and be saved), or as reprobate sinners (who would never believe)...

When we are referring to metaphysics, creationism must be right and traducianism must be wrong. We can make a place for traducianism only if we do not speak on this level. That is, it can be used as a description of the relationship between the parents and their offspring on a non-metaphysical level. In ordinary speech, if I push Tommy in the chest, it would be accurate to say that "Vincent pushed Tommy." But if we are talking about metaphysics, about causation and such, then I must say that "God caused Vincent to lift his hand (that is, God lifted Vincent's hand) and caused it to extend toward Tommy and to touch Tommy's chest. Then God caused Tommy to feel an impact on his chest and caused his body to fall backward." That is, there is no direct and necessary relationship between my pushing Tommy and Tommy's falling back, since I do not have the metaphysical power to create (as if I am God) or to

change anything in creation (as if to “create” a new configuration of the universe). Thus traducianism could be acceptable only in the relative sense and when not speaking on the creative level. But why make room for it if it is really useless? And it seems that almost all of the time, the question is indeed posed on the metaphysical level, so that creationism should be the answer. Man cannot create souls.

Like the doctrine of compatibilism, the doctrine of traducianism asks the question on one level and then answers it on another level, and ends up missing the whole point. Those who affirm traducianism either forget metaphysics, or they affirm some principle like secondary causation...”¹⁴¹

The Scriptures teach that man is a mind (image of God) and clothed in a body. Some confused people will say that there are three things, “body, soul and spirit” (Trichotomist). By this they slander the bible saying there is a distinction of head and heart knowledge/faith (etc.). For more detailed arguments and rebuttals see Vincent Cheung Systematic Theology, 2010 pages 123-125.

This issue can be dealt with in a broad brute slap. The Scripture uses the words “heart” and “mind” interchangeable with knowledge and emotions. It will say the mind felt this. Or it will say, the heart understood this. That is, the intellectual part, which one would think only belongs to the mind, is attributed to the heart and vice versa. The only way for Trichotomists triple doctrine of man to work is if the heart and mind are truly distinct; however, the Scripture uses these terms interchangeably. Thus, the mind, soul and heart (and all such terms) all refer to the same, invisible image of man.

Gordon Clark says, *“the term heart denotes emotion about ten or at the very most fifteen percent of the time. It denotes the will maybe thirty percent of the time; and it very clearly means the intellect sixty or seventy percent.”*¹⁴²

With the previous doctrine of what intelligence means, and that emotions are not an image of God, it should be easy to understand why 3-part distinction of man is a false. Whether it is morality or feelings, their foundation is the rational mind, thinking about them and making choices about them in biblical application. This is the image of man; it is one thing; however, it can produce a few different functions. The category error Trichotomist’s make is between man’s singular nature made in God’s image (man’s rational mind) and its functions.

This will be dealt with more later, but faith because the image of man is intellectual and rational, and not emotional or moral is nothing more than mental assent to God’s Word. Many seem to commit a category fallacy between mental assent with wishful hope. Faith is not wishful hope, it is not emotional; although, passions can arise due to true or false assent in the mind, yet, they are not faith itself. I cannot mentally assent that durian is my favorite fruit. I can say it in my mind, and speak it out loud,

¹⁴¹ Vincent Cheung, “Creationism vs. Traducianism”
From the ebook, Sermonettes Vol. 2. 2010. Page 83-84.

¹⁴² Gordon H. Clark, The Biblical Doctrine of Man; Jefferson, Maryland: The Trinity Foundation, 1984; p. 82.

Jonathan Edwards in his book Religious Affections makes a similar comment about these terms.

but this would not be a mental assent; rather, it would be a mental lie or mental delusion. Unless by nature, you like durian as your favorite fruit, you cannot mentally assent that it is, without it being a mental lie and delusion.

Likewise, unless by nature you are born-from-above, you cannot mentally assent to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unless by nature, you are a Christian and have renewed your mind with scriptural promises, you cannot mentally assent that by Jesus' stripes all your sicknesses are healed. When you are born-from-above, God radically corrects your mind so that subjects and predicates line up in the right way; such as, "Jesus died for my sin." This recreated mind wants to affirm these, or that God makes the mind predisposed to want to affirm the correct premises. If it helps you can imagine the mind with a certain bent to it. The sinful mind is bent in such a way that it naturally puts the wrong subjects and predicates together and then affirms these delusions. It is the opposite for the born-from-above mind. Also, the Holy Spirit gives an inner testimony that these premises are true for them. The Spirit says, "yes" to the promises of God in the mind of the elect. When a Christian renews their mind in the Word and promises of God, their minds are "renewed" more and more to a spiritual nature. This means, by the Scripture, wrong subjects and predicates combinations and premises are removed and replaced with the correct ones. The Spirit helps by giving an inner testimony that these truths are true for them. By this they apply the knowledge to themselves. When this happens, they can simply say to this mountain (in mental assent), be cast into the sea, and it will happen.

Man and Woman.

God made man, and then woman from the man. Since we have already been dealing with the decrees, then we know reality is a logical order of God's plans. Thus, we read the reason man and woman were made, as they were, and then commanded to marry, was to reflect the first order decree of Christ and the church.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for her; 26 in order that he might sanctify her by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word; 27 in order that he might present to himself the church glorious, not having a spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she may be holy and blameless. 28 Thus also husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. The one who loves his own wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as also Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 (This mystery is great, but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.) 33 Only you also, each one of you, must thus love his own wife as himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:25-33)

The becoming "one flesh" is the part directly said to be in reference, as the original decree, of Christ and the church. At the very beginning of the decrees, out of love, God decided to have people united to Christ, in a very close unity. What we learn is this, to

illustrate this type of close unity, God created male and female. He then commands that a man leave his parents and be united to his wife in one flesh. There are two aspects to this.

First is leaving or separating from the parents. Then secondly, is the positive of being united to your spouse. Therefore, from a purely broad view of the decree, Paul says in Romans 8, that He takes the elect from the same neutral (i.e. before sin) lump of clay, and separates them for a good purpose. In addition, we were born in history, with Adam's sin and sinful nature. In Ephesians (both in ch.2 and 4) Paul says we were born, in a sinful nature and separated from the life, favor, knowledge, and communion of God. In both the neutral consideration and in the context of sin, there is a separation from something. Jesus is not just the invisible God, but the Godman.

The uniting of the elect to Christ, is both in (1) nature, and in (2) benefits. By nature, they become like Jesus Christ. Thus, in Romans 8 Paul says, they are predestined to become "image of Christ." As has been said before, in Corinthians 2 the saints are given the Spirit of God, who alone knows God. This passage says that this knowing God, for the mature, is about knowing all the good things God is giving to the saints. Paul concludes the saints, therefore, have the "Mind of Christ." Because we are united to Jesus not just as sub-heirs, but co-heirs, Jesus lavishly pours all the benefits on His saints. Jesus was anointed by the Spirit, and thus, He baptizes the saints in the Spirit for the same ministry, power, and miracles. Jesus is at God's right hand, and thus, the saints, through Jesus Christ have access to the throne of God to ask and receive. They have insider status to approach God as their Father, because God is now their Father. In fact, if you recall the 1 Corinthians 3 circle diagram, you will remember that "all things" are given to the saints. If you look, you will see that "all things" is also contained in the bigger circle of "Jesus." Thus, all things are Jesus'. But the saints are "united" to Him. Thus, all things are also placed in them. This is how close the unity is with Jesus and His saints. In fact, Jesus lives in the House of God; He says, is preparing a place for us in this same House of God.

If you recall our text in Ephesians 5 you will notice that it says the man sanctifies the wife with the word of God. This is no surprise, because this is what we already learned in 1 Corinthians 2, in what it means to have the "Mind of Christ," and because Jesus does this and prays for this in His own earthly ministry.

"Sanctify them in the truth—your word is truth.

Just as you sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

And for them I sanctify myself, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in the truth.

"And I do not ask on behalf of these only, but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word..."

John 17:17–20 (LEB)

Jesus sanctifies His own body with the truth, and thus, commands that husbands purify their wives by speaking the truth to them. Jesus favors His own body by lavishly helping them, and thus commands husbands to favor their wives lavishly above all others. The church respects Jesus Christ, and so wives are commanded to respect their husbands.

What happens in the beginning of creation is a double whammy for an immovable truth. First, their creation was designed from Christ and the church. Christ and the church is of the highest importance and glory to God. Thus, by connection to this, by a man marrying a woman, it has great importance and value to God. It is not to be tampered with, since tampering with it would make it inferior and defective for the ends God created it for; or has man become wiser than God, in knowing what pleases God (somehow more than God Himself) and how to maximize giving God supremacy?

For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

(1 Corinthians 11:8-9 NIV)

A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

(1 Timothy 2:11- 13 NIV)

Secondly, when God creates, something there is always the chance that God might change its definition (for example, Adam's "image of God," is different (in respect of a lesser quality) as compared to the new definition of the Saint's "image of Christ"). At other times, God reminds us that just like He originally created something, He wants the definition to stay the same as He created. This is God's world, not someone else. God is the foundation for definitions, not something else. God is the foundation for the definition of man and woman, and of marriage. As for man's and woman's definition and the role in marriage, we learn in the New Testament, by the infallible testimony of God through Paul, the original created distinctions and similarities are to stay in their original definitions.

I could go on the implications of God's definition for man and woman for things as, marriage, church and other things, but the basics are painfully obvious. If you are in rebellion to God's command then continue to be so and let God's curse be upon you, if you are willing to believe, then do so and be blessed.

I will, however, give few brief points and further reading suggestions. For more, see footnote.¹⁴³

"Then he said to the woman, "I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.""

(Genesis 3:16 NLT)

"Don't be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God.

This is how the holy women of old made themselves beautiful. They put their trust in God and accepted the authority of their husbands.

For instance, Sarah obeyed her husband, Abraham, and called him her master. You are her daughters when you do what is right without fear of what your

¹⁴³ See Vincent Cheung, Systematic Theology, Chapter "man," for further reading.

husbands might do.”
(1 Peter 3:3–6 NLT)

The Scripture records that after Adam’s and Eve’s fall into sin, that God (God cursed all women with this, not someone else – God is the foundation, even for curses), cursed the woman to desire the authority, which God gave to their husbands. Thus, anything a woman does to take even a tiny bit of her husband’s or man’s authority, is a curse upon her, and it brings curse upon the marriage, and a curse upon the church and society. What some think is liberating or empowering in society (casting aside God’s definition for man), is flooding their societies with curses and God’s wrath. Some women by this definition, are nothing more than a walking, breathing curse. Satan was of course there, when God’s spoke this curse over the woman, and to this day Satan does what he can to make women embody this curse to the fullest. Some are so delusional and gullible by Satan’s lie, that after cursing themselves and the men around them by taking and rejecting man’s authority, they call it “empowerment.” The only empowering they have done is empowered death, stupidity and sin to be a slave-master over them. No, being a walking curse does not empower anyone, except Satan’s ability to accuse you to God. Being a curse, more and more, makes you less and less of an image of God. They have become an anti-God image.

Christ removes the curse on women when he removes their desire to usurp the authority of men. When the work of Christ is applied to women by the power of the Holy Spirit, they learn to accept the authority of men as instituted by God at creation. There is no longer a demonic compulsion to rebel. Thus for women to submit to male leadership in the home and the church is a sign of righteousness and regeneration, and the rejection of male leadership in the home and the church is a manifestation of sin and wickedness, and the curse. Instead of abolishing male leadership in the home and the church, the work of Christ restored and reinforced the original divine design.

This also means that all teachings and arguments that oppose the authority of men in the home and the church, including those that attribute the subordination of women to the fall and the curse, are themselves effects of the fall and the curse. In other words, the doctrine that attributes women's subordination to the curse, and claims that this has been removed because of the work of Christ, is itself a manifestation of sin, rebellion, and the curse.¹⁴⁴

Peter says that Sarah’s beauty (and remember that physically she was over-the-top beautiful) was in calling her husband “lord” (meekness/gentleness), and her “faith in God’s promise.” By this same standard, even in the New Testament, any woman can make herself very beautiful to God, her husband, and the world.

The man’s command to love the wife is a command to love/favor her as his own body, and to even die for her sake, and to purify her with God’s truth. The non-Christian woman’s ability to respect her husband’s authority, is an impossible ethic to obey, because it can only be done in the knowledge and faith of God’s truth about man and woman and its relation to Christ. However, the Christian is empowered by God’s Spirit and truth to do this. No person can obey the gospel command to be saved, except by the power of the Spirit (causing new birth) and truth. This is true for any ethic.

¹⁴⁴ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg. 128. (www.vincentcheung.com)

Husbands, by the power of God and renewing their minds in the truth of God, favor and cherish their wives to the standard that God commands.

Satan has a low opinion of women, thinking she is stupid. Satan deceived the woman in to thinking that God was holding back on her, despite giving everything in the Garden to her. Satan thinks women are gullible; therefore, he attacks women in this way, as if they are blind and stupid: “God is withholding from you.”

Satan thinks man is weak. Man gave into the peer pressure of the woman, to eat the fruit. Therefore, guess how the evil one attacks man? Satan often attacks man (with his authority) by peer-pressure. If you recall Jesus’ heated dialog in John 5, He makes the point that the religious leaders (males in authority) “love to receive praise from one another.” Just like Adam wanted Eve’s approval, rather than obeying God (and by this rejecting God as His epistemology), Satan attacks man today in the same way, by tempting man to seek human approval rather than God’s. If male authority, surrenders to human approval (and thus rejecting God as an epistemology), then the whole system under their leadership is cursed and sub-human stupid.

When both the man and woman respect and love each other by the power and truth of God, their marriage becomes more and more like that of Christ and the church. Both the man and woman are held accountable to obey God in marriage, whether or not their partner is “easy” to submit to or love, or “difficult” to submit to or love. However, with God all things are possible. With faith a whole new world of possibilities opens.

A Question about Male And Female and Defective Bodies:

Vincent Cheung was asked a question about the small percent of people born with both male and female biology. He answered it well and I will post it below. The issue here to remember is that a person with little faith, still has options to take that does not include sin and delusion. However, a person with a mature faith in all the promises of God, discovers that even things such as defective bodies does not give limitations, because faith transforms the impossible into the possible. Faith opens a whole new world of possibilities for the believer.

“Science is not an objective authority or body of knowledge. Science is not God. What is science? Science is people. A very small group of people. These people use theories that they developed, categories that they thought up, instruments that they manufactured, and they claim that there are things such as molecules, germs, genes, etc., and they claim that they are this and that, and that they determine this and that. Science is just a pretty name to sum up all this, well, to hide all this, because the truth is that it is as weak as it sounds once you expand on what it is. So I cannot accept this as an authority to tell me about the nature of reality or as a basis of ethics.

If we cannot agree on the above, then the issue changes first to the nature and reliability of science, and AIS (Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome) becomes meaningless until we settle this. But if we can agree on the above, then science

becomes irrelevant to the spiritual and ethical aspects of AIS. That is, even if there are indeed such things as chromosomes, and even if it is true that men and women have different genetic makeup, there is no way to jump from this to the conclusion that chromosomes determine rather than merely correlate with gender. It is logically impossible to jump from one to the other. It has to be accepted by an act of decision without reason. But if I do not accept it, since there is no reason to accept it, then the relevance disappears. Thus on this point I might agree with the person who said that before genetics, the person might have been regarded as an infertile female, because physically, this person would be able to become “one flesh” with a male. The person might marry someone and never discover the condition.

Whatever the reason for the infertility, this is a physical defect. As with the case of homosexuality, which some scientists regard as genetically determined (Is homosexuality even physical? We are assuming many things that science claims for now without agreeing or disagreeing, but just so we can have this discussion), it is a consequence of sin (not necessarily particular sins, but the fall of man). Jesus came to save us from sin, and to destroy the works of the devil. He has come to save the whole man. There are some benefits that are explicitly delayed until after this life, such as our resurrection body. However, there are other benefits that are explicitly established for this life, such as healing, both spiritual and physical. Healing is meaningless after this life, because then we will receive a resurrection body, and that is transformation, not healing. If you are getting any healing at all, you are getting it now. Whatever the reason for the defect, God can heal it. If there are indeed such things as chromosomes, and if they indeed determine gender, and if they indeed determine that one is male genetically even if the person is female in other aspects, God can change the genes to match. Likewise, if there are indeed such things as genes, and if genes indeed determine sexual orientation, God can change the genes. Even if the science is true, and if God does not heal, the person can remain single for life. But science does not know what is true, and God indeed heals.[1]

This is no different than if someone comes into God’s kingdom crippled, or blind, or sick with cancer. “Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses” (Matthew 8:17), just like he bore our sins. Healing is part of redemption, just as much as forgiveness, because the basis is the same. To deny this is to preach a different gospel, and to trample on the blood of Jesus as a common and ineffectual thing. In fact, there is so much healing for the church, for “the children,” that Christians can dispense it to the outsiders (“the dogs”) as the “crumbs” that fall from the children’s table (Matthew 15:27). As Jesus said, “They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:18).[2] Since cessationists reject the atonement in this sense, they cannot offer biblical counseling on this matter (imagine counseling against sin when one’s theology rejects atonement for sin). They cannot offer any proposal that solves the problem. They will probably resort to nonsense about the sovereignty of God (who in his sovereignty sent Jesus to bear away our sicknesses), suffering as a blessing (a blessing that Jesus spent much of his time to eliminate, Acts 10:38), suffering with or for Christ (when he suffered some things so we would not have to), that this is still a fallen world (when Christ has

overcome the world), and then hand this person over to almighty “science” (which means that small group of people, mostly unbelievers and evolutionists, who are scientists). None of this is of the gospel, but of unbelief, that is, of the devil.

As long as there is confusion, and as long as there is no change, and if there is unbelief when it comes to healing, why not just put gender and sex out of the picture, become a “eunuch,” and dedicate one’s life to the gospel (Matthew 19:12)? Jesus said that some are born eunuchs, some are made eunuchs by men, and some renounce marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. If one does it with joy and faith (though apparently lacking faith for healing), and not grudgingly, he can still have a wonderful and productive life through Jesus Christ.

Again, I would insist that the biblical solution is miracle healing, and that biblical counseling should not begin by making backup plans against the biblical solution. But if there is so much unbelief, then the first backup plan is celibacy, if not for life, then at least while destroying the unbelief. If the unbelief is simply regarded as acceptable, then I would have no more counsel because I do not think any course of action would make a difference any longer. The person does not care what God says, and might as well do whatever he/she/it wants.¹⁴⁵

Subdue the Earth

“Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth,””
(Genesis 1:26–28 NASB95)

This will be dealt with more in the Logic chapter, but there is an important point here. God gives man a few commands here. One is to “rule” over the earth and all the living things in it. God just commanded Adam to be a king in essence. Secondly, God commanded man to multiply and fill the earth. Thirdly, God commands man to “subdue” the earth. This word for subdue means to use force and make something do what you want it to do. God commands man to use force and make the earth do what man wants the earth to do. This is said in context of God commanding man to be fruitful and multiply. Thus, man is to use force and make the earth be useful to man

¹⁴⁵ Vincent Cheung. “Science and Sexuality.” From the ebook, BACKSTAGE. 2016 chapter 10. Page 16-18.

being fruitful and multiplying. In today's terms, we call this practical or operational or hard science. Man forces clay and rock to be concrete, so that man can be blessed and multiply. Here is the important thing. God commands the use of science to be a blessing to man, by forcing the earth to be this blessing, but God did not command man to use science as a first principle of knowledge. In context, God is giving propositional revelation to man, as man's first principle of knowledge.

I heard Bill Winston mention in a sermon (as I paraphrase) that people do not realize that through the gospel, God is our rich supply of material goods. He then mentions it was this way from the beginning. In the garden God richly supplied Adam and Eve with an overflowing abundance of material provision. They did not work for it. God provided it. When they sinned, God stopped being their material provision; not in the absolute total sense, otherwise God would not even give us rain or dirt. The blessing of Abraham restores this back, and the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ (2 Corin 8:9, 9:8) restores this back.

This is why Isaac reaped 100-fold in the desert. This is why Jesus can get tax money, that he did not work for, from a fish. This is why oil, water, bread, fish and other material goods can be transmuted or multiplied. This is why the wealth of the wicked is stored up for the righteous. In all these types of things and more, the elect do not work, but God supplies them by His power and provision. This does not mean we do not work, but that in Jesus Christ, the correct and natural order of things is restored. God provides for man supernaturally and abundantly.

The big idea of man working, by his own power to provide for himself, was always a perversion of God's creation. From the beginning God is supposed to be man's supernatural supplier. Over the years man has gotten accustomed to the curse. He has convinced himself it is good to work 2 jobs, while barely being able to pay his bills. It is good because despite the lack, he did it by the sweat of his brows. Or man works hard and by chance gets rich, and so focuses on his own power and wealth. Both are an arrogant perversion that God is to be man's supply by His own power and abundance.

The Fall

“God made men upright,
but they have sought out many devices.”
(Ecclesiastes 7:29 NASB95)

“Because of this, just as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned.

For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not charged to one's account when there is no law.

But death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who is to come.

But the gift is not like the trespass, for if by the trespass of the one, the many died, by much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, multiply to the many.

And the gift is not as through the one who sinned, for on the one hand, judgment from the one sin led to condemnation, but the gift, from many trespasses, led to justification.

For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through the one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.

Consequently therefore, as through one trespass came condemnation to all people, so also through one righteous deed came justification of life to all people.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.

Now the law came in as a side issue, in order that the trespass could increase, but where sin increased, grace was present in greater abundance,

so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”
(Romans 5:12–21 LEB)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal which Yahweh God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God indeed say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat,

but from the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, God said, ‘You shall not eat from it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

But the serpent said to the woman, “You shall not surely die.

For God knows that on the day you both eat from it, then your eyes will be opened and you both shall be like gods, knowing good and evil.”

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, and the tree was desirable to make one wise, then she took from its fruit and she ate. And she gave it also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed together fig leaves and they made for themselves coverings.

Then they heard the sound of Yahweh God walking in the garden at the windy time of day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh God among the trees of the garden.

And Yahweh God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”

And he replied, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I am naked, so I hid myself.”

Then he asked, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree from which I forbade you to eat?”

And the man replied, “The woman whom you gave to be with me—she gave to me from the tree and I ate.”

Then Yahweh God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Then Yahweh God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, you will be cursed more than any domesticated animal and more than any wild animal. On your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

And I will put hostility between you and between the woman, and between your offspring and between her offspring; he will strike you on the head, and you will strike him on the heel.”

To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bear children. And to your husband shall be your desire. And he shall rule over you.”

And to Adam he said, “Because you listened to the voice of your wife and you ate from the tree from which I forbade you to eat, the ground shall be cursed on your account. In pain you shall eat from it all the days of your life.

And thorns and thistles shall sprout for you, and you shall eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread, until your return to the ground. For from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return,”
(Genesis 3:1–19 (LEB))

God made man “upright.” God made mankind without a sinful bent; rather it was a bend toward uprightness, or obedience. This bent, as defined in the above section is a bent that naturally wants to put correct subjects and predicates (God’s revelation) together and apply them correctly. A bent in the mind that gravitates to disobedience is what the New Testament calls the “flesh” or “sinful flesh,” or the “old man,” (etc.). The sinful mind is naturally bent to disconnect correct subjects and predicates and readjust them wrongly, and then apply this delusion to itself. The body, with all its strong sensations easily moves a mind that is already bent to incorrectly structure subjects and predicates and its application.

Adam did not have the Holy Spirit in the way that is described in 1 Corinthians 2:16. God’s Spirit alone knows God, and yet, for Christians they now have God’s Spirit, so that they judge spiritual things with spiritual things like God does. This is so much so the case that Paul says Christians have the “Mind of Christ.” Adam did not know God in this powerful way. On the flip side, Adam’s mind was not corrupted and bent toward disobedience. At least to some degree it was bent to obedience, because he was

originally made “upright.” It was bent to obedience, but not as strong as Christians have when empowered by the Spirit. Also, in heaven God will so strongly empower and structure our minds that we will never sin again. God is the foundation for man’s ability to obey His commands, not something else.

And so, “Why did Adam fall?” God sovereignly made the bend toward obedience in Adam’s mind not strong enough to endure Satan’s and Eve’s temptation. This is good because God did it.

There are two ways to analyze this. But first we need to remember what sin means. Sin is a transgression of God’s commandment. Sin is not a “bad feeling.” John (1 John 3:4) tells us that “*all sin is lawlessness.*” Not some, but all sin is breaking a commandment of God. Thus, ethics and understanding what sin is, is intellectual/rational and not a feeling. God gives commands in propositional knowledge (innate knowledge or the scripture). A person considers these commands and then chooses to obey them or disobey them.

The sinful flesh or sinful nature is foundationally in the mind. The “state” of mind is bent toward suppressing God’s truth and command and walking over it. Imagine a roof of a house that is one single slant, rather than a roof that is divided in the middle with two slants downward. The sinful mind is a roof that is slanted to the west. West is breaking God’s command. When it rains (when thoughts rain down) the mind being slanted downward to the west, means that by “nature” or naturally, the water drains to the west. This is what corruption did to the mind of man. A completely renewed mind is a roof that is completely slanted to the east (obeying God’s command). When a person rains down thoughts, their thinking by nature, naturally moves the thoughts to obeying God’s command. Sanctification deals with the fact that at conversion God radically bends the roof to the east, but it is not 100%. Therefore we are commanded to “renew” our minds in God’s truth and Spirit. The more we do this, the more the mind becomes closer to being a one slanted roof to the east.

The other minor aspect is that after Adam and Eve’s sin, man was cursed with corruption so that their physical bodies grew weak and eventually died. That is, both the mind and body were corrupted. This weakened body, even if the mind was not corrupted, fights against a renewed mind that wants to obey God. A basic illustration would be a body that is tired and exhausted. Even without a sinful nature, a tired body would be a pull on the mind, to not pray and seek God tonight, but just go straight to bed. This is why in Romans 8 Paul says that God not only renews the mind, but will give life to your mortal bodies (Romans 8:10-11). God does not leave us as orphans, He helps His children with both the mind and body.

Adam’s mind, was a roof, although bent for obedience (to the east), was not strong enough to resist the temptation. One reason for this is for displaying of man’s utter weakness. Man, even without a sinful bent, (and with some type of bent for good) was utterly incompetent, stupid and pathetically weak to the smallest of tests. Think about the test in the Garden. It was a small and easy test. And yet, man was utterly weak to it. If man was this weak and stupid before sin corrupted him, then how much more is man weak and stupid after his corruption?

This shows us why when it comes to our salvation in Jesus that God must do all the saving, lifting and deliverance, because man, even before sin is utterly incompetent to help themselves. Considering our sin, it is 1000x more obvious that every good thing

and every blessing we have, must be by God's power, by His wisdom and by His unmerited favor to us.

“ Who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. 7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will.”
(Romans 8:5-7 NLT)

“Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.”
(2 Corinthians 4:4)

Among other things, the Bible associates sin with a lack of intelligence or rationality. Ecclesiastes 7:25 mentions "the stupidity of wickedness,"¹⁴⁶ and Proverbs 6:32 says, "one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense" (NASB). Referring to nonChristians, Paul writes, "Their thoughts are useless, and their stupid minds are in the dark. They claim to be wise, but they are fools" (Romans 1:21-22, CEV). It makes no sense to rebel against God. Insofar as a person disbelieves or disobeys the Bible, he is deficient in judgment and understanding. The Bible describes him with the word *moros* – the non-Christian is a moron. On the other hand, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding" (Psalm 111:10).

Thus although the intellectual equipment of the non-Christian remains in existence – that is, he still has a human mind – sin has almost entirely crippled his intelligence. His mind is biased against God and truth. He constructs his worldview with impossible axioms and false premises. The result is a comprehensively delusional view of reality. Even if the non-Christian were given true premises, such as biblical propositions, his sinful and stupid mind would still err in reasoning, and he would still produce false conclusions through fallacious deductions.¹⁴⁷

All non-Christians are intellectually defective and inferior. Their thinking is controlled by biases and fallacies so that they consistently form conclusions that are hostile to God. It is the rational mind of man that reflects his likeness to God; therefore, the fact that evil has affected the intellect of man means that it has penetrated the core of his being. Although man still retains his likeness to God in that he still retains his mind, it has been so damaged that man is now born with a disposition toward evil, a bias toward falsehood and absurdity. The destructive consequences of sin on the mind are called the NOETIC EFFECTS OF SIN.

¹⁴⁶ An alternate translation is "the wickedness of stupidity." Either translation relates the evil in man to his diminished or inconsistent rationality.

¹⁴⁷ This means that the non-Christian can never discover truth by himself, and even if given the truth, he will fail to understand it or acknowledge its implications. Thus Jesus says, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3). This spiritual birth must be decided and caused by God without any cooperation from man.

In order to understand the redemptive plan of God, we need to grasp the extent to which man has fallen. Sin's effect on the spiritual aspect of man is more than that of a crippling blow, but a fatal one. Non-Christians are not only spiritually sick and blind (Luke 5:31; Matthew 15:14), but they are spiritually dead. And since they are spiritually dead, they are completely helpless when it comes to spiritual operations. Ecclesiastes 9:3 says, "Furthermore, the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives" (NASB), and the prophet Jeremiah observes, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jeremiah 17:9). Man in his unregenerate condition is described as evil, insane, and incurable. Just as a dead person cannot request or respond to any assistance, a sinner cannot attain to or prepare for salvation by his own will or effort, and in himself he cannot even decide to repent or accept mercy from God.

Additional verses indicating that the non-Christian is spiritually dead include:

But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."
(Matthew 8:22)

"For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." So they began to celebrate...."But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."
(Luke 15:24, 32)

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.
(John 5:21)

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins...But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.
(Ephesians 2:1, 4-5)

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.
(1 John 3:14)¹⁴⁸

This fall of Adam brings up the order of the Divine Decrees. We see, considering God being the only cause of everything, and having infinite understanding and infinite ability, could have created Adam with the ability to resist the temptation. God denied this to Adam, and by extension, denied this to all humanity. Since we already dealt with the fact that by deduction of God's sovereignty, there is nothing free relative to God's direct and absolute control, that this includes man's will. Man is accountable precisely because man is not free. First, man is not free from God giving him commandments, and secondly man is not free from God holding Him accountable to these commands.

We already dealt with the doctrine of good and evil. God's command to man, is the only law. What is good and evil is what God commands man to do, and what God does. There is no law or definition outside of God. God is the foundation for what is

¹⁴⁸ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology.

good and evil, not something else. God is the foundation for laws, not something else. Thus, we already know the objection that God somehow owed Adam a mind that could resist temptation is anti-intellectual, irrational, and demonic.

This point of Adam's fall is a point that shows if someone's doctrine affirms the absolute sovereignty of God and affirms the logical order of God's decrees (supralapsarian) or contradicts the scripture. If someone affirms that God pre-designed Adam's mind to fall to temptation, then at the very least you affirm a basic supralapsarian order of God's decrees. If God pre-designed Adam's mind with weakness to fall, but for no reason, then you are teaching fatalism. But if you affirm God pre-designed Adam to fail the temptation for prior purposes and goals for mankind and His glory, then you affirm both supralapsarian and divine determinism.

I want to give a word of caution here to some. We should be very cautious with any statement that limits God, even in the smallest way. Recall an early comment by Vincent regarding the topic about God not lying. We ought to be careful in how we say this doctrine, so that we do not even imply that God somehow lacks an ability. Example, God not being able to lift an infinitely heavy stone that He created, is not due to a lack of ability, but because of a category error: God is not physical, and thus, God does not lift anything in that sense. The same with not being able to lie. It is not a lack of ability, but a category error; truth is never a lie, but God is truth. However, with creating something, if we are not talking about a category error, or contradiction, then God has the ability to do anything. There is nothing God cannot do. He has immeasurable understanding and infinite force. With this combination, there is nothing God cannot do. He can do anything. Thus, God had the ability to create Adam with the same level of self-awareness, of his own mind and body, and still create him with the power to resist the temptation in the Garden. He denied this to Adam. God did this for the end purpose of a glorious church with Christ, and His value displayed in it. Also, consider that in heaven, God uses His power to so perfect us that we will not sin. Thus, God has the ability. God lacks no power; there is no ability that He lacks.

All things are possible for God. This is our maximum.

From the John Calvin quote below, we know Calvin taught a logical order of God's decrees and divine determinism. In addition to this, Calvin taught there is no such thing as God "permitting" anything. All things are by God's choice, and by God causing it to happen; so much so, that even digestion in the stomach is by God willing it, every single time. There is nothing natural about a stomach that makes it digest; God causes in regularity, digestion to happen in a stomach. Thus, if Calvin taught God does not permit anything, then Calvin denied that God permitted the reprobates to do or be anything. Thus, for some to say the doctrine of God directly and actively predestining reprobates is "hyper-Calvinism," are stupid and false witnesses against Calvin. (I do not call myself a Calvinist; I say this, because I do not like false slander).

"If any complains that [Adam's will, mind and heart] was vulnerable because its power was weak... Surely God cannot be restricted to making man so that he would not sin. Such a nature might have been superior, but to argue with God, as though He were compelled to give this nature to [Adam], is the height of

injustice. [Adam] did not have the will which would have given the power. [If God gave him this power then] this would have resulted in perseverance.”¹⁴⁹

I agree with Calvin. It is not merely unjust, but the “pinnacle of injustice” for a creation to say God owed His creation anything. Buddha has nothing to say. My feelings or observations do not produce the truth that “*if I have a soul, God has to treat me a certain way; even if He created me; God owes me.*” Satan thought that way; these thoughts in people shows he is teaching humans to believe this same lie. Just as my LEGOS has nothing to say about where I place them or build with them, (even more so) humans with souls have nothing to say to God about how and what He creates with them. To say God must treat me a certain way, “because of my soul,” is to reject God as the foundation of creation, is to reject God as the foundation of standards and is to reject God as foundation for what is good and evil.

Because God is the foundation, God sovereignly chose to give promises to man; therefore, God wants to keep these promises. God sovereignly convinced Himself to make these promises and thus to keep them. No one, or no standard made God make promises to man. God freely chose to do it. Because God cannot lie by category, we know we can appeal to God’s promises in absolute certainty. However, this appeal is not appealing to a different standard like, “because I have a soul.” No. It is an appeal to God as the foundation, the way it should be.

An interesting hermeneutic here is the law of first mentions. Many Pentecostals and Charismatics like this hermeneutic, but like many, they only use it when it fits their pet-theology, but do not use it when it is a doctrine they do not like. God did not create Adam, with a pre-designed weakness to the temptation, with Satan as a co-creator. This is not Middle Earth; there was no Valar or Satan that sang off tune and co-authored and/or override what God created in Adam. What Adam was at the beginning was all God, and there was and still is, no one beside Him.

The first mention of man’s weakness is God alone: without anyone, anything or any demon. We are not talking about Satan being the secondary “*object (like a chess piece)*” (not cause, the person moving the chess piece) that tells the lie (the tempter); rather, we are talking about the authorship and cause of man’s creation, which created him with the weakness to not be able to withstand the temptation. God authored in His book called “Reality,” that Adam would not have the strength to resist. God alone created, authored and caused this.

Thus, God is the author of sin and evil, in the category of reality, and causality. God is not the doer of sin; and He is not the tempter. Adam was the doer of sin, and Satan the tempter. Therefore, every other instance of man’s temptation and sin, “*does not contradict this doctrine that was established first.*” The doctrine is established that God alone is the metaphysical author of sin and evil. Thus, when we read that God enticed a demon to be a lying spirit to Ahab, we know the only real cause behind both Ahab and the demon is God’s authorship and cause. To say it was something else would be

¹⁴⁹ John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, Edited by Tony Lane and Hilary Osborne, Baker Book House, 2006. Pg. 64.

[]-added by author.

to contradict the first mention of it. God is the foundation for the initial creation, the ongoing motion and end of a thing, not something or someone else.

Adam's sin was transferred to all humans.

Some wish to resist this, because they keep starting with man as the foundation and not God. OF COURSE, it would be wrong for a man to do such a thing, but God is NOT a man. With no standard but Himself and His own arbitrary choices, God decided that when Adam sinned, both his sinful record and sinful nature would be transferred to all humanity. God, without asking Adam or without asking humanity, or asking anyone or anything, decided to appoint Adam as humanities' representative. Thus, when Adam sinned all humanity sinned with him, even though they did not do the sin and were not there. Because God decided to do this, it is righteousness and good by definition.

In the mind of God, God thought that all mankind is credited and made sinful by Adam's sin. This is the foundation of it all. Thus, such phrases as, "original sin" (etc) are ambiguous. There is nothing inherent in man, flesh or reality, or a secret standard over God that necessitates that by procreation Adam's sin is transferred to his children. However, God thought so, and by definition of God thinking it so, this is good and righteous.

The better phrase, for original sin, is what we get by looking at the decrees. Since we are already in divine decrees, we can see Adam is a later order decree. Jesus as the representative for the elect, was the highest order decree. Without asking the Elect, without the elect being there, without them earning God's sonship and righteousness, God chose that Jesus would represent them. In God's mind He thought the elect would be freely given what Jesus did. Therefore, Jesus' sonship and righteousness and abundant life became their sonship, righteousness and life.

Jesus' righteousness and life is freely credited to the Elect, even though they did not earn it; it is so, because God think so. Adam is an anti-type or opposite illustration of this. Adam's sin and death is freely credited to all humanity, even though they did not earn it; it is so, because God thinks so.

Jesus' righteousness is freely given both in the (1) forensic sense and (2) by nature. God (1) declares them forgiven and righteous, and (2) writes His laws on their mind so that their nature becomes righteous. The same with Adam in the opposite direction. Through Adam, God (1) declares all humans as lawbreakers, and (2) God (not Satan) creates all humans with a sinful nature. In Adam's freely credited sin, the curse of death is given, and by this sin dominates and controls humanity. In Christ's freely credited righteousness, unmerited favor dominates and controls the elect, so that eternal life becomes a total reality for them.

God is the source of all knowledge. God controls all metaphysics and ontology. God is the only lawgiver. God is the only one who gives definitions to His own creation. The Logos continues to uphold His creation faithfully in His definitions of it.

Thus, why is it a correct definition that all people, born after Adam, were born created with a sinful nature and death, when they did not do the sin themselves? Because God thinks so. Why is it a correct definition that sinful people are credited with Christ's righteousness, life, health, wealth and inheritance, when they did not do it themselves? Because God thinks so. Why is it correct for God's adopted children, to

have the privilege to ask for anything and then get this anything they desire from Almighty God, from the LORD of Angel Armies? Because God thinks so. Why is it a correct definition that adopted children have bold access to the very throne room of heaven, to the only Immortal, Invisible King of Ages, to ask for help and ask for blessings? Because this Eternal Lord of Ages think so. Why is mercy defined as both a spiritual help, and as a natural help of “double health and wealth”? Because God thinks so. Why is it correct, that God’s children have all their sicknesses and diseases taken away? Because God thinks so, and He has written this definition in stripes upon the back of His only Son.

The sin of Adam freely credited to all humanity (except Christ), was a radical corruption. The corruption was not enough to stop mankind from being called the “image of God,” because God and Scripture refer to mankind in this way. Sin darkened the intelligence of man from being able to clearly accept God as an epistemology and making deductions about themselves from these premises. God’s innate knowledge is still in man. This knowledge is not erased, but only suppressed. Man does not stop from using the laws of Logic and deduction in any way, but they suppress making logical arguments from God’s knowledge. Thus, in addition to being called being made in the image of God (past tense), Jesus would refer to them as children of Satan and as morons. Paul would also call unbelievers, morons, blinded and that their intelligence is darkened. This is how Jesus, the apostles and the Scripture thinks of all non-Christians; they are stupid, blinded, intellectually malfunctioned. This is what happened to all mankind because God chose to freely credit Adam’s sin and death to all.

This is the context for the promise and the coming of Jesus Christ to save His beloved church.

In this passage of Romans 5 we also see a vicious cycle of horror. The order is sin, and then the curse of death. The argument Paul gives is this: “All humans are those who have sinned. All who have sinned are those who are cursed with death. Thus, all humans are those who are cursed with death.” In verse 21 Paul then says in addition, where death is, sin rules and dominates. “Just as sin reigned in death, so also grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Thus, sin brings in the curse of death; however, the curse of death greatly empowers sin, so much so, that sin becomes a dominating slave master over all humans.

It is a revolving horror story, with no humanly way out. It was in this context Jesus was promised to be a mighty savior and light to the world.

God’s Conversation with Adam and Eve.

The conversation God had with Adam and Eve, when they sinned, provides some important foundations for the progression of the rest of Scripture.

FAITH THE FIRST DOCTRINE. This is first brought to my attention, in this technical way by Vincent Cheung, in Faith Override from Sermonettes Vol 9 (page 14),

Jesus made a covenantal argument. He made a redemptive-historical argument. And his theology was correct. But then she made a declaration of faith, and

that finished the whole exchange. There was no more rejection, and no more argument. Faith shut down every opposition, every reason to refuse, even from Christ himself.

Faith trumps everything. Faith is immune to even correct theological arguments. This is not because faith could contradict sound doctrine, but because faith in God is the first sound doctrine. Faith in God is the primal orthodoxy. Thus we do not say that faith would contradict correct theology, but that correct theology could never contradict faith. Even when a doctrine comes straight from the word of God, so that there is no room for refutation, it will always leave room for faith, because faith comes first. No covenant? No problem. Stuck in the wrong spot in redemptive history? Who cares? Faith always reaches God directly.

God told Adam and Eve that they had free access to the whole Garden. God gave them everything. God also commanded them not to eat of the tree of good and evil, for if they did, they would surely die. God not only gave definitions about man and the world to man, but also gave commands. The command about the tree, came with a consequence. It did not come with a reward, but only a punishment if not done; thus, the religious fan boys who say there was a covenant with Adam, are plus ultra-stupid. They lust to make stuff up to promote themselves. It is easy being a famous preacher or theologian because all you need to do is add terms to the Scripture and make it say whatever you want it to. There is no way to logically infer a covenant with Adam. Even if there was one, the Scripture does not reveal such a thing.

Satan's temptation was a direct attack against God being man's epistemology. God gave to Adam propositional definitions about His creation and commandments for them to follow. This was Adam's starting point for knowledge. Satan's attack was directly against the idea that God was the only starting point for knowledge. Or to say it in philosophy verbiage, Satan's attack was directed against Christian epistemology; he attacked the presuppositional level of the Christian Worldview.

Because God has commanded faith in His revealed definitions, man is not merely to think about reality; rather, man ought to move and behave within the definition that God defined man with. Mankind will be held accountable to this, because man is not free relative to God's authority and command over Him. Even the concept of what is value, if it is something man ought to value or not, is an ethic, because it is about what we ought to do. That is, it is about God giving us a definition about some aspect of reality and commanding us to interact with (x) as something valuable or not valuable. It is based in God's commandments.

Christian ethics work within the order of God's sovereignty over all things: His revelation to man, His definition of man, and finally His command to man. God's command is not only a definition about aspects of reality, it is a definition about God's creation called mankind, and that God will hold man accountable to operate within this definition.

The first doctrines, in the most technical way, would come from the first few verses of Genesis, however, when I say "the first doctrine" in context here, I mean the first doctrine, where God interacts with man and teaches him something, for the first time.

This comes from the combination of God's command to Adam and Eve, and His remarks to them after their sin.

This was the first school lesson for mankind. God gave His correct and precise description about what mankind is, to Adam and Eve. God said they will be accountable by His authority to interact within this definition. Satan comes along and tempts them to not agree with God's definition. Satan in essence says, "*Even though God created and controls all reality, should you trust His definition of it?*" "*Did God really say that about (x)...?*" Satan appealed to things like lusting for more of something and pride; however, those were the symptoms, or additives.

The foundational issue was about faith in God's definition about His reality.

Two points.

One. God's definition was correct, and Satan's a lie. Just because someone says something in a sentence does not mean it is intelligent. I can say, "*Do you really have to exist, in order to deny your own existence?*" I could say that as a snake, your pastor or a Greek philosopher, but the result would still be the same self-refuting nonsense. To overcome man, Satan, attacked his enemy with deception and lies.

Second. The foundation of Satan's lie used a starting point of **empiricism** rather than **God's revelation**.

Satan first injected doubt about God as a starting point. "*Did God really say.*" This is a negative apologetic attack, against God as an epistemology. Then Satan does a positive apologetic for empiricism. "**YOU, look** at how attractive this fruit is to benefit you." Satan encourages man to start knowledge with "man," and "how man sees and observes such and such." Or for a simple contrast, The kingdom of God, versus, the Kingdom of self. It is God's revelation, versus, man's speculation.

Paul in contrast to what Satan said, says the opposite, "*we live by faith, not by sight,*" (2 Cor. 5:17)." Paul further says in 1 Corinthians 1 that man by his wisdom did not know God. Next in Chapter 2 verse 4 Paul says by the power of the Spirit He gave a deduction ("demonstration") (obviously from Scripture), so that the Corinthian's faith, is in God rather than man. Major premises started from God's word. The Greeks, which according to Paul, "*seek for (human) wisdom,*" could not discover God. The Greek philosophers had two main epistemologies (3 if you include the self-refuting skeptics): Plato as a pseudo-rationalist, and everyone else (From Socrates to Aristotle) were empiricists. All these Greek epistemologies had one thing in common, they all started with "man as a starting point". The only honest one was Plato who admitted that by his rationalism, he could not get to the realm of the categories(forms/logos), or that he could not get from his rationalism to the categories that defined reality.

So, whether in the first days of the Garden or in a New Testament Church, God is constantly teaching and reteaching this subject. We are to start with God's revelation and believe His words; we are to do this over all human starting points (or non-God starting points). Seeing this is the foundational attack of our greatest enemy against us, we need to consider it and prepare to withstand it, and then defeat it.

Yet, it seems even preachers take more time in a sermon to explain why Jesus did NOT REALLY SAY, "*I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you receive it,*

and you will have it,” (Mark 11:24). Their exegesis is mostly about, “Jesus really did not say that.” It makes one think whose side they are on?

Our stance on epistemology is a positive shout of faith. It is to say, “*Yes, Jesus did say,*” rather than to bark out, “Did Jesus really say that?”

Those who question, “*Did Jesus really say that,*” do not have a valid deduction from Scripture. Instead, they seek for a sign, or for human wisdom. But as Jesus says, an evil person seeks for a sign. They say, “*physician heal yourself,*” and proceed with informal fallacies of ad-hominem attacks. God is the foundation of theology, not man.

God is the only first principle of Knowledge. There is no knowledge from observations. Wait? Who was the fool that told you that knowledge comes from human observations? Because God is the foundation of theology it is a non-relevant point if a person does not do what the Scripture says. If God says, then that is the only correct definition of reality.

They say, “*Oshea heal thyself.*” Or, “*history for the past 1,500 years, ‘heal thyself.’*” I have experienced some success in healing (and I know others with better success), but that is not even relevant in a logical argument. It is an ad-hominem fallacy. What does God’s revelation say? They seek a sign that God’s word is true. They read in God’s book, “*...God did say...*,” but then they seek a sign from God to prove it. However, Jesus said even if someone from the dead comes back to preach to them, they still would not believe. Jesus did give these a sign. It is a book called the Scripture. Jesus stands before these sign seekers (reformed, traditionalist, non-faithers) and throws a book at their feet. Jesus points to it and says, “read and believe it and live. Disbelieve it and burn in hell fire.”¹⁵⁰ Of course they hate this, because they want a sign to prove the book is true. And so, it is foolishness to them. Yet, the fact is, they have their sign. The issue is whether they will say, “yes, God did say,” or “this is what I observe and say.” Their sign seeking would make the Jewish leaders in Jesus’ day blush with envy.

They say, “*I do not see this.*” Or, in the past a bunch of pastors got together and said, “*WE do not see these miracles or healings Jesus promised, and so WE come together to publicly say, ‘‘God did not really say; He meant something different; this something different is what WE see and observe, and calculate.’’*” These are David Hume lovers; they are empiricist perverts. They are committing spiritual perversion at the presuppositional level. They seek wisdom the same way the Greek philosophers

¹⁵⁰ I picked up this type of analogy from Vincent Cheung.

“God had, indeed, done all these things, and contrary to many theologians, he could still do them if he wants. There is nothing in the Bible to guarantee us that he would always comply with the doctrine of cessationism. Nevertheless, in most cases the truth of Jesus Christ does not reach men by what they regard as spectacular ways. *Instead, God hands them a book, and in effect, says, ‘Read it. Believe it and live. Disbelieve it and burn in hell.’* This is very difficult, even impossible, for non-Christians to accept. God designed this hindrance to expose those who are destined for hellfire, and to exclude them from eternal life. It is not that the divinity of the Bible is hidden, but that sinners are blind to it.” From the ebook, Sermonettes Vol. 1. 2010. Page6.

Socrates and Aristotle did. Their starting point for knowledge is a human starting point. It is a kingdom of men, a kingdom centered on self. Jesus' wisdom to these, is the same for the sign seekers.

When God met with Adam and Eve, He did just what He said He would do. He curses them with death, along with all reality (Romans 8:20-22). After pronouncing the curse God gave a "promise" of salvation. He said the offspring of woman would destroy Satan, while Satan only manages to bruise this person. Thus, God's first classroom, reinforced the absolute surety of His words. This is why, even in this book, we start with epistemology, because the Scripture teaches this as the first doctrine along with faith.

The big idea is that God will do what He said He will do.

They sinned, and they died, just like God said. God does what He said He would do. If God, who in His own definition of the Trinity is a positive love, is so faithful to exact punishment for sin, then how much more will He be faithful to exact love for faith. After this God made a promise. The connection here is the connection of the absolute surety of God's word, and our faith in it. He promised a savior for mankind, and thus, it will happen just like God said. The promise gave the basic information that there is a kingdom of God and of Satan; one of truth and one of lies. There would be hostility between the people divided by this promise. In the end, Satan and those aligned with the faithless one, will be defeated, but the Savior will win, and His winning will benefit those on His side.

God's school lesson at the start of history is simple. Where Adam failed to believe God, we are to succeed by having faith in God's promise of a savior. This is the start of the history of man. It is the start of how man was ultimately divided into two groups, not from the perspective of election, but from man's point of view. God's promise ensured man was now divided by those who had faith in His word saying "God did say," or those who would continue to say with Satan, "did God really say?" God's promise, is a promise that cut humanity in half, with a great gulf between them. This simple doctrine is the story of human history from Genesis to Revelation. It is hard to overstate this simple but powerful doctrine, that underlines the whole Scripture.

The truth is profound. Through Adam's sin we see the absolute certainty of God's word as an epistemology, and we see the absolute faithfulness of God's command and punishment. The lesson starts there; however, it ends with God's promise of salvation. Thus, the ending note is a resounding bell of hope. God says for those who hope in His salvation will be saved. They will not be disappointed. This is exactly what we see in the promise of Joel, and in the fulfillment in Jesus Christ. God ended man's first theology lesson with a triumphant shout of faith that would cause all the elect through history to respond to. God's first theology lesson leaves man with the promise that if you believe in God's promise of good, you will absolutely receive it. Of course, this promise was basic and broad, much more would be revealed later.

We see throughout the Scripture with every other promise of good, no matter how great or how small, if only a muster seed of faith was in a heart, that person absolutely saw that promise become reality. Whether Hannah, or Samson, whether Jabez or David, whether Paul, Peter, Philip, a Roman centurion, or a gentile woman, when there was faith in God's word, God absolutely granted their faith with the good promised.

Whatever aspect of life that the promise dealt with and someone's faith engaged it, God's salvation busted through.

As Vincent says, faith is "the primal doctrine, and faith gives us direct access to God." God's Word being the sole epistemology, and our faith in its definitions and promise, was the first major established doctrine between God and man. It was the first test, and it was the first battle waged on earth. This is not only a hermeneutic of first mention for the doctrine of faith, but is the first mention of a doctrine period, for which no other doctrine will later contradict. Every other doctrine, definition and promise will line up to support this one.

Therefore the book of Hebrews is all about "faith," and why the book of James is about, "true faith versus false profession of faith," and not about someone's pet ethic. Samson is mentioned as a man who the world was not worthy to have known his name. Why? Faith. This is why, when many only remember Samson's moral imperfections, God and Scripture only seem to remember his awesome faith. Why, because God has always put a premium on faith in His Word. Many boil the Scripture into their one or two pet ethics they like, and force everything through this; whereas, the Scripture makes faith the foundation doctrine. It is hard to overstate how big and persuasive this doctrine is throughout the whole Scripture.

For example, when Hebrews would sum up the Israelites disobedience, it would restate the issue as "unbelief in the good news." The positive is that God promised something good to the Israelites. Their reaction was defined as disbelief in the good that God promised. By the same standard Joshua and Caleb's actions are defined as faith in the good promised. If you have faith, then obedience will follow as a consequence; likewise, if you have unbelief, then disobedience will follow. Thus, disobedience or obedience is restated as unbelief or faith, which is the antecedent. The foundation is faith.

Therefore, someone like the gentile woman could outargue Jesus,¹⁵¹ to get healing for her daughter. She made an argument for faith in God's word. Because God has a standing contract with faith, which as established at the very beginning, if faith is engaged, then faith will always be honored by God. Jesus even said to the woman, "your will be done."

"But she came and bowed down before him and said, "Lord, help me!"

"It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs," he said.

"Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, your faith is great! Let what you want be done for you." And her daughter was healed from that hour."
(Matthew 15-25-28 NET)

Jesus, the greatest teacher who ever lived, Jesus the greatest prophet who ever lived, Jesus the greatest man who knew God's Will perfectly and set His face like a flint to

¹⁵¹ Vincent Cheung's essay on Faith Override, has been a help to me on this topic.

accomplish it at all cost—said to this outsider woman, “*woman, not God’s plan be done* (His plan to only minister to the Jews before the atonement), *but your Will Be Done.*”

JESUS: “It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs.”

WOMAN: “Jesus, these are Your words not mine. You said with Your words, there are dogs in the house beneath the table. Even if you did not intend it, you have me under your table. Even if you did not intend it, there are crumbs that fall from the table. You SAID IT, not me! If You are to be faithful to Your word, then you ought to let me have the crumbs, because I am there under that table with those crumbs, and I want them. YOU SAID IT, not me!”

This woman, even if she is commandeering Jesus’ analogy to go farther than Jesus intended, she does something that most people lack, which is engaging God’s word with importance. This was the very thing Adam and Eve failed to do! In faith she treats the Lord’s word with seriousness! God just spoke. God cannot lie. She is banking on the fact that Jesus must be faithful to His words, even if Jesus did not intend them to the length she is asking for.

Jesus, after seeing this woman use His analogy against Him, rather than rebuking her, praises her. Think about that? How often did Jesus do that? Jesus gets out maneuvered and out argued by a woman taking His analogy farther than He intended, and He praises “her faith” for doing so. Unlike many around Him (including His own disciples), she was engaging His word with great importance and seriousness.

Jesus says to her, “*Woman, God’s plan is to only minister to the Jews right now; however, not God’s plan, but your will be done on earth, because of your faith.*”¹⁵²

Your theology must include this Jesus, or you are not a Christian. Your faith must treat God’s every promise (even the health and wealth ones) with this level of seriousness, or you are not a Christian.

In the beginning God did say, “let there be light,” but God also made a pact with faith. Man throughout their history would be divided solely on this one issue. There would be those, who like Joshua “gave a good report,” and say “*by God’s promise we can do this,*” and those who “gave a bad report,” and said, “*even with God’s promise we cannot do this.*” They tried to stone Joshua and Caleb to death. Yet, in the end, only Joshua and Caleb inherited the promise, and those “united in church unbelief” all perished. This is the repeated story of man’s history over and over again.

Third question, “how does God cause man to get from their starting point to obtain this first intention He had for them?”

¹⁵² Behind Jesus saying not God’s will be done, in regard to His plan to only minister to the Jews before the atonement, is God’s standing doctrine of faith. God’s will is to honor the will of man, when man engages God’s doctrine of faith in His word. When the woman engaged Jesus’ word with absolute importance, it triggered this first doctrine of faith. Thus, behind Jesus saying, “*woman your will be done,*” is God’s will/promise being done by His faithfulness to always honor faith, His first doctrinal lesson established with man.

Vincent sums up this whole topic in a nice way,

This doctrine of creation provides a crucial basis for many other doctrines. It tells us about the nature of God, that he is full of wisdom and power. It tells us that God is in control of all things, since he created all things and determined the course of history according to his plan. It tells us about his special relationship with man, since he created man in his own divine image, and then declared to man his commandments. It tells us about how God perceived his own creation, that it was good. It tells us about God's design for man and woman, that they are to marry, that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that man is to have authority over woman. Above all, it tells us that man is to serve and worship God, that man is lost until he finds his place in the Creator through Jesus Christ, and that those who know God can possess the assurance that he has found the source, the purpose, and the rock of his existence.¹⁵³

With the summary being laid down, and the decrees already discussed we can move on to the question and doctrine concerning man's history from their initial creation throughout the ages.

Anthropology, the *doctrine and history* of man is about how God uses His absolute sovereign control over the *two group of mankind*.

History.

There is no statement about the history of man, which man says, that can be justified as a true statement of reality. Even if it is something that Abraham Lincoln did on this or that day. When man records history, man does it from an epistemology of empiricism, observation and induction. All inductive reasoning commits the informal fallacy of a non-sequitur: the conclusion does not logically follow from the premise. Empiricism commits multiple fallacies, including more than one category fallacy. As Christians, we can have some broad truth premises about reality, such as time, how man generally progresses over time in technology (etc.), and thus, a Christian is always more intelligent and superior (or at least in principle) to non-Christians, when they use inductive reasoning, whether in history or scientific experimentation. This does not make inductive reasoning valid, but that a Christian has a better chance to make a better guess in their conclusion. However, because of the irrationality built in all empiricism and observation, any statement of the history of the world is at best an educated, yet irrational statement of reality. The Christian worldview makes no difference if we know all history as truth statements, or some, or if we are in a dream world. Christians would still be saved by Jesus Christ, and enjoy His rich supply and presence forever.

We do know some history as truth statements, because the Scripture gives us many statements about history. These revealed statements about history are the only statements about history that are justified as truth claims. (There is a category about

¹⁵³ Vincent Cheung. Creation in the Beginning.
From the ebook, Sermonettes Vol. 1. 2008. Pg. 8.

private knowledge revealed in dreams for prophecy, but that is for another section, for mature students.)

In the public forum, only Christians can speak about history with intelligence and honesty. Non-Christians who speak about history are unintelligent and irrational. All non-Christians have no idea what they are doing.

The Great Divide

God's promise to Adam and Eve, is the great divider of mankind. Ultimately, it is not man, but God's promise that divided mankind. People harp on a false understanding on what unity means. Some will unite all church denominations together, even if it means to unite Jesus with Satan, just as long as all profess to be a Christian and attend a church somewhere. They will give an account to Jesus one day for their abominations. Even with something as basic as requiring circumcision, Paul said such a person is cursed by God, even if an angel said it.

God divided the world with His promise of salvation and blessings. Because of this promise the world is divided by those of faith and those of unbelief. Since many in the church are filled with unbelief, those of faith cannot have unity with them any more than Joshua and Caleb could have had unity with the other 10 Israelite elders who gave a report of unbelief. It is faith in God's promise that unites, not a church. A Church united in unbelief will damn you just as easily as non-church peoples' unbelief damn them.

It was God who divided mankind, both in His decrees, and in the Garden when God gave the revelation of His promise. God had many options after Adam sinned. God has infinite ability, and so anything is possible for God. God could have done many different things, but what He did do, was to give a promise, which divided the world.

Ultimately, there is only two things that man can unify to: faith in God's definition and promise, or unbelief in God's promise, by placing their faith in human speculation and superstition. Theologians want to invent complicated theories to impress people, but the Scriptures teaching on this is basic and simple.

Faith and unbelief, divided Able and Cain, Jacob and Esau, Joshua from the rest of the Israelite elders, David from Saul, the prophets from the Jewish Nation, and Jesus' disciples from the rest of the world.

There are two groups of mankind, and it is not the color of their skin, or wealth, or social status or talents that divides them. It is the decree and causality of God that divides them into the Elect or Reprobate. From the relative level, it is faith or unbelief in God's promise that divides the world. Any political promise to solve human dividedness is both stupid and delusional. God guarantees the Elect and Reprobate are divided by faith and unbelief. The only political promise to ensure prosperity and health for all, would be to have a nation of Christians, who are faithfully believing in God's promise and by faith receiving God's blessing upon them (even then it would not be complete due to the fallen world, but it would be substantial). Any political promise that does not strive for this, is a lie, blaspheme and intellectually broken; or in other words, it is a promise that has no connection with reality.

In summary we learned 3 important doctrines to remember as we proceed forward. (1) mankind's freely imputed sinful record (and nature), and (2) God's promise of salvation divided the world into two groups, (3) and God's first lesson was the certainty of His promise and His contract with faith.

Salvation

Salvation is mainly about metaphysics. It is how God is using His sovereignty towards to the Elect to save them and toward the reprobate group to destroy them.

It is about how God uses His sovereignty toward the God-man Jesus Christ, how God has exalted Him above all, and how God causes the elect to benefit from His exaltation, and the reprobate to be damned by it.

Like in many things there can be some overlap of categories, such as the ontology of epistemology. In the human perspective of hearing the gospel and assenting to it, it is a matter of epistemology. In salvation we have the addition of God's command to man, man's failure to obey, Christ's success in performing them and the Father freely crediting this righteousness to the elect. In this narrow viewpoint we can call this the ontology of ethics.

Jesus Christ.

“[Give] thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.¹³ Who rescued us from the authority of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son of His love,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

THE FIRSTBORN OF ALL CREATION

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

And He is before all things,

And in Him all things hold together.

18

And He is the head of the body, the church;

Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross—through Him—whether things on earth or things in heaven.

And although you were formerly alienated and enemies in mind and in evil deeds, but now He reconciled you in the body of His flesh through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach...” (Colossians 1:12-22 LSB)

This will be a brief summary focusing on the themes and syllogism of this book,

for other important basics, see the section on “Jesus Christ,” from *Vincent Cheung, Systematic Theology*.¹⁵⁴

We will start this section with a continuation of the basic teaching of the Trinity we learned from an earlier section. The Trinity is defined as one divine essence¹⁵⁵, which includes the infinite amount of knowledge, among other things. However, each member has some different acknowledged propositions they affirm in relation to this infinite knowledge. Jesus does not affirm, “I am the Father,” and the Spirit does not affirm, “I am the Son.” Jesus affirms, “I am the Son of God.” Each person of the Trinity, with their specifically affirmed propositions, is a system of propositions.

When the Son of God, became a human, He still retained one nature. What was added was a human mind (with this human mind was added a human body), and this mind was under the control of the divine mind.

Christ is one “person.” He is never said or implied to be a “they,” and he is never portrayed as one person communicating with another person. There is no instance in which Christ the man prays to God the Son, or anything like this. Based on the way that he is referred to, the way that he refers to himself, and the way that he behaves, there is no reason to think that he is not one person.

We add to this “one person” premise the idea that Christ must have two natures, one human and one divine, and then the idea that each nature must include a “mind” that accords with such a nature, one human mind and one divine mind. But on top of all this, if we add the idea that a mind or center of consciousness is necessarily a “person” in itself, we would end up with two persons. However, there is a formulation that retains the view that Christ is one person, with two centers of consciousness. As indicated, the need to arrive at this formulation is not arbitrary, but necessitated by the biblical data.

This formulation begins with the definition that a “person” is a “system” of consciousness, not a “center” of consciousness. Each system can either contain only one center of consciousness or multiple centers of consciousness. At the

¹⁵⁴ I do not feel it is necessary to write this Jesus Christ section, since the basic information I would write, would be very close to Vincent’s. Thus, other than a summary of the information, I will expound on a few points that flow with the specific argument(s) I have been making and focusing on in this book.

¹⁵⁵ I sometime use the term “nature” (divine nature), but when I do, I do not mean personality, but essence.

incarnation, God the Son took up a human mind in such a manner that the human mind is contained by the divine mind, but not mingled or confused with it. The divine mind would have access to and control over the human mind, but not vice versa. Since there is nothing inherently impossible about this, and if it accommodates the biblical data, this would make it a good formulation...

... We can return to the case of a man with multiple personalities to illustrate why it makes sense to define a person as a mental system. He has more than one center of consciousness, but he is still one person, because the multiple centers of consciousness come under one overarching one. (We are speaking relatively, because the only reason that counts is that God regards him as one person, and saves or damns him as one person.) The personalities do not exist independently, and they could be destroyed without killing the man and without erasing the prime personality, and so his personalities should be taken as a whole — thus a “system.”

The Trinity is not this way, since the members of the Trinity could be and must be distinguished in a different way than multiple personalities within one human person. The three are presumably not dependent on one another in the way that the secondary personalities of a person with multiple personalities would depend on the original personality.

There are three systems working in unison, each possessing the fullness of deity. Each of these systems presumably has only one personality. God the Son took up a human center of consciousness, but without it confusing or mingling with the divine consciousness. So in the Trinity as such, there remains only three centers of consciousness, since the human nature of Christ was never deified.

In this way, the definition of a person as a system at the same time accommodates the nature of the Trinity and the nature of Christ — one essence, three persons, even though the person of the Son has both a divine nature and a human nature.¹⁵⁶

Now we proceed to define who is Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, and He came to earth clothing Himself in humanity.

1In the beginning was the [LOGIC], and the [LOGIC] was with God, and the [LOGIC] was God.

2This one was in the beginning with God.

3All things came into being through him, and apart from him not one thing came into being that has come into being.

4In him was life, and the life was the light of humanity.

5And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not [understand]¹⁵⁷ it.

¹⁵⁶ Vincent Cheung, “One Person, Two Natures.” From the ebook, *Sermonettes Vol. 2015*. Pages 59-60.

¹⁵⁷ The LEB footnote on this term,

“Or “comprehend” (if primarily referring to people in the world).”

6A man came, sent from God, whose name was John.

7This one came for a witness, in order that he could testify about the light, so that all would believe through him.

8That one was not the light, but came in order that he could testify about the light.

9The true light, who gives light to every person, was coming into the world.

10He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, and the world did not recognize him.

11He came to his own things, and his own people did not receive him.

12But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God,

13who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a husband, but of God.

14And the Word became flesh and took up residence among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the one and only from the Father, full of grace and truth,”

(John 1:1–14 (LEB))¹⁵⁸

Jesus was the “Word,” or a better translation would be “Wisdom” or “Reason,” although “Logic” is as acceptable as “the Word.”

The Greek word “LOGOS” is where we get our word for “logic.” The translations and commentaries, which still suffer from an anti-intellectualism or irrationalism,¹⁵⁹ have a difficult time with this section. The term in the narrow sense is about logic, deductive reasoning such as mathematic ratios and/or wisdom communicated in category sentences. There is some play here in the historical context of the “logos” doctrine from the Greeks, about the logic or order of the universe and the source of this logical ordering. However, since we do not depend on any first principle other than Scripture, and all history is tainted with inductive logic, we will stay with an official defining of the term from the context of the gospel. The term for “Word” is an acceptable if not the best translation, due to its narrow definition—which conveys the truth or understanding communicated; yet, it also means to rationally understand and to communicate a wise or rational understanding of something.

Since both in context of this passage and in the rest of John’s gospel the intellectual and believing topic is emphasized, it would mean “comprehend” (see verse 10). The word for “light” usually means an ethical light or intellectual light. Because the context is Jesus being the “LOGOS” and the world not intellectually understanding who He is, the context would again mean an intellectual light, and the darkness is an intellectual blindness. With an intellectual light being the context, the meaning of verse 5 has double or triple context to mean “understand/comprehend.”

¹⁵⁸ [LOGIC] is by author.

¹⁵⁹ This will be dealt with a little more in the Logic section.

The word “Logic” is about as good as a translation as “Word,” if not better. It does not mean less than Logic. From the context for how John is using it, it means more than just logic or deductive arguments, but not less than. Thus, Christians should not shy away that the “LOGOS” does not mean less than “Jesus is the LOGIC. THE LOGIC WAS GOD. THE LOGIC IS GOD.” Your Jesus and your theology must include this. Jesus is Logic. Jesus is perfect deductive reasoning. Jesus is the law of noncontradiction. Jesus is the law of identity. Jesus is the law of excluded middle. Your Jesus must include this.

The well-known prologue to John’s Gospel may be paraphrased, “In the beginning was Logic, and Logic was with God, and Logic was God.... In logic was life and the life was the light of men.”

This paraphrase-in fact, this translation-may not only sound strange to devout ears, it may even sound obnoxious and offensive. But the shock only measures the devout person’s distance from the language and thought of the Greek New Testament. Why it is offensive to call Christ Logic, when it does not offend to call him a word, is hard to explain. But such is often the case. Even Augustine, because he insisted that God is truth, has been subjected to the anti-intellectualistic accusation of “reducing” God to a proposition. At any rate, the strong intellectualism of the word Logos is seen in its several possible translations: to wit, computation, (financial) accounts, esteem, proportion and (mathematical) ratio, explanation, theory or argument, principle or law, reason, formula, debate, narrative, speech, deliberation, discussion, oracle, sentence, and wisdom.

Any translation of John 1:1 that obscures this emphasis on mind or reason is a bad translation. And if anyone complains that the idea of ratio or debate obscures the personality of the second person of the Trinity, he should alter his concept of personality. In the beginning, then, was Logic.

That Logic is the light of men is a proposition that could well introduce the section after next on the relation of logic to man. But the thought that Logic is God will bring us to the conclusion of the present section. Not only do the followers of Bernard entertain suspicions about logic, but also even more systematic theologians are wary of any proposal that would make an abstract principle superior to God. The present argument, in consonance with both Philo and Charnock, does not do so. The law of contradiction is not to be taken as an axiom prior to or independent of God. The law is God thinking.

For this reason also the law of contradiction is not subsequent to God. If one should say that logic is dependent on God’s thinking, it is dependent only in the sense that it is the characteristic of God’s thinking. It is not subsequent temporally, for God is eternal and there was never a time when God existed without thinking logically. One must not suppose that God’s will existed as an inert substance before he willed to think.

As there is no temporal priority, so also there is no logical or analytical priority. Not only was Logic the beginning, but Logic was God.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Gordon Clark, *God and Logic*.

When I took formal logic at college, it did not matter whether it was basic Classical Logic, Natural Deduction or First Order Predicate logic, all work or do not work based on the foundation of the Laws of contradiction, identity and excluded middle. Thus, for those new to thinking about this, just think about Jesus being defined as logic, as Jesus being the law of contradiction, identity and excluded middle. When God thinks and decrees that “Jesus was born from the virgin Mary,” God does not think or decree the opposite, “Jesus was not born from the virgin Mary.” When God thinks about definitions for His creation, such as grace and works, their identities are constant and definite. If you agree with this, and agree with God always thinking in this rational way, then you already believe that God is Logic. You already believe in the certainty of category deduction, because the laws of Logic is what makes deduction work, alongside mathematics. Thus, there is no room for Christians to be anti-logic; to be anti-logic would be to be anti-God, for then the Trinity would be 15 members for 3 means 19.

But since Jesus is called the Logic and Jesus makes appeals to the law of contradiction to prove His theological points about Scripture, then Christians are under the category of obedience to acknowledge this and believe it.

Therefore, “Reason” (reasoning) or “Wisdom” are better terms that can better incorporate the ideas of both Logic and the Truth of God, and that this wisdom shines out into all the reality, which the Wisdom made. Thus, the whole creation is knit together with rational understanding, and mankind, who is the image of God, is made in the image of the “Wisdom.”

The WISDOM made everything. That is why it looks so ordered and perfect. The WISDOM, when He shines in a soul, intellectually awakens this soul to “understand” God’s truth planted in them, so that it grows and bears the intellectual fruit of faith.

This foundation of Jesus is important, because He is head of the church; He is the Image that God’s chosen ones are created in. Everything else the saints gained from their new creation in Christ is built on this “Logos” foundation. We have already discussed, in the doctrine of man, what intelligence means. We learned the foundation of the Spiritual aspect of man is in this intellectual foundation. This foundation is to have true premises from God’s revelation and logically apply them to the world and oneself.

Jesus’ ability to think in this spiritual and intelligent way, is freely given to the saints, so that Paul says we “have the mind of Christ.” Christ’s ability to be Spiritual and intelligent becomes the Saints’ ability to be Spiritual and intellectual. This is made reality by the Spirit of God poured into the saints and the “truth”; however, there is a particular emphasis on the “truth” of all the good things freely given them.

This theme we will see more and more. God’s ability becomes the Saints’ ability. The realm of possibilities that are possible by God’s ability, becomes the saints’ realm of possibilities. The power of God becomes the saints’ power. As Jesus was anointed by the Spirit with power to do His ministry, the saints’ have the same Spirit given to them to minister in the same power of Christ, with the one exception that Jesus promises they will have even greater power for miracles than Himself. Super humble people have a problem with this, but since super humble people never receive God’s salvation, let us leave them to their religious masochism, for it is all they will receive in this life or the next.

This Logos of intellectual light and wisdom that made and logically ordered the whole future of the reality, is the logos that John says became flesh and stepped into the world He made. John says He was full of “truth” and “unmerited favor.” These themes of truth and grace will repeat themselves in John’s gospel, and the conclusion John gives is for us to believe in God’s Son and be saved. It is also said that Jesus was the only begotten of the Father. Thus, Jesus is the only immutable, eternal Son of God.

The Wisdom became flesh. Jesus was born from the virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit. The announcements of the angels at His birth declared Him to be “the Christ,” “Savior,” and “Lord.” They also declared on the basis of His birth two other things: 1 “glory to God in the highest,” and 2 “peace and goodwill to men.” That is, Jesus’ birth gives way to doxology and praise. It also gives to the elect, goodwill and peace.

Christology,

I dislike having to give this note of warning on such a wonderful topic and focus, but it needs to be said. The forceful way some people use the hermeneutic and focus of Christ-o-centric, or Christ-centered or the redemptive historical reading of scripture is wrong and heretical. For some people the bible is not Christ-centered enough for them. As odd as it sounds, Christ is not Christ centered enough for them. And so they invent man-made theories to force most or all of the bible to be Christ-centered in a way that the bible is not. By doing this they exalt themselves and exalt man focused theories over the scripture and how the bible interprets itself.

This is pathetic, because when reading the bible with a redemptive historical approach, in a correct way, it can yield some beautiful insights. However, if you take it too far you end up making Jesus and the Father fight one another, and cause the scripture to devour itself. It is a man-centered invitation for how to be Christ-centered. And so the whole thing is a man-centered theology.

For example the story of David and Goliath is not mainly about Jesus and His defeat of sin and death. This passage is not Christ-o-centric. There can be an additional insight taken from this story about Jesus and His defeat of sin, but it does not replace the original story as the main thing. Because the bible teaches us to moralize the bible for ourselves, then an additional insight or application of this story is to inspire us to use courageous faith to defeat Goliaths in our lives; however, this is not the main point.

There is an important reason for why this story is the main story and why there are grave consequences if you try to make the Christ-o-centric the main thing. David prays to God (a Word of Faith Confession), and thus, God is already the main power and author in the story. David even says by his actions everyone will know there is a God in Israel. The point of the story is for all to know there is a God who has chosen Israel. Now, carefully think about the implication if you were saying that a story where God is already the main power and author, is not the main story, but Jesus is, because Jesus is more central and important.

The implication is that God is not the main thing, but rather God is. It is contradictory nonsense. Or, God the Father is not the main thing, but Jesus is. This is blasphemy. This is to make the scripture devour and fight itself. This story with David and Goliath is a story already about God. You cannot therefore make it more God-centered. It is already God-centered to the max. A story where God is already the main author. His displayed power does not need your help to make it more God-centered. A story where God is already the main author and power does not need your help by allegorizing God into it, as if God was not already there.

If a person did not already see God as the main author and power of this story, then I understand why they would feel the need to allegorize God into the story by making it Christ-centered. They are reading the story as if they are an atheist. God is not there and so they need to allegorize God into a story where God is not present. This happens because their Christ-o-centric theories have become so all consuming that when they read the bible they do not even recognize the Father or the Spirit. They do not see God already in the passages, and so they need to allegorize Jesus into it so that the passage now becomes God-centered.

Vincent Cheung even noticed a pastor bragging about this.

“A well-known pastor and professor was teaching a group of children something about biblical theology. They came upon a passage in which Christ performed a healing miracle. The pastor persisted with one of the children until the poor thing finally surrendered to the interpretation that the passage was not about the healing miracle, but about Jesus Christ. But the passage was already about Jesus. Why did the pastor forbid the child’s initial understanding? The advocates of biblical theology and the redemptive-historical approach are fond of boasting that they find Jesus on every page of the Bible. The problem was that this particular page revealed Jesus Christ the healer, and as one who would heal those who ask by faith. You see, this is what the theologians resent. This is the thing that the pastor and professor refused to permit. He had to destroy it before faith in this Jesus grew in the heart of the child. He had to murder this Jesus before he could take root in the next generation. And so he did it. And then he wrote a book and boasted about it. But Jesus said that someone like this should go kill himself (Matthew 18:6).

He claimed a miracle is only a “sign” that points to Jesus Christ. But which Christ? What does the sign tell us about this Christ? Does the sign “Christ is a healer” point to a Christ who is not a healer? Does the sign “Christ heals those who come in faith” point to a Christ who does not heal those who come in faith? How do you pull this off? Magic! What would a sign have to say to actually tell you that “Christ is a healer” and “Christ heals those who come in faith”? You just won’t let it happen, will you? You will allow Christ to be only that one thing about him you still believe in and nothing else. You will let Christ be only as big as your microscopic faith, instead of increasing your faith to embrace all of Christ. When the Bible reveals a Christ that is bigger than your faith, you cry heresy. This is what you mean by Christ-centered, but you make everything, including Jesus himself, centered on what you decide...”¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ Vincent Cheung. All Things Are Yours. Sermonettes Vol.9. 2016. Pg. 16-17

The issue with their Christ-o-centric theory is that the Father, the Spirit, the Scripture, and even Jesus Christ Himself are not Christ-centered enough. The scripture is not God-centered or Christ-centered enough for them. Jesus is not Christ-centered enough for them, and so they end up correcting Jesus by allegorizing passages directly about Jesus to not be about Jesus and what Jesus is doing and teaching, but instead be about Jesus. Nonsense. This nonsense occurs because they have a version of Jesus they like and allegorize all scripture, even Jesus and His own words into this version.

Christ-o-centric theology has become a smoke-screen to allow elites to practice liberal theology by covering it up with the most gospel sounding words possible. They have a doctrine of Jesus that is liberated from the confinement of scripture. They do not like the Christ that the scriptures reveal and so they create a false doctrine of Christ and then force the entire bible into this false doctrine of Jesus. They call it Christ-o-centric and then accuse others for not being Christ-centered when they do not adhere to this anti-Christ version of Jesus they allow. They are the worst of the worst of religious elites.

A Jesus who says, “your faith saved you” (regarding forgiveness of sin) and “your faith healed you,” is a Jesus that they cannot allow to live. If I teach on these verses, then I will get corrected by them, saying I am too man-centered. Since this is a direct teaching from Jesus’, they are correcting Him not me. And if they think, if they were put back in Jesus’ time that they would not correct Him, then they are delusional. They would correct Him with great zeal. Since Jesus is the main protagonist of His own existence, then Jesus serving man, healing man and praising man for their faith, is as Christ-centered as it gets. It is already Jesus to the max. It is already Christ-centered on steroids. The issue for many, is that the Jesus revealed by scripture is a Jesus they hate.

At that time the argument seemed so pious. The church had strayed from the path by paying too much attention to men, holding services for healing, prosperity and marriage, when the purpose of worship should be the glory of God, not the needs of men.

Liturgical music should talk less about us, and more about God and Christ. Preaching should be focused on the person and work of Christ, and not on our instruction for healing and prosperity, for example.

Men need to be degraded and humiliated. God should be the only one to receive glory. That was the message.

It was through Vincent Cheung's writings that I began to realize the hypocrisy of these people. To paraphrase, if you are more Christ-centered than JESUS Himself, then this whole time you have been only self-centered, and still marveling at being so Christ-centered!...

When a church holds an event to restore marriages or heal the sick. The immediate purpose of such meetings is to use divine resources to meet human needs, and in this sense it seems that God is being used as a springboard.

However, since people are being saved by divine means rather than by human tools, it is clear that the meetings are theocentric. They would be completely man-centered if psychology were used to heal relationships and medicine to heal bodies.

Because it is the wisdom and power of God that is in action — exactly as God wants it to be — it is not God who is being used, it is he who uses human needs and the activities of the church as a springboard to magnify his attributes and results in the world.

Christocentrism is a hermeneutical and liturgical principle that lacks a biblical basis. Nothing in the Bible suggests that the word of God should be interpreted in a Christocentric way or that everything in worship should be Christocentric. The Bible is messianic, not Christocentric. Some things in it are about Christ, others are not. It is not correct to say that Jesus is the subject of the Bible, if by that we mean that every sentence in the Book is about him. It isn't, and we don't need to pretend it is. Some sentences, paragraphs, chapters and even books are not about him — although they can be read in his light and may contain specific references to him, whether literal or figurative. For the Bible to be Christocentric to the standard demanded by those who make a big deal about this need, it would have to be a book about Christ and not about us, but the Bible is a book about us too, therefore, it is not Christocentric. Defenders of Christocentrism consider it Christocentric only because they distort it to fit their standards..

This shows that Psalm 24 is not Christocentric. The second part can be taken as referring to Jesus Christ, but in the poem as a whole Jesus shares space with the believer. The Christocentric preacher was forced to distort the passage so that the man would not have space in his exposition. In the process he ended up saying that God's people are made up of people with dirty hands, impure hearts, who turn to other gods and swear by idols. This is probably true of him and those who approve of him, but it is not true of anyone who actually belongs to God's people.

Advocates of this principle are often eager to humiliate man, even man who has already believed in Christ. They say, for example, that the believer's righteousness is like filthy rags, and that our best works are nothing. However, the Bible says that we do good works by the power of Christ and the Holy Spirit. When they denigrate our good works, they are attacking the righteousness that God produces in us. In their zeal to offend man they end up offending God....¹⁶²

From our first passage in Colossians 2 we read what it means for Jesus to be God; it means just as the Father created all things, it is equally true for Him; all things were created by Jesus. All things were created by Jesus. All things were created for Jesus. All things are upheld into being by the Son of God. Interestingly, right after saying all things were created by and “FOR” the Son of God, the next section says Jesus is the

¹⁶² Gabriel Arauto. Translated to English by Google Translate.

head of the church, the first born from the dead, so that He will have supremacy in all things. Thus, we see Jesus as the savior. As the Hero of the church through destroying death, sin and Satan, He becomes the public, central-axis of praise and preeminence. This passage gives us a quick overview of the decrees of God, from the perspective of Christology as the focus.

In summary of the decrees in Christology:

God decreed His Son to be the public supremacy for all reality. In this “public” audience there is an elect people that will understand and enjoy Jesus’ supremacy the best. God decided that Jesus’ supremacy is the foundation of life and redemption to a group of chosen ones. He will destroy their enemies of death, sin and Satan. God then decrees not to save a group called the reprobates, so that by their destruction they are the disposable diaper to show how great God’s lovingkindness is to the Elect. To get this plan into place God decrees the fall of man. And lastly, Jesus (with the Trinity) created reality to set the whole plan into motion.

Thus, even back at the beginning of history, God promises Jesus will be the hero that destroys the serpent and the curse of death. This starts both the story of the person of Christ and the promises contained in Him. It also starts the story of God’s chosen ones, who by faith overcome the world, death and sin. There are many Christ-o-centric themes that are not about invisible spiritual focuses. Such passages about Jesus’ healing on the demand of man’s faith, is about Jesus’ healing man on the demand of his faith, and not about forgiveness.

Since we have introduced the importance of the primordial doctrine of faith in the section on “man,” it seems relevant to focus on Jesus’ birth and its connection to faith, since the Bible does so.

And Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years.” And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands before God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time.”

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David,³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of His kingdom.”³⁴ But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren.³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, the slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah,⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ And it happened that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴² And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!⁴³ And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me?⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

MARY MAGNIFIES THE LORD

46 And Mary said:

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
For He has looked upon the humble state of His slave,
For behold, from this time on, all generations will count me blessed.
For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
And holy is His name.
And His mercy is upon generation after generation
Toward those who fear Him.
He has done a mighty deed with His arm;
He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones,
And has exalted those who were humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
And sent away the rich empty-handed.
He has given help to Israel His servant,
In remembrance of His mercy,
As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and his seed forever."

And Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY

And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For He visited and accomplished redemption for His people,
And raised up a horn of salvation for us
In the house of David His servant—
As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old—
Salvation from our enemies,
And from the hand of all who hate us,
To show mercy toward our fathers,
And to remember His holy covenant,
The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,
To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies,
Might serve Him without fear,
In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,

For you will go on before the Lord to make ready His ways,
To give to His people the knowledge of salvation
By the forgiveness of their sins,
Because of the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,
To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To direct our feet into the way of peace.”

(Luke 1: 18-20, 31-56, 67-79 LSB)

Luke spends a decent amount of real-estate to show the doubt of Zechariah contrasted with the faith of Mary. Zechariah’s mouth was cursed to not speak after speaking a word of unbelief. Mary was the opposite of this. She spoke of word of belief and God opened up her mouth to sing a song of praise, which was theologically packed with truth for such a young girl. She was filled with wonder and joy, and even those around her were filled with joy and the Spirit, when they came close to her.

As shown by the garden, this is what we expect from the legacy of faith and unbelief. The promise from the Garden said Jesus is the hero for mankind, but not for all mankind in the broadest sense, but for the part of mankind that would have faith in Him. Fast forward thousands of years later, and even before Jesus is born, the first chronological highlight the Scripture gives us in the incarnation of God’s son, is a lesson of faith versus unbelief. The promised Hero is here, and He will divide the world by those who believe and those who do not. It is encouraging to see that even when one has doubts, like Zechariah, one can correct themselves and mature their faith in God’s promise. Let us do the same, by not making excuses, but maturing our faith to receive the promises of God, no matter how great and awesome they are.

God’s Contract With Man

Both Zechariah and Mary mentioned God being faithful to this promise to Abraham. This is significant.

The promise to Abraham is important, because, unlike the Mosaic law, which was only a temporary addition—that has already been fulfilled and removed—the promise to Abraham is both a continuation of the promise to Adam, and through the atonement of Christ—rather than removing or fulfilling the promise of Abraham—by grace it transfers us into the promise of Abraham, so that we are continually effected by its eternal blessing.

To show the importance of the Abraham Contract let us consider what is said at the beginning of Acts. Luke records

During the forty days after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized with^[b] water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
(Acts 1:1-8 NLT)

“I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ.

But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith,”
(Galatians 3:5, 13-15 NLT)

“And this woman, who is a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan bound eighteen^[a] long years—is it not necessary that she be released from this bond on the day of the Sabbath?”
(Luke 13:16 LEB)

Luke tells us the risen Jesus Christ had a focus to His teaching during the forty days He appeared to the disciples. This focus was not on the “finished atonement,” or on “justification by faith” etc.; rather, the focus was on “the kingdom.” We see Jesus defining this doctrine by His command for the disciples to be baptized in the Spirit for power. This heavenly power will enable them to advance the kingdom. The Book of Acts, which has Luke as the same author, continues to define, what being baptized in the Spirit is, and how this power expanded the Kingdom of God. It was not mere evangelism, or preaching that advanced the Kingdom of God; rather, just like with Jesus who was anointed by the Spirit (casting out demons, healing the sick, healing the sick, healing the sick, prophesying, resurrecting the dead). Jesus baptizes His disciples with the same Spirit so that they follow in His footsteps. That is, the way Jesus expanded the Kingdom is how Jesus commands us to expand the Kingdom. This is how Luke defines Jesus’ teaching on “the Kingdom” and how we expand it. Any deviation from this is rebellion and disobedience.

This Abrahamic blessing also helps us to see the context of eschatology. The gospel is “x,” and this “x” empowers us to expand the kingdom of Jesus, as Jesus sits on His eternal throne. This x is the baptism of the Spirit. The point of interest is that Paul says the baptism of the Spirit and miracles is the blessing of Abraham. The blessing of Abraham, is the power that enables us to expand His kingdom. Paul puts the Spirit and miracles together, and so we know he has power and miracles in mind when speaking of the baptism of the Spirit. But if we go back and read all the good blessings God promised Abraham, it included all sorts of favors and miracles such as health,

wealth, fame, abundance, favor, military victories and etc. Thus, eschatology is in one sense the church walking in the full blessing of Abraham and by this expanding the kingdom for Jesus. We expand the kingdom and take ground away from the enemy by an onslaught of miracles, goodies and blessings, in a similar way Abraham did.

God's contract with Abraham. In the Gospel of Luke, we see Jesus saying it was "necessary" for this daughter of Abraham to be healed on the Sabbath. Two things. First it was connected to "Abraham's blessing" (daughter of Abraham) and not to the Mosaic Contract or to His atonement, or to the New Covenant or something like that. Second, it was "necessary" that it be done. If one understands what a contract or covenant is, then it is obvious why Jesus said it was "necessary" for God to perform something. God is the only being with free will and absolute power. If it is necessary for Him to do something for us, it is because He promised to do so. It is necessary for truth to be truth. It is good for truth to always be truth. God made promises and so it is necessary for truth to be truth; it is necessary for God to do what He said. It is necessary for the Logic to always be Logic. Or to say it another way, God is God, and He does not change. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The gentile woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter of demon possession, Jesus said only Israel was included in His ministry. He said it is morally wrong to take bread that belongs to one person and then give it to someone else. Take notice of the presuppositions Jesus is using. He is presupposing that healing and casting out demons is "bread" and it rightfully belongs to children of Abraham (Israelites). That is, healing is not the special ice cream the child gets once a week; rather, it is the daily supply that is contained in the blessing God promised to Abraham.

Therefore, even without spiritual gifts, and even if you deny healing is directly tied into the atonement (Isaiah 53:4-5), the ancient contract God has with Abraham makes it "necessary" that you get healing when you have faith. Of course, those who fight God will make God's contract to Abraham to stop, just like they do with faith, the baptism of the Spirit, the gifts and everything else. But if you have one drop of faith, then have some respect for God's contract to Abraham. Take this way of escaping and begin to believe for your healing today. Use this as a catalyst to begin to believe in all the promises and blessings of God. It is necessary for God to give you these blessings and bread, if you only believe.

As for the passage in Galatians, Paul argues the gentiles receive the Holy Spirit (which refers to the baptism of the Spirit, see Acts 19:2-5) and miracles because of Abraham's blessing, and not directly by atonement of Jesus. Paul argues that Jesus' atonement grafts us into the blessing of Abraham, already established by God's contract. The atonement of Jesus provides the doorway of grace and mercy, which qualifies us to receive this ancient contract. His atonement does not replace or fulfill it; rather, it qualifies us to receive this contract that is already eternal and established in ancient times. God swore by Himself, as Hebrews 6 reminds us. What God swore by Himself to do, was not directly about forgiveness or the atonement. It was about all the favor and blessings (health and wealth) He promised to Abraham and his children. He will do what He promised Abraham. It does not matter how awesome the blessings are, God will perform what He promised.

Thus, our ability to obey the command of Jesus Christ to expand His Kingdom, as defined by Acts, is directly tied to the blessing promised in the Abrahamic Contract.

Christian application for eschatology and expansion is directly tied to God's promise to Abraham. Obviously, this is foundational.

Our daily bread to receive healings and miracles is directly tied to God's promise to Abraham. This again, is foundational.

In addition to this, Paul defines the foundation of the doctrine of "righteousness" based on God's engagement with Abraham. Thus, Paul's understanding and the law of first mention puts being declared righteous with Abraham; this again is foundational.

I Am your Exceedingly Great Reward, Righteousness

Allow me to introduce you to the doctrine of righteousness, as the Scripture introduces it, and not how tradition does. There is some historical reasons why "justification by faith," is stated as it is, but that is just it, it's not stated how Scripture does it. Let that sink in. Because of this, the doctrine is often distorted, sometime beyond recognition. The Reformed are found of their doctrine, justification by faith, but this is a narrow doctrine—in scope of the whole gospel—albite a very important one. Their fanboyish love for man and the past, has led them to soil this beautiful rug, like a dog making its territory. Let us rather, learn this doctrine how the bible itself introduces it, and expands on it. Let us not define such important doctrines such as the gospel, by man's love for man, and history; rather, through submitting to the scripture as our only starting point for knowledge, let us learn the definitions of reality. *"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path,"* (Psalm 119:105 NLT).

Romans 4 (NLT)

The Faith of Abraham

4 Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What did he discover about being made right with God? 2 If his good deeds had made him acceptable to God, he would have had something to boast about. But that was not God's way. 3 For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith."

4 When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. 5 But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners. 6 David also spoke of this when he described the happiness of those who are **declared righteous**¹⁶³ without working for it:

7 "Oh, what joy for those
whose disobedience is forgiven,
whose sins are put out of sight.

8 Yes, what joy for those
whose record the Lord has cleared of sin."

¹⁶³ Boldface mine.

9 Now, is this blessing only for the Jews, or is it also for uncircumcised Gentiles? Well, we have been saying that Abraham was counted as righteous by God because of his faith. 10 But how did this happen? Was he counted as righteous only after he was circumcised, or was it before he was circumcised? Clearly, God accepted Abraham before he was circumcised!

11 Circumcision was a sign that Abraham already had faith and that God had already accepted him and declared him to be righteous—even before he was circumcised. So Abraham is the spiritual father of those who have faith but have not been circumcised. They are counted as righteous because of their faith. 12 And Abraham is also the spiritual father of those who have been circumcised, but only if they have the same kind of faith Abraham had before he was circumcised.

13 Clearly, **God's promise to give the whole earth** to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God's law, [but on God declaring one righteous because of their faith].¹⁶⁴ 14 If God's promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary and the promise is pointless. 15 For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!)

16 So the **promise** is received by faith. It is given as a **free gift**. And we are all certain to **receive it**, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have **faith like Abraham's**. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. 17 That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.

18 Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, "That's how many descendants you will have!" 19 And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah's womb.

20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, **his faith grew stronger**, and in this he brought glory to God. 21 He was fully convinced that **God is able to do whatever he promises**. 22 And **because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous**. 23 And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded 24 **for our benefit, too**, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.

Let us review what God promised to Abraham, when God "declared him righteous." Paul, uses the principle of first mentions here in this passage, by bringing up the account of Abraham. He does something similar in Galatians by reminding us that

¹⁶⁴ [] my translation, since I felt the NLT paraphrased too far on this part.

Abraham's promise was before the law, and that Jesus' substitutionary atonement grafts us into this promise of Abraham. What did God promise Abraham, when he believed? When the doctrine of God declaring people righteous by faith was established, what were the doctrines being believed?

Paul in this passage mentions a portion of this promise, by saying God promised to multiply his children (starting with his own) as the stars. Paul also states that God promised to give the world to him and his descendants. The whole world! Well, that escalated quickly.

(Genesis 12:1–2 LEB).

“And Yahweh said to Abram, “Go out from your land and from your relatives, and from the house of your father, to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make **you** a great nation, and I will bless **you**, and I will make **your** name great. And **you** will be a blessing.””

Genesis 15 NIV

1 After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield, **your very great reward.**”

... 5 He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “**So shall your offspring be.**”

6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

14 “...But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions.”

Genesis 17 NLT

... 4 “This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! 5 What’s more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham, for you will be **the father of many nations.** 6 I will make you **extremely fruitful.** Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!

7 “I will confirm my **covenant with you and your descendants** after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: **I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you.**”¹⁶⁵

Paul says the Scripture recorded this as an example for the gentiles, because we are declared righteous and receive the same blessing on the same type of faith that Abraham had, who is the father of faith.

¹⁶⁵ Boldface is mine in these 3 passages.

There are 3 main places God promises to Abraham. If we were to go by the religious elite, these promises appear man centered. God does NOT promise to establish Himself with a great name, no, He promises to make Abraham's name great. Moreover, God does not promise to make Himself a blessing, but to make Abraham a blessing. Furthermore, God does not promise to make Himself a great nation, no, God promises to make Abraham a great nation. Lastly, God does not promise to bless Himself, no, He promises to bless Abraham. This is said without any mention of sin or forgiveness.¹⁶⁶

In the second encounter, which is still a continuation and reaffirming of the first, God promised to protect and to be Abraham's exceedingly great reward; lastly, God promises to make his descendants as abundant as the stars. There is no mention of sins or forgiveness. Abraham believed God would do what He promised, in that God would protect him, bless him, make him wealthy, favor him and give him super abundant children and give the world to him. God then declares Abraham righteous in His sight.

These promises of blessings and favor is God's salvation to Abraham. He is taking Abraham from his childless, pagan home and giving him wealth, fame, health and one miracle after another.

God promises again to give super abundant descendants and then we hear for the first time the phrase "I will be your God," and also to his descendants. In the temporary covenant with Moses and then again restated in the permanent covenant in Jesus' blood we get further insight what "I will be your God means." However, here in the first mention of the doctrine, it is defined as God giving Abraham incalculable descendants, the world (as Paul says), blessings, favor and rewards.

Summary:

God: "Abraham, I will bless you, I will make you wealthy and prosperous, I will give you supernatural health, I will highly favor you in all things, I will exalt your name before the world, I will give you a son and love your children as I loved you."

Abraham: "OK, I believe You are able."

God stands up in Heaven, points His finger at Abraham and declares:

Righteousness.

This is the biblical doctrine of God declaring His chosen ones "righteous" in His sight. God is not rewarding righteousness because He believed, as if believing was a work,

¹⁶⁶ Although I have heard other people mention the importance of Abraham, such as Oral Roberts (mentioning Abraham's promise means healing as bread in the example of the gentile women), but it was Vincent who help me the most to understand this doctrine, and must give credit to him. I would recommend his essay, "Edge of Glory."

but giving Abraham the additional unmerited gift of righteousness, because he believed God is faithful to perform all the health and wealth He promised Abraham.

There is a presupposition behind this, which is the connection that Abraham was not declared righteous by God, but now is. The presupposition deals with the doctrine of our standing before God.¹⁶⁷ If we are not righteous in God's sight, then we are unrighteous in His sight. The law of exclusion is in play here because man is under the law of God. Since God is the Almighty, and the source of all things, then for Him to declare someone righteous in His sight is important.

Christianity is a positive doctrine, not negative. Therefore even with being declared righteous, the first mention of it is a positive one. God promises an over-the-top, excessive abundance, wealth, health, protection, blessings and even the world. After these good promises, God then declares a man righteous in His sight, because he believed God would do it. Because our sin was in the way, then sin must be dealt with, but sin is not the focus, God's good promise of blessings and faithfulness to do it, is. This is where many make mistakes in how they focus on parts of the bible and what they focus on when they preach. Those who mock the health and wealth preachers are far more guilty of super-abundantly focusing on sin, sickness and death to the point of being satanic masochists. Their focus on sin, makes sin more central and foundational than God Himself, and more foundational than His promise of blessings for His chosen ones. They do such things to affirm their unbelief and to appear humble in the eyes of the people they want to receive praise from. They have their reward.

God is the foundation for declaring man righteous in context of giving super blessings and rewards; not man, and not man's sin. God is the foundation for everlasting contracts; not man, and not man's sin. God is the foundation for super abundant blessings, health and wealth; not man, and not man's sin.

Vincent Cheung on this subject says,

“God promised that Abraham would have a son, and that his descendants would become numerous like the stars. He promised that he would make his name great. It was not presented as a promise of salvation or justification as such, and it was not a call to suffering discipleship. It was a promise of healing, prosperity, and glory for Abraham. And Abraham was justified by believing in this promise. The sort of message that false teachers call heresy today has been the foundation for the calling of Moses, the coming of Christ, and the salvation of Christians. Abraham recognized that his own body and his wife's body were

¹⁶⁷ “You are nothing but a Canaanite! Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. On the day you were born, no one cared about you. Your umbilical cord was not cut, and you were never washed, rubbed with salt, and wrapped in cloth. No one had the slightest interest in you; no one pitied you or cared for you. On the day you were born, you were unwanted, dumped in a field and left to die.

But I came by and saw you there, helplessly kicking about in your own blood. As you lay there, I said, ‘Live!’ And I helped you to thrive like a plant in the field,”
Ezekiel 16”3-7 NLT.

old and barren, but because God said that he would have a son, natural circumstances became irrelevant. He believed that God was able to perform a miracle of healing.

It would have been redundant to believe that God was willing to do what he said. Of course he was willing — he said it. God said, “Abraham, I have made you the father of nations. You are going to have a son. I will make your name great.” Imagine if Abraham had said, “I know you are able, but are you willing to do it?” This would have made no sense, but somehow it has become a pillar in Christian reasoning. “Well...I just said you are going to have a son.” “Right, I heard you. But are you willing to do it?” Should we treat God like a child? It is even more absurd to focus on the will of God for healing given all that the Bible says about the nature of God, the work of Christ, and the ministry of the apostles and the believers. Even the attempt to demonstrate the will of God for healing seems redundant and ridiculous. Abraham believed that God was able to do this thing that was impossible for human power to accomplish. And that was faith.”¹⁶⁸

The scripture teaches the doctrine of being declared righteous in God’s sight, not in the context of sin or salvation, but of faith to believe God will be faithful to His promise to bestow us with over-the-top blessings, health, wealth and fame. It is interesting how the Scripture in Romans 4:13 interprets its own gospel blessing to Abraham as a promise to give the “whole world” to him! Two important things need to be said here.

One, this remark about the “*gospel blessing*,” was intentional. This again, will likely be a surprise to some, particularly those obsessed with sin more than God Himself. Paul in Galatians 3 says the promise “blessing” to Abraham was the “scripture” preaching the “gospel,” not only to Abraham but to the gentiles. This means that like the doctrine of God declaring people righteous was first introduced without sin, but in context of abundant favor and goodies, it is also with the doctrine of the “gospel.” It is true that what God promised Adam and Eve in the Garden, although vague, is about deliverance and in this sense was a promise of “good news”; however, in referring to the “gospel” in context to how the Scripture interprets itself directly, it is with Abraham the Scripture introduces “the gospel.” The reason for this, is that the children of faith and unbelief are publicly and historically made known with God’s promise to Abraham.¹⁶⁹ Also, not only does the Scripture directly call this blessing the gospel, but it is also in this context that the Scripture uses the principle of first mentions, about the doctrine of God declaring someone righteous in His sight.

Thus, the scripture introduces the doctrine of the “gospel” to Abraham, not in context of sin or justification, but of God giving extraordinary blessings, wealth, health and fame to humans. Let that sink in.

The gospel is “good news” that is “reported” and announced. The gospel, like with everything else about God and His chosen ones, is first and foremost a positive

¹⁶⁸ Vincent Cheung, “Healing: the Will of Man.”

¹⁶⁹ Before Abraham, the children of faith were more random and spread out. There was no definite line or place to show a strong heritage of faith. Even though Israel was marred with unbelief, there was always the remnant of faith in him, as opposed to every other nation on earth that did not even have a small public remnant of faith.

doctrine. It's first announcement is of extraordinary good things for God's chosen ones. Abraham believed this report of good news of blessings, and God declared him righteous for it. For this reason, when the gospel is "mainly" announced to be about sin and forgiveness or only forgiveness, it distorts and even slanders the way the scripture teaches the doctrine. Therefore, the gospel will be defined in this book as, "all the good things that the death and resurrection of Jesus accomplished at that place and time." More will be explained later about this, but you will see how this definition will give proper place for sin and forgiveness (as a free gift blessing), but also strongly focusing on God's super abundant blessings (health, wealth, help and powers), which are freely given to us, not only for the next life, but for this one.

From the beginning the gospel was foundationally an announcement of all the good things God is giving us, which like Abraham, by faith we receive today, and not just for the next life. What if Abraham said, "well, I will receive a child in the next life, so it will be ok." No! If Abraham thought this, there would have been no Isaac. Do not be deceived. To receive these good promises of miracles today in faith, are so important that if you do not receive them, then there is little hope you will find any good thing in the next life. If you are a true child of Abraham, a true child of faith, you will receive your miracles in this life, and then you will have proof that in the next life you will receive heaven itself.

"So again I ask, does God give you his **Spirit and work miracles** among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

So also Abraham "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham.

Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and **announced** the **GOSPEL** in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be **blessed** through you."

So those who rely on faith are **blessed** along with Abraham, the man of faith," (Galatians 3:5-9 (NIV))¹⁷⁰

Because this "blessing of Abraham" (Galatians 3:8) is called by scripture the "gospel" let us read that in the text. Remember a few verses later "the Spirit," was put together with "miracles." Having "the Spirit," refers to the baptism of the Spirit, as Paul refers in Acts 19:2,5. Then in context Paul puts the Spirit and miracles together which also leads to the Spirit meaning, baptism of the Spirit. Paul says the Spirit and miracles is proof the Galatians began in the "message of Christ." Elites would not give miracles and the baptism of the Spirit for proof that a person has received the message of Christ (Acts 2:28-39), but the scripture does.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,"

in order that the "***gospel***" might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus,

¹⁷⁰ Boldface added by author.

so that we might receive the “**gospel**” of the Spirit through faith,”
(Galatians 3:13-14 LEB).

“The gospel” preached to Abraham is defined as receiving the blessings of the Holy Spirit and miracles. Let that sink in. God promising to be Abraham’s exceedingly great reward, means we get the gift of the baptism of the Spirit and miracles, and the Scripture calls this “the gospel.” This is not how most define the gospel. But who is more God-centered, and who is more gospel-centered, some famous theologian or the scripture itself? Interestingly, Paul does not refer to Christ being our curse for us on the cross, as directly the gospel, but as something that makes the gentiles receive the gospel of the Spirit and miracles. It is true that the “gospel” is used in other places as incorporating the whole aspect of Jesus’ substitutionary death and resurrection; however, I point this out to show that the Scripture at times narrowly uses the “gospel” as only its positive blessings, just like it was originally preached to Abraham. That is, the scripture interchanges “the gospel” with “God’s abundant favor.” Here, the “message of Christ”¹⁷¹ is about the substitutionary atonement of Christ, particularly the negative aspect of Jesus becoming our sin, curse and sickness. The “gospel” here is referred to as the positive blessings of God giving the Spirit, miracles and the world to us.¹⁷²

Note the scripture brings up the blessing or gospel of Abraham through scripture. The Exodus rescue was based on this gospel. Isaiah 51 minds Israel to remember they have the gospel of Abraham. This blessing for them meant comfort and turning their wilderness into gardens of Edens.

“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the Lord:
Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.
The Lord will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.
-Isaiah 51:1-3 NLT

Both Marry and Zechariah said Jesus coming as a savior was because God was faithful to His promise to Abraham (Luke 1:44-45, 58-73). Then Jesus said it was necessary for a woman to be healed on the Sabbath because she was a daughter of Abraham. This gospel preached to Abraham was a promise of grace. God cannot lie, because He is truth, He is the logic. And so, it is necessary for God to do all gospel blessings of fame, health, wealth, and glory He promised to Abraham and his children. Jesus did not say he healed the woman because it was a sign. No. He healed her because God is faithful to his promise to Abraham.

This teaching on the gospel also condemns cessationists 1000x over. Paul narrowly uses the “gospel” to only refer to the blessing of the baptism of the Spirit and working

¹⁷¹ In 3:1-2 the message Paul referred to was about the “crucifixion of Jesus.”

¹⁷² I can count on one hand how many times I have heard preachers use the terms gospel and message of Christ the way Paul uses them here.

miracles. Therefore, those who resist the baptism of the Spirit (as defined by Acts) and working miracles, are those who fight against God's promise to Abraham; they fight against the gospel. Cessationist rather than being gospel-centered, are gospel enemies and blasphemers. They are gospel haters. The gospel is not even in the picture for them. They are centered on something, but it is not the gospel. However, as I think about it, there was a group in the New Testament, of spiritual beings and men who tried to stop this gospel of the baptism of the Spirit and miracles. They were "gospel-centered," but only in the sense they were centered on destroying it. So in a sense cessationists are "gospel-centered."

The second point that needs to be addressed is Paul summing up the blessing of Abraham, as God "giving him the world." In Galatians the blessing of Abraham is called the gospel, and Paul boils it down to receiving the baptism of the Spirit and miracles. Here in Romans 4 Paul boils down the promises of God to Abraham as God giving the "whole world" to him. Both are true, correct, and together they broadly incorporate the favor of God given to His chosen ones. As for the gospel of the Spirit and miracles, we see God being our Exceedingly Great Reward in the spiritual and material sense.

Recall an earlier doctrine; we went over how man's image is intellectual and spiritual. We discussed this from 1 Corinthians chapter 2. Through the Spirit, who alone knows God, we who are given the Spirit, have the "Mind of Christ." In the baptism of the Spirit and miracles, this intellectual and spiritual image becomes so infused with God like power, that it becomes more than an internal spiritual reality, it becomes an outward world effecting power. God's intellectual and Spiritual glory is so overflowing with power, that it is the sole cause of reality. As image bearers, we also reflect this image of God in us. God is such an exceeding great reward for His chosen ones, that He spares no expense. He gives us the "Mind of Christ," and unlike Zeus who would never let a person even think about borrowing his lightning bolt, God gives us His lightning bolt to wield as our own.

Jesus overcame the world, and with our faith in Him, "we" wielding God's power overcome the world. This is the legacy of God's children. The same love the Father loves the Son, the Son asks the Father to love us with. We are made one with God, by His unmeasurable favor that He has for the Son, He pours in and all around us. Thus, whether it is the image of God's intelligence, God gives us His intelligence, or whether it is God's power, He gives us His power. When God said we are recreated in the image of Jesus Christ, it is correct definition of reality, and not a mere metaphor. There is no one who gives like God. If He gave His Son to save us from our sins, then how much MORE will He freely give us all things in Jesus? Who can measure such lavish and generous giving?

Paul sums up Abraham's blessing as God giving the whole world to Abraham. The brief history of this is simple. The world was originally made for man. God gave it to Adam. God gave dominion for creation to Adam. God did not name the animals, Adam did. When Adam sinned, this dominion was taken from man and given to Satan, on the relative level, not ultimate. When the devil tempted Jesus, he said all this was given to him, referring to aspects of the earth and human establishments. He is called the prince of the air. This was not true before Adam's fall, because Adam had dominion. After Jesus' resurrection He says to the disciples, "All authority has been given to Me," (Matt.28:18). But there is more to this. Jesus has extended this authority

to His followers. Jesus as a man, has regained the dominion lost to Adam and gained much more, for He rules at the right hand of the Power. However, this lost dominion did not begin with Jesus, but in Abraham. In God's gospel promised to Abraham, God began to give back dominion to man. This is why Paul says the world was given to Abraham. In Isaiah 5:1-3 God reminds Abraham's children (those who seek righteousness) to remember they were cut from Abraham and because of this He would make their wastelands turn into the garden of Eden. In the blessing of Abraham, the fruitfulness and dominion of the world was given back to God's chosen ones.

Recall our earlier circle diagram from 1 Corinthians 3. Paul says the world belongs to God, but they world also belongs to the saints. God puts "the world," as a smaller category, inside the larger category of "His children." The world, the past and present, the future, and all things belong to God's children. Understanding God's giving nature, why should any saint have any hesitation to affirm and believe that God would create and give the whole world to His chosen ones? Who could doubt this but the unbelieving and wicked? As said before, this was how Satan tempted Eve; as if God was somehow holding back on her. To disbelieve and not enjoy the good things God has so graciously given us, is what led man into sin to begin with. If you have the smallest hesitation to believe and receive all the great things God has given to you, in this life, is at the same time leaving the door open for Satan to tempt and destroy you. God as given you His Mind, His Power and the wealth of reality, and if you disbelieve it, Satan will come along and say, "look at all the things you don't have, and all those things you can't have." He will tempt you to acquire God's freely given things, by a malfunctioned and intellectually delusional way. You will live a lie, a fallacy and become wicked. Do not allow yourself to be such easy prey. Rather, receive from God all that He has given you, and expand the Kingdom of God with truth, power and resources. Become Jacob who possess his possessions. "*And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions,*" (Obadiah 1:17 NKJV)

Considering what God promised Abraham in being his exceedingly great reward (giving the world to him), Abraham became financially filthy wealthy, had a wife so physically beautiful that kings wanted her (70 years old) for their Harlem, defeated 4 kingdoms and their armies, supernatural had children beyond what natural bodies can do and prospered in all that he did. He became famous, even among kings. This is what it meant for God to be Abraham's God, and Abraham to be His son, in relation to reality. Reality is freely given to Abraham to bless and prosper him. It is true the "fullness" or completeness of this promise is realized after Jesus' second coming; however, the point here is to state what is available in this life, which is the life we are currently existing in.

The temporary contract with Moses in the law, also restated what this blessing of "*God being our God, and we His people,*" looks like, if the *law if perfectly kept*. Of course, in Jesus Christ, the law is perfectly kept. Thus, we who are Christians receive the blessings of that law; although what is really happening, is that this favor is originally the unmerited and eternal blessing promised to Abraham from ancient times, which the atonement of Jesus grafts us into.

"I will give you peace in the land, and you will be able to sleep with no cause for fear. I will rid the land of wild animals and keep your enemies out of your land. In fact, you will chase down your enemies and slaughter them with your

swords. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand! All your enemies will fall beneath your sword.

“I will look favorably upon you, making you fertile and multiplying your people. And I will fulfill my covenant with you. You will have such a surplus of crops that you will need to clear out the old grain to make room for the new harvest! I will live among you, and I will not despise you. I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so you would no longer be their slaves. I broke the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk with your heads held high,”
(Lev. 26:6:13 NLT)

Jesus, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and perfect faith in the word of God, asked and multiplied five loaves of bread to feed 5,000 men (not including women and children). There was such a “surplus” of food, they had to gather large baskets, in order to hold all the extra. There was such a surplus of the power of the Spirit given to the church that people would try to let their shadows touch them, so that they might be healed of sickness and demons. “The apostles were performing many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers were meeting regularly at the Temple in the area known as Solomon’s Colonnade. But no one else dared to join them, even though all the people had high regard for them. Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord—crowds of both men and women. As a result of the apostles’ work, sick people were brought out into the streets on beds and mats so that Peter’s shadow might fall across some of them as he went by, (Acts 5:12-15 NLT).” But even table bearers, such as Phillip, had such a surplus of power and favor, that he was bodily transported by the Spirit to different locations, which is not recorded that even Jesus experienced. Paul said that Jesus was a wealth atonement-substitute on the cross for us, so that the Corinthians will live in financial abundance (because Jesus took on their poverty), so that in this “surplus” of money they can freely give to the cause of advancing the gospel and helping the church (2 Corinthians 8:9 & 9:8).¹⁷³

Melchizedek, the eternal priest—without beginning or end—and an archetype for Jesus, brought Abraham bread and wine in Genesis chapter 14. The context was God blessing Abraham with a victory by defeating 4 kings and their armies who had taken Lot as a captive. In returning from this victory, Melchizedek met Abraham, bringing him “bread and wine.” The connection is obvious. This high priest of God is giving bread and wine, as an archetype for what Jesus, the true high priest, was going to do. This again was without the context of justification or salvation, but of granting Abraham a military victory over his enemies. God promised to be Abraham’s great

¹⁷³ I will not long deal with the stupid objection that says, “the church in Jerusalem was poor to whom they were giving the money too,” because the main context of this was the “persecution” for the sake of the gospel. As said, many times, that is a different category other than everyday troubles. Thus, if you are not under direct persecution, for the sake of being a true Christian, then this objection is a point of non-relevance. Green is 7 therefore blue is 7. Please think like adults and do not annihilate categories like children playing imaginary games. With that being said, even under persecution, we are not without weapons, and ways to gain victories, and if death for the gospel’s sake is truly our end, then the Spirit will make this clear, and not irrationally inferring it from mere circumstances. Only those under the power of the Spirit and filled with mountain moving faith, are those qualified to make such distinctions, which means those who make such stupid and wicked objections are not qualified.

reward, and therefore, even in military conflicts God favors Abraham. God even blesses Abraham with a high priest and gives him the bread and wine. Thus, those grafted into the blessing of Abraham, have victories over their troubles and enemies. Likewise, the true high priest gave us His body to be broken and His blood to be spilled out, to both save us from sin and favor us with blessings. I could go on and on about his, but the point is made.

This ties into our previous teaching on the decrees. The original intention God had toward the Elect was all blessings and glory and love. It was a purely positive intention to create a chosen people to share in the love He has for His Son, to be freely given in and over them. Therefore, after the introduction of the Garden and God's promise of salvation, God singles out Abraham and introduces the major Christian doctrines in an exclusive positive way, without the context of justification. Abraham is blessed and favored; Abraham becomes God's friend. Abraham believes and God declared him righteous for his faith in a health and wealth gospel. In this Abraham is an archetype of how God saw all His chosen ones, at the beginning of His decrees. After Abraham, we see in Scripture how God designed to get all His chosen ones to this overabundant blessed position. Thus, God after Abraham brings in the temporary law of Moses to teach about man's sinfulness. "This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God's promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise. Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins," (Galatians 3:17-19 NLT).

This will end the scripture's basic introduction of Soteriology and how it introduces major doctrines of salvation. The next section will deal with the specifics of the atonement of Jesus Christ and its accomplishments.

Abraham/gospel promise – You are highly favored and blessed.

Moses/Law – You are sinful.

Jesus/It is finished – I save you from your sins (the doorway of the gospel), and I give you Abraham's blessing (a seat at My Father's table, the gospel).

Contract Continued:

This detour from "God's Contract with Man," about the biblical definitions on the original introduction of salvation terms was foundational before we get into the specifics.

Vincent Cheung has helped me understand the definition of what a Contract or Covenant means. First, "contract" is the same meaning as "covenant," and thus using contract can help some by not glossing over the loaded and familiar term of covenant. Second, a "contract" is about removing the idea of "maybe" and the idea of a "case-by-case scenario." Thus, in a marriage contract, you remove the idea that on a case-by-case, you will decide to love your wife, or be faithful to them. A "case-by-case" situation is therefore, for outsiders not insiders. This is similar to how Jesus asked

Peter regarding the temple tax, and if family tax their own family or outsiders. Likewise, insiders are those whom you remove the case-by-case and establish a faithful promise to always do something. Therefore, if God is treating your prayers on a case-by-case situation, then God is treating you like an outsider, a reprobate. If you approach God this way, then you are treating God like an outsider. You approach Him as if you do not have a blood contract with Him. However, for God's chosen ones, consider how lavishly and lovingly God deals with us. He treats us like the closest insiders. He removes the case-by-case and says if you ask in faith you will have what you ask for.

As Vincent will say in the quote below, he was the first person he knows of, to state covenant/contract this way. Therefore, I will quote him at length on this so that he can fully make his argument.

He says,

...Romance

There are many things that we can say about the terms of the contract, but one statement deserves special attention. God said, "I shall be their God, and they shall be my people." He confirmed this by a contract. He will be our God forever, and forever, we will be his people. We are not alone in life. We have a contract with God. No one can tear us apart. No thing can separate us from his love. No power can prevent him from saving us, healing us, blessing us. God is for us. We are for God. This is an unbreakable relationship. An unbreakable commitment. We have a contract with Deity. The only God. The Supreme Spirit. The All-Wisdom. The All-Power... He said, "I shall be their God, and they shall be my people." He is our God. He is the only God, and our only God. When we want something, if we do not expect it from God, who are we supposed to get it from? Are we supposed to get it from Satan? Our contract is with God, not with the devil. Are we supposed to get it by ourselves? But to strive by the strength of the flesh is the very model of carnality and man-centered religion. We see people who speak against expecting healing and prosperity from God, and then they strive for these same things by their own strength. They act as if they have no God, and no contract with him. But he is our God.

A formal contract does not necessarily hinder romance and intimacy in a relationship. Certainly, it does not replace love, because it is out of love that God established the contract with us, and we know that he loves us because he offers us this contract of salvation and blessing...

... Why did God contractually commit himself to us? Why did he make a formal declaration, signed in blood, to save, to heal, to guide, to protect, and to prosper his people? He is God, and he can do whatever he wants. Why doesn't he just do good things for us whenever he feels like it? Couldn't he accomplish the same things without a covenant? He wants to give us a consistent basis for faith. It is true that the will of God is easy to discern. Even without a formal contract, it is still possible to know what we can expect from God. As we fellowship with him, and as he reveals himself to us, we would come to know his abilities and tendencies. We would, for example, understand that he is a

God who forgives our sins and heals the sick. However, without a contract, it leaves room for us to think that he would decide what happens on a case-by-case basis, and we would not know what he decides until it happens. But God wants us to be sure what he would do as we come to him. He doesn't want us to approach him with a hit-or-miss attitude. He doesn't want us to think of prayer as a gamble, as a rolling of the dice. As the Bible says, "He who comes to God must believe that he exists, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him." He wants us to know that he will surely reward, instead of thinking that he will possibly reward, but might not. He wants us to be sure about what he would do, and to instantly reach that place of certainty.

God had made a promise to Abraham. He would have fulfilled it if there was nothing more, but he confirmed it with an oath. Why? "To show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose." He made a promise, so of course he intended what he had promised, or he would not have made the promise. But he added an oath to show more convincingly that he meant what he said. This is intended to convince us that we would inherit this promise, and God would do this for us and see it through. The text calls it an "anchor of the soul." This is what we mean. Our contract with God is our anchor. If we will devote our thoughts on this sacred contract, our faith will be immovable. We will not say one thing today, and something else tomorrow. We will not act one way this week, and a different way next week.

Return to the marriage covenant. The man and the woman decide to commit themselves to each other. They express the intention, but also seal it with a formal contract. Now they are free to invest all that they have and all that they are into this relationship. When they receive a blessing, the husband never has to wonder if the wife would share it with him. They belong to each other. When they face a decision, the wife never has to wonder if the husband will put her first....

... This contract remains intact regardless of emotions and feelings, regardless of circumstances, regardless of momentary confusion, regardless of our performance. You say, "God is faithful, but we are weak. Doesn't this mean that the covenant could be destroyed because of our failures?" However, the covenant is made between God and the Seed, not seeds as in many, but seed, as in Christ, and we become members of the covenant in Christ. As the God-man, Christ will never fail, and thus he guarantees our side of the covenant. The contract keeps our mind stable in the face of turbulence and opposition, and in the face of inciting words from our enemies intended to cause division. It maintains our priorities also in the midst of happiness and abundance, so that we will never forget God, just as he will never forget about us. He does not need a contract to keep him honest, but it is given for our sake. Our contract with God is an anchor of the soul. We are bold and happy to throw ourselves into this faith and this relationship.

Status

A covenant brings two parties into a special relationship, but by doing this, it also draws a line that excludes everyone else, and defines everyone not in this relationship as an outsider. It divides the whole world into two groups. This

covenant confers a formal status on an insider to face those who are outside of this relationship. The person becomes an ambassador of the covenant. Again, take marriage as an example. Once a woman marries a man, she receives formal status as the wife of that man. She is no longer just an acquaintance or a friend, but a member of this new family unit. She is authorized to present herself as a member of the family, whether she is addressing individuals, groups, the government, or God. She is authorized to act in the name of the family, to sign documents, to accept or reject offers, and to perform many functions proper to her status. She also has the power to inherit the resources of her family. Of course, this is also true for the man, who by marriage has become a member of the new family unit. A covenant is not only a formal declaration of who we are to each other, but also a formal declaration of this relationship to outsiders. A married person has a formal basis to reject all suitors, in addition to any personal reasons. All of this is true when we have a covenant with God. We have a formal status as his children. We are the ambassadors of Christ. We are agents of the kingdom of God.

This formal status is fundamental to the work of the gospel. For who are we to speak for God? But we have a covenant with God. A wife has the right to speak for her husband, and a husband has the right to speak for his wife. So it is with our contract with God. We are insiders of his kingdom. We have the commission to declare God's message to the world. The covenant confers upon us the authority to challenge outsiders in the name of God. We have the authority to rebuke them for their sins, to expose their errors and delusions, and to command them to repent. We have the authority to invite them to leave their current condition and enter into a contract with God. A stranger or even a friend would not have the authority to invite someone into my home, but a covenant partner who has a formal status with me would have that right. We can say to someone, "I come to you with a message from my contracted Master and Father. I am authorized to inform you that if you will turn from your sins and follow Jesus Christ, you will be welcomed into the family of God." We have the authority to speak for our God. We have the authority to even guarantee membership in the family to someone who would comply. We are not simply pets, but we are his contract partners. We are authorized to declare his terms to the world.

A contract creates a world of its own. Regardless of what the rules are on the outside, a contract defines its own rules. A stranger has no right to take from your possessions whenever he wishes. He would get something from you only when you sovereignly offer him something, probably on a case-by-case basis. But if you sign a formal document stating that he has a right to take from you whatever he wants, and whenever he wants, that would be a contract. Now this person is no longer a stranger like any other outsider, but he is an insider to a contract that you have with him. It is a special relationship, and he has a formal status. The rules that apply to everyone else no longer apply to him. He lives by a different set of rules. He might continue to live as one without a contract, and fail to take advantage of what he has a right to receive, but he could walk by this different set of rules at any time just by acting on the terms of the contract. The contract creates a world of its own. Now he is still in the world, but he is not of the world....

All of this is true by the very definition of covenant, but I have never seen it explained like this, not even by those who are familiar with the operations of faith and power. The ones who present themselves as experts in the theology of the covenant are usually the ones who know the least about the covenant from this perspective. Their theology is usually the most contrary to what it means to have a covenant. To use marriage as an example again, whenever my wife asks for me she does not have to wonder if I would support her in that instance. Whenever we meet someone she does not have to wonder if I would prefer him or her over my wife this time. The act of forming the marriage covenant meant that, by this one motion, I had decided how I would treat her in every case in the future. If I had intended that I would decide how to treat her on a case-by-case basis, or on a day-by-day basis, I would not have formed the covenant, because it would be meaningless, and in fact there would be no actual covenant. It would be a contract that carries no terms, no conditions, and no promises.

The very point of a contract is to prevent decisions to be made on a case-by-case basis. The very reason for it is to declare the will of each party for future events. There is no need for a contract if one can discover the will of another only by observing what the other person does in each instance. By definition, a contract guarantees that one would know what the other person will do before he does it. From this perspective, even the “pinky promise” doctrine from children is far superior to the covenant theology of the creeds and scholars. Children know what a promise means. Even children know that to decide on a case-by-case basis after a promise has been made does not make one the honorable sovereign, but a LIAR – pants on fire. A theology of covenant that uses divine sovereignty as an excuse to nullify the covenant makes God into a liar. The trash-grade preachers and theologians ought to be embarrassed to be associated with the term, because their theology exposes the fact that they have no covenant, that they do not believe they have a covenant, and that they do not live as if they have a covenant...

Ask some kids what a pinky promise means. There used to be some of them that took it more seriously and cut their fingers as they made the promise. There is your covenant. You have instantly gained more useful understanding than the combination of multiple streams of “covenant theology” developed over multiple centuries. Now imagine God made such a pact with you, promising you diplomatic status, endless and divine life, supernatural insights and powers, and all his resources both in this life and in the life to come, only that instead of cutting his little finger, he cut up his own Son. He made his Son into a man and drained all his blood as he made this oath to you. There is your gospel.

Our contract with God creates a world of its own. The effects are more powerful than any human contract. A human contract indeed creates a world within a world, but its rules are still limited to the same possibilities, only they make a specific application of these possibilities. On the other hand, a contract with God creates a world of its own under God, so that the terms of this contract make an application of God’s possibilities. Thus our contract with God overrides even the rules of physics, biology, sin and death – the spiritual and natural laws that apply to outsiders. We live by a different set of rules. For the outsiders, when there is a drought, the crops die. This is natural law. But

because we have a contract with God, we can have the greatest harvest in the middle of the gravest famine. We hear about the spread of diseases, but our contract states that Jesus took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses, so we walk in the law of life instead of the law of death. For the outsiders, when a disease spreads in the world, then a disease results in their bodies. This does not have to be true for us. We can even heal the sick by merely touching them or speaking to them. The unbeliever has no such law in their physics and biology...

There is no need to wait for God to decide whether he would help you on a case-by-case basis. There are people like that. They call themselves Christians and they think that they are deferring to the sovereignty of God. The truth is that they are living as people without a covenant. However, since there is indeed a covenant, to live as people without a covenant would mean that they reject the covenant or that they are outsiders of the covenant, that they are unbelievers. If God decides whether to help on a case-by-case basis, it would mean that he does not decide on the basis of a covenant or on a contractual basis. And this would either mean that God himself breaks the covenant, or that he addresses people who are not in the covenant. But those people who are obsessed with talking about the covenant still relate to God as if he decides on a case-by-case basis. They still live as those who are without God and without hope in this world. Their biggest boast is in reality their weakest point. Their theology is blasphemy. It implies that God disregards a covenant that he himself decided to establish. But God is not a liar.

We have a contract with God, signed by the blood of Jesus. He was the one who decided to sign the contract with us. If he had wanted to decide on a case-by-case basis, he would not have signed a contract. But he did sign a contract. This is why you can come to him with boldness and certainty. He could have left you to approach him each time without any rights, but he has given you rights to approach him whenever you wish.¹⁷⁴

Vincent is not re-inventing the wheel; rather, he is avoiding logical fallacies and exegesis mistakes by clearly defining the terms. Relative to today—in what the loaded term “covenant” means—what Vincent is saying is original enough that I must quote him and say I learned this from him. However, this meaning of contract or covenant is not new. Many in the west have a problem with defining things from the Medieval or Reformation time, thinking it is how the bible does it, when in fact the Scripture does not.

In the Scripture a contract or oath or convent, as Hebrews 6 says, was the end of all disputes. Why? Because it was not a case-by-case decision anymore. A case-by-case, would leave doubts and disputes. A contract contradicts this case-by-case, because it gives a formal guarantee of resource and access and rights; it guarantees a “yes.” This guarantee of a “yes” destroys the temptation of a dispute. It makes the person an insider. I suppose, this is why Vincent kept bringing up the marriage contract. It throws out the case-by-case situation for the spouse, and replaces it with a permanent

¹⁷⁴ Vincent Cheung. “Our Contract With God.”
From the ebook, *Contract*. 2020. Pgs. 9-18.

“yes,” and access. This phrase of a case-by-case, is how God pragmatically treats His contracts. God swore by Himself and entered into a formal contract with Abraham. This made Abraham an insider and the rest of the world was made outsiders and reprobates. Because a contract guarantees a “yes,” therefore, all the promises are yes, to the Amen and the glory of the Father. Also, faith is the Spirit writing this “Yes” (Contract) in our hearts so that we say yes to all of God’s promises. Faith is God’s contract written on our hearts. Faith is God’s yes in our hearts that causes us to both believe and confess God’s good promises.

If I have a contract with Netflix, then Netflix does not decide on a case-by-case if I get access to their shows; no, this contract (assuming I am true to my contract to pay—and in Christ He has already paid our account) with Netflix means they always treat me with a “yes” to have access. Whether I take advantage of this access is another story, but I have a “yes” from them.

If I have a home association covenant that says, *“I will not cut down trees more than 10 inches in diameter, on my property, without approval,”* then when I find a tree larger than 10 inches I do not decide on a case-by-case if I will cut it down without approval. (etc.) My contract is my permanent “yes” to what they asked. God does this with us. It is part of the contract that He is our God, we are His people, and He will never stop from doing good to us. He gives a permanent “yes” for salvation for any who ask in faith, and a permanent “yes” for healing/miracles or any who ask in faith.

Therefore, this will be our basic definition of what a contract/covenant means. This will be our foundation for understanding everything God promises to do, which is in the Abrahamic and New Covenant contracts. Thus, whatsoever is promised by God in His contract, is no longer a case-by-case issue. This is where we start.

God is so kind that even though a promise is all that is needed, He kills and cuts up His only begotten Son in a bloody mess. He points to Him and says, “I will do all the good things that I promise to do for you. He is a God of unmerited favour and everlasting love.”

We are insiders when we ask God for forgiveness, healing, wealth, Godly abilities, favour and spiritual powers.

What you will find is a whole new world of possibilities, options and glory are opened up for those insiders contracted with God.

We have examined the beginning of God’s contract, and its basic definition. Now we will examine the end result, which in the order of the decrees, is the end God wanted from the beginning; it was His original intention for man.

8 But when God found fault with the people, he said:

“The day is coming, says the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel and Judah.

9 This covenant will not be like the one
I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand

and led them out of the land of Egypt.
 They did not remain faithful to my covenant,
 so I turned my back on them, says the Lord.
 10 But this is the new covenant I will make
 with the people of Israel on that day, says the Lord:
 I will put my laws in their minds,
 and I will write them on their hearts.
 I will be their God,
 and they will be my people.
 11 And they will not need to teach their neighbors,
 nor will they need to teach their relatives,
 saying, 'You should know the Lord.'
 For everyone, from the least to the greatest,
 will know me already.
 12 And I will forgive their wickedness,
 and I will never again remember their sins."

13 When God speaks of a "new" covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and will soon disappear."
 Hebrews 8:13 NLT

This is spoken in context of the Mosaic Contract. God says it is obsolete. Paul says in Galatians 3 that it was a temporary contract, whose main purpose was to show how sinful we are, and to lead us to God's free promise of grace and mercy in Jesus.

"But the scripture imprisoned all under sin, in order that the promise could be given by faith in Jesus Christ to those who believe.

23 But before faith came, we were detained under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith was revealed. 24 So then, the law became our guardian until Christ, in order that we could be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise,"
 (Galatians 3:22-29 LEB).

But our focus is on this New Contract. It speaks of two distinct promises. One is a redemption of sins. The second is blessings and goodness. God will forgive all our sins, and never remember them. As for our sanctification God writes His laws into our souls. That is, we do not do this, God does. God will both remove our guilt of our sins, and then He Himself will write His laws on our minds so that we will follow and obey Him.

Moreover God, not us, or even an angel, but God Himself will be our personal teacher and instructor. We will know God, for God will be the one teaching us. We have already seen in 1 Corinthians 2 that God gives us His Spirit so that we know God the way God knows Himself, which is His Spirit. God also promises to "be our God and we His people." We have already seen this phrase first with Abraham. It means blessings

for all sorts. It means material blessings and miracles of renewed and healed bodies, financial wealth, favor in the sight of men, having a great name and etc.. It also means God declaring us righteous for believing His gospel of blessings. In another place in Jeremiah talking about the New Covenant God says, I will never stop from doing good to you. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good for them. I will put a desire in their hearts to worship me, and they will never leave me, Jeremiah 32:40 NLT. This again, is like God's promise to Abraham.

In essence this New Covenant is a combination of Abraham's blessing and the redemption from our sin that the Mosaic covenant exposed. Jesus is the awesome accomplishment of both. He is our hero who saves us from our sins, and lavishes us with unending favor.

We just discussed the context of Contract Theology considering the decrees. Contract Theology is God promising to the elect the original intention of His love (His top level decree). In blood, God promises to the elect His good intentions from the top level of His decrees. History is an accomplishment of God's decrees. And this is what Contract Theology is, but with one extra layer. God tells the elect His decrees and promises to do it. Next in history, God faithfully executes this contract that He promised in blood. In essence, Contract Theology is an encompassing of both the decrees and the execution of them, of both the logical order and historical implementation of them.

Before God made a formal blood contract with man, The Father and Son, first made promises/declarations to each other. It is from this foundation of the Father to the Son, and the Son to the Father, that God then makes a contract with His elect. These are things the Father and Son decreed and agreed to do before the creation of the world.

The Father:

And now the Lord says—

 he who formed me in the womb to be his servant
to bring Jacob back to him
 and gather Israel to himself,
for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord
 and my God has been my strength—

6 he says:

 "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant
 to restore the tribes of Jacob
 and bring back those of Israel I have kept.
I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,
 that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth,"
(Isaiah 49:5-6 NIV).

"The Lord said to my Lord,

 "Sit in the place of honor at my right hand
until I humble your enemies,
 making them a footstool under your feet."

The Lord will extend your powerful kingdom from Jerusalem;
 you will rule over your enemies.
 When you go to war,
 your people will serve you willingly.
 You are arrayed in holy garments,
 and your strength will be renewed each day like the morning dew.
 The Lord has taken an oath and will not break his vow:
 "You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek,"
 (Psalm 110:1-4 NLT).

"I will tell the decree; Yahweh said to me:
 "You are my son; today I have begotten you.
 Ask from me and I will make the nations your heritage,
 and your possession the ends of the earth,"
 (Psalm 2:7-8 LEB)

The Son:

"For the Lord GOD will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set
 My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed. He is near who justifies Me;
 Who will contend with Me? Let us stand together. Who is My adversary? Let him come
 near Me.
 Surely the Lord GOD will help Me,"
 (Isaiah 50:7 NKJV).

"Committed Himself to Him that Judges righteously,"
 (1 Peter 2:23 NKJV).

"I will put My trust in Him."...
 "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me,"
 (Hebrews 2:13, Isaiah 8:18).

"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering
 and sin offering You did not require. Then I[Christ] said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll
 of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is
 within my heart,"
 (Psalm 40:6-8 NKJV).

However, he was the one who [took away(bore)] our sicknesses,
 and he carried our [diseases], (see Matt 8:17)
 yet we ourselves assumed him stricken,
 struck down by God and afflicted.
 5 But he was pierced because of our transgressions,

crushed because of our iniquities;
the chastisement for our peace was upon him,
and by his wounds we were healed.

By His knowledge the Righteous One,

My Servant, will justify the many,
As He will bear their iniquities.
12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,
And He will divide the booty with the strong;
Because He poured out Himself to death,
And was numbered with the transgressors;
Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,
And interceded for the transgressors,”
(Isaiah 53:4-5,11-12 LEB)¹⁷⁵

“I saw the Lord before me continually,
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken.
For this reason my heart was glad
and my tongue rejoiced greatly,
furthermore also my flesh will live in hope,
because you will not abandon my soul in Hades,
nor will you permit your Holy One to experience decay.
You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will fill me with gladness with your presence,”
(Acts 2: 25-28, (as quote from Psalm 16:8-11) LEB).

“Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out this that you see and hear,”
(Acts 2:33 LEB).

"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world,"
(John 17:24 NJKV).

“He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them,” Hebrew 7:25, and “For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into

¹⁷⁵ [] () -added by author.

This word for bore (take away) is used in verse 12, “He took away their sins.” It is the same word used in Leviticus 16 with the escape goat. The goat “took away” the sins of the people because the sins were transferred to the goat, and then the goat was lead outside the camp as a dirty outsider. Jesus did this for us. This is used in both verse 12 of Isaiah 53 and verse 4, where the prophet says Jesus, took away our sickness like escape goat, by becoming our sickness in our place as a substitution sickness atonement. How can one negate this without negating verse 12 when the same word is used for our sins, and the overall context of 53 is about substitutionary atonement? But alas, when have theologians been own for their intelligence?

heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us,”
(Hebrews 11:9 NKJV).

“I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours,”
(John 17:9 NKJV).

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me: and this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day,”
(John 6:38,39 NKJV).

From these snippets of scattered conversations between the Father and Son, we see a few basic doctrines. God asked the Son to save the Jews, but also all the elected Gentiles. The Father asked the Son to do this by a substitutionary atonement. The Father says this will magnify Him and display His value. The Father promises to raise the Son from the grave, so that He does not see corruption. However, this resurrection is not merely life given back, but the Father uses His power to thrust Jesus Christ above all powers and authorities by sitting Him at His right hand of power. The Father promises to conquer all enemies and put them under Jesus’ feet. The Father promises to give Jesus a reward, so that Jesus can lavishly give the spoils of this reward to His chosen ones. This promise is the Holy Spirit. This reward of the Spirit is given to Jesus, so that from His official position of power, He can pour out Power (Baptism of the Spirit) on His church. This infusion of endless miracles, healings and power enables them to advance the kingdom of God and tear down the gates of hell.

The Son responds in more than a few ways that He has absolute confidence in God to do what He promises and to strengthen Him to do this difficult task. Jesus says it is His pleasure to do the Father’s plan. He is delighted to save the Father’s chosen ones and make them His people, His brothers, His children. He is delighted to enjoy pleasures forever at the Father’s right hand. Jesus is glad to share the spoils of His victory with all His saved children. As the Father loved Jesus, Jesus prays this same love of the Father to be in the elect.

In these promises to each other, the Father promises that Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. In summery, this means Jesus’ priesthood is before and different from the Levitical one. It is an eternal and permanent priesthood, that the Levitical one cannot override, which came later. The Levitical priesthood, particularly with the Day of Atonement, we see an illustration or copy to learn what the substitutionary atonement of Jesus will look like, who has the original and eternal priesthood.

In Jesus’ priesthood, we learn in Isaiah 53:12 that He both bore (like the escape goat) the sins but He also “interceded” for them. For example, the priest in Leviticus 16 on the Day of Atonement, only sacrificed and interceded for the children of Israel, and not Moab or someone else. The atonement is for Israel only, not other people. The priest only intercedes for Israel. As the next chapter says (17) the “life” of the animal is in the blood. This is like “life” currency. Jesus gives us the currency of His life in exchange for our currency (or debt) of death. The “intercession” is about telling the bank where you want the money to go. What would happen, if you dropped off a briefcase of

money, without specifying where you want it? This is why Jesus intercedes, He is telling the Father where the life currency of His atonement goes.

In John 17 Jesus prays, “not for the world” but for those whom the “Father gave Him.” This means His sacrifice was only for those whom the Father gave Him, and not the whole world, as in every single person. If Jesus did not intercede for ‘x’ group, then Jesus did not die for them. We call this **definite atonement**. Jesus’ atonement was successful for a definite group and not universally for all.

John 10:26-27, Jesus says, “*you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep! My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*” The “you do not believe” is the conclusion, the “*you are not my Sheep,*” is the major premise for why we have this conclusion. If you are not already part of Jesus’ sheep, then it concludes you do not believe, and will not believe. Jesus is answering a question with a separate statement about metaphysics and its effects. The ones not believing Jesus, ask if He is the Messiah. To put Jesus’ statement into a syllogism, (1) if you are not my sheep, then you do not believe.” (2) You are not my sheep. (3) Thus, you do not believe what I say.” Also, Jesus in other places says there is only two options, sheep and goats. By saying they are not sheep He is saying they are goats.

If you are not part of Jesus’ sheep then you will never listen and believe what Jesus says. “*And I have other sheep which are not from this fold. I must bring these also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock—one shepherd.* (v.16)” Combining this with the above meaning we learn, if a future person is not already now part of Jesus’ sheep, then they will not believe. Jesus teaches if someone is a sheep now, even if they are not-born-again now, they will believe in the future. His sheep, including those who are “*going to believe*” (future), believe because they “*are*” (present) already His sheep. These are those who Jesus interceded for, therefore they will believe at God’s predetermined times.

Jesus says “*My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them eternal life, and they will never perish forever* (v27-28).” After saying those who asked if He was the messiah, are not part of His Sheep, He says straight to their face that He gives eternal life to His sheep, which excludes those He is talking to, because He said they are not part of His sheep. The scripture does not teach that there are two groups that receive “eternal life,” but only one. Therefore, the law of excluded middle applies here. If you are not part of this group, then you are a goat, a reprobate.

This also kills the very stupid teaching that says predestination, election, reprobation and God’s absolute sovereignty is an insider doctrine for mature Christians, and not outsiders. Jesus in a mixed audience, in the face of those He is calling reprobates, is teaching these doctrines. Jesus does this again, for example, in John 6, where He says only those the Father draws will come to Him to receive eternal life, and it is for these, that He gives up His life.

We learn there are two things about salvation. One is the decrees of God. God in His sovereignty plans and does all the saving for sinful man. Since we have already dealt with the overall doctrine of God’s sovereignty we will focus on this second important point. Jesus’ statements about salvation, are statements about reality, not theoretical what ifs. God decides ‘x’ is a sheep and ‘y’ is a goat. The sheep is in the category of a sheep and gets all the category realities that belong to it, and the same with the goat.

The world is God's playdough. He makes up categories from nothing, with all their attributes. He then creates individuals out of nothing, to put into these categories all that He wants.

For the sheep, Jesus says that He dies for them. He will give them eternal life and they will live with Him forever. This is the reality, the category of being a sheep. He is the only Potter. If God decides 'x' is a sheep, then it is so. No one, not even Satan, not even the 'x,' can stop it, not because the person will believe against their own will, but because the Potter molds their will to be a sheep, and thus they will believe. Salvation is about reality, not ethics or about man and his choice. Because salvation is reality first, choice and ethics—which are conclusions of epistemology and reality—will follow.

This is great news for all God's chosen ones who have cried out to God to save them. They will not be disappointed. Despite their internal struggles (even besetting sins) and the attacks of men and devils, even all this cannot stop them from being sheep, cannot separate them from God's love, and cannot stop them from inheriting eternal life. This becomes a cornerstone for the believers to correct themselves and mature their faith, knowing they are winners. Their faith has overcome the world, because they are children of God. Christianity is a religion of reality.

Next we will explore the subject of the golden chain of salvation that Paul mentions in Romans 8.

28 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose, 29 because those whom he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those whom he predestined, these he also called, and those whom he called, these he also justified, and those whom he justified, these he also glorified. What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us. (Romans 8:28-31 LEB).

The syllogism is in historical order, and not decreed ordered.¹⁷⁶ There are a few categorical statements about reality and a conclusion we are to apply to ourselves from this. This syllogism contains more than 3 premises and so it is a sortie, or chain syllogism.

Paul uses this chain of categorical truths as a foundation to say, "If God is for us then who can be against us?" Verse 28 is a very broad but powerful statement of God's sovereignty over all providence, over every aspect of our lives. God works all things for good, for His elect. Then he gives this chain syllogism as a summary (as a broad picture) of our salvation, to show how this works.

Remember that in a basic bullseye syllogism, the last circle is the first decree, and the smallest circle is the first executed/historical application of these decrees. However, Paul appears to use "predestination" in a time execution order in this passage. That is, in history, God's thoughts of "foreloving" and "predestination" are, historically in time, first in order before He acts, and therefore, in this way it can be used as starting the historical order of the world. It is like an autobiography of a famous person saying, "on

¹⁷⁶ There is the possibility of "Foreloved to predestined" is one big broad statement, and "predestined to glorification" is another argument showing the details for what "foreloved to predestined" means.

this day, I decided to do this or that.” Thus, even in history, the day and time of an invisible thought or decision comes first and is part of the history of such events. God’s thoughts are not linear, but when time started, when God created reality, at this earliest point in time, God’s thoughts are decided to forelove and predestine this group.

Therefore, this historical chain syllogism, might not be the best syllogism to show the nifty-piffy forward and backward visual of God’s decrees in a chain syllogism, (at least for some who are new to such thoughts). For example the syllogism in 1 Corinthians 2 says “(1) All things are ours. (2) We are Christ. (3) Christ is God’s,” and the conclusion would be “All things are God’s.” The larger circle going down to the smaller circle, is the logical order (the Decrees), but going from smaller to larger, is the historical execution.

The logical deduction Paul uses here is called a Sorites. This is simply a normal bullseye syllogism (i.e. A.A.A, where A is a proposition that = All Subject is in the Predicate), but it continues to add additional categories, where the previous category is placed inside the next one. (All A is inside of B, and all B is inside of C; Thus, all A is inside the category of C.) What needs to happen is that the predicate of the previous proposition needs to be the subject of the next with affirmative propositions. This will create a circle diagram where one circle will be placed in the next. The circles do not lie; they give a visual demonstration of the deduction; to show if it is invalid or not. In this case, it is valid. Because this is a normal AAA bullseye type syllogism but only longer (i.e. A.A.A.A.A.), one is able (if the sorites is done correctly) to take any two premises and form an independent AAA syllogism.

There are exceptions for a particular premise, for a negative one, and when it is stated in the form of a hypothetical (If P, then Q) but that is for another time. Also, this type of syllogism may be stated in a reverse format.¹⁷⁷

The form looks like this with a 6 premise sorites.

All **A** is inside the category of **B**

All **B** is inside the category of **C**

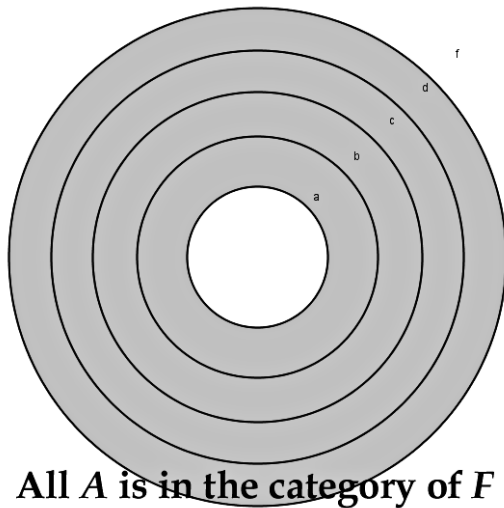
All **C** is inside the category of **D**

All **D** is inside the category of **E**

All **E** is inside the category of **F**

Thus, All **A** is inside the category of **F**.

¹⁷⁷ All A is B, All C is A, All D is C, All E is D, Thus, All E is B.



I see examples of other people mentioning this sorites in Romans 8:30, however, they are prone to leave out verse 29, and thus only make this a 4-premise syllogism. This is a mistake, because the first premise comes from verse 29; and thus, the syllogism is in fact 5 premises.

At any rate, the first premise starts with, *Those whom God foreloved are those He predestined.* The rest of the verse gives us extra insight as to what this predestination results in for both Jesus and for the ones predestined; however, this is not relevant for the immediate syllogism being made by Paul. The next verse simply picks up at the category of, *“whom He predestined”* The predicate of this premise is the subject of the starting premise in verse 30. Paul does not give the conclusion of this syllogism. However, in my experience of reading Paul he normally gives a conclusion. I suspect that he does not here, because he clearly spells out the rest of this enthymeme¹⁷⁸ sorites that the conclusion it is not needed.

In summary, we are told all things work for our good who are called by God in verse 28. Paul then gives an argument to show the undeniability of this reality. We are told from the initial love of God to glorification the saints are directed by God’s decree to love them, and that this decreeing leads to a good end, without any falling through the cracks or mishaps. The conclusion is: “All those God foreloves are those He glorifies.” God’s direct and absolute sovereignty is Christian reality and causality. Soteriology is in fact a sub-category under metaphysics. Salvation is how God uses reality and causality toward this exclusive group of elect persons.

Also, it is in this syllogism that Paul shows the reality of verse 28’s category of “*the called.*” Paul shows us that this category needs to be seen in the larger logical and reality of God’s decrees. He wishes for us to see it all put together in a chain argument. Here we find being “Called” is in the middle of the decreeing, (and or

¹⁷⁸ This means a syllogism that is only stated in partial form. This is for rhetorical reasons, and when the rest of the syllogism is obvious, so you can say it in partial form, so that the audience fills in the rest.

execution). The whole thing starts with being foreloved; it ends with this same people being glorified with Christ.

(A) Those whom God foreloved are (B) those whom God predestined.

(B) Those whom God predestined are (C) those whom God called.

(C) Those whom God called are (D) those whom God justified.

(D) Those whom God justified are (E) those whom God glorified.

Therefore, (A) those whom God foreloved are (E) those whom God glorified.

Predicate Logic.

$L \supset P / P \supset C / C \supset J / J \supset G // \therefore L \supset G$				
<u>T</u> <u>T</u> <u>T</u>	<u>T</u> <u>T</u> <u>T</u>	<u>T</u> <u>T</u> <u>T</u>	<u>T</u> <u>T</u> <u>F</u>	<u>T</u> <u>F</u> <u>F</u>
<u>T</u> <u>T</u> <u>F</u>	<u>F</u> <u>T</u> <u>F</u>	<u>F</u> <u>T</u> <u>F</u>	<u>F</u> <u>T</u> <u>F</u>	<u>T</u> <u>F</u> <u>F</u>

HCS = Hypothetical Chain Syllogism rule for Natural Deduction. (see pic)

Terms:

L = Foreloved. g = God. P=predestined. C = Called. J = Justified. G = glorified. s = Sally.

For every x, if x is fore-loved by God, then x is predestined by God; and, if x is predestined by God, then x is called by God; and if x is called by God, then x is Justified by God; and if x is Justified by God, then x is glorified by God.

- $\forall x (Lgx \supset Pgx) \bullet \forall x (Pgx \supset Cgx) \bullet \forall x (Cgx \supset Jgx) \bullet \forall x (Jgx \supset Ggx)$
- $Lgs \therefore Ggs$
- $(Lgs \supset Pgs) \bullet (Pgs \supset Cgs) \bullet (Cgs \supset Jgs) \bullet (Jgs \supset Ggs) \quad 1,2 \text{ UI}$
- $Ggs \quad 3. \text{HCS}$

Now that we have gone over the technical argument, we will explain the individual meaning of terms, with a few added.

Contract & The Atonement.

16 Now when someone leaves a will, it is necessary to prove that the person who made it is dead. 17 The will goes into effect only after the person's death. While the person who made it is still alive, the will cannot be put into effect.

18 That is why even the first covenant was put into effect with the blood of an animal. 19 For after Moses had read each of God's commandments to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, along with water, and sprinkled both the book of God's law and all the people, using hyssop branches and scarlet wool. 20 Then he said, "This blood confirms the covenant God has made with you."

23 That is why the Tabernacle and everything in it, which were copies of things in heaven, had to be purified by the blood of animals. But the real things in heaven had to be purified with far better sacrifices than the blood of animals.

28 .. Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him."
(Hebrews 10:16-20, 23, 28 NLT).

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, occasion would not have been sought for a second. 8 For in finding fault with them he says,

"Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will complete a new covenant with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,

9 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers
on the day I took hold of them by my hand
to lead them out of the land of Egypt,
because they did not continue in my covenant
and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will decree with the house of Israel
after those days, says the Lord:

I am putting my laws in their minds
and I will write them on their hearts,
and I will be their God
and they will be my people.

11 And they will not teach each one his fellow citizen
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,'
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful toward their wrongdoings,
and I will not remember their sins any longer."

13 In calling it new, he has declared the former to be old. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is near to disappearing."
(Hebrews 8:7-13 LEB)

"For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread 24 and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for

you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—**an agreement confirmed with my blood**. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.” For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.”
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NLT)

“For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater to swear by, he swore by himself, saying,

“Surely I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply you.”

And so, by persevering, he obtained the promise. For people swear by what is greater than themselves, and the oath for confirmation is the end of all dispute for them. In the same way God, because he wanted to show even more to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his resolve, guaranteed it with an oath.”

(Hebrews 6:13-17 LEB)

Before we move on to the specifics of God’s working salvation, we will finalize our definition of *Contract* by defining it alongside *Atonement*, because these two go together.

Hebrews 9 says that by death, the “last will and testament” of a person goes into effect. This is stating the obvious, for how can a last will and testament go into effect, while the person is still alive? This is the level of certainty God wants us to have with His promises. God’s nature alone is enough to give absolute surety to His word, but God in His kindness gives us even more assurances to His promises. He does this by swearing by His Name, and in addition through death, like a last will and testament, confirms that He will do what He says He will do. Like Vincent said in an early quote (as I paraphrase), “*God cuts up His only Son into a bloody heap, points at his corpse, and says, ‘look, I will do all the good things I promised I will do.’*” Therefore, even with Abraham there was a sacrifice. It is a public declaration of the certainty of the promise. There was a death, and so the ‘will’ is now in effect.

The death of the person means the “will” is “already” in effect. You do not need to do something to make the “will” apply to you. God already did something to make the last will and testament apply to you when He killed His only Son. God already did something, and so you don’t do something. It is already in effect. You already have it.

In addition to this, is the aspect of the curses and blessing of the sacrifice. Blessings for keeping it and curses for not. The curses included things like sickness, poverty and reality working against you like a villain. The blessings included things like health, wealth, fame and reality working for you like plot armor works for a hero in a book. Thus, when God entered this contract with Abraham, God caused Abraham to fall asleep, and only He walked between the pieces of the sacrifice. By this God alone took on the curses and blessings of the Contract. God still expected Abraham to keep believing and following Him, but God took all the accountability (in the aspect of working) onto Himself. God’s faithfulness and declaration through blood and death of

a sacrifice (God is truth) ensures He will continue to bless and multiply Abraham. Because God took on the responsibility of His promise to Abraham, by walking through the bloody animal corpses, God sent His only Son to ensure Abraham's children receive all the good things promised. And so, Jesus Christ became our curses in His atonement. In perfect law keeping and resurrection of life, Jesus became our blessings. We are united to His death (our curses die with Him), and resurrection (we share and live in His blessings and inheritance). Jesus did these things in our place as a substitute for us to benefit from them.

Jesus says His "blood"(which implies His death), "confirms His covenant" with us. That is, just like Hebrews 9 says that by blood and death, the "last will and testament" becomes active, by Jesus' death, it makes His 'will' (which is a Contract) active for all it was intended for. Jesus' death confirms the contract of His Will in two ways. One, it is like a public vow or oath, where God swears by His Name, and it is impossible for God to lie. The second is that His death itself is the very thing that takes this contract from inactive to an active contract. We already have it.

His atonement is the category reality in the antecedent, and the consequent is the necessary application. As said before, the very nature of God alone makes it necessary for God to do the things He decreed and said He would do. However, since it is God's desire to show us extra kindness by both swearing by His Name and entering a binding Contract, we will focus on this as the "necessary" connection of our *modus ponens*.

I could simply say, "If atonement, then the application." However, the necessary aspect the bible focuses on is the "last will and testament" (which is a contract) as the necessary connection. Thus, premise one of our syllogism is "if atonement produces a contract, then the application is necessary."

But atonement, we meant the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus, which at that time and place, accomplished salvation and all the good things promised by God for His chosen ones.

For the listed subtitles below, the atonement accomplished them, and the contract ensures its necessity application. Because the connection is necessary, if you have the atonement then you have the application (*modus ponens*). If person 'x' does not have application, then they were not part of the atonement (denying the consequent).

Thus, being called, justified, baptized in the Spirit, adopted, sanctified and glorified (etc.) can all be headed with "***as contained in the contract***," or last will and testament. Thus, we will only make such future comments about this, where some appear to forget it, rather than mentioning it at every point.

Called. In place and time God calls His elect with the message of the gospel. We are referring to the intellectual message, and not the reality of being born-from-above. The bible often refers to this intellectual presentation as "preaching," or "proclaiming" the good news. When a man calls another man to believe in the gospel, this "call" is preaching. However, when God "calls," this more often means the power of God causing a person to be born-from-above, often on the occasion when another person is

proclaiming the gospel.¹⁷⁹ This “call” from God can be referred to as God’s “**summons.**” It is an effective summons that causes a dead soul to be re-created into a mind, which is patterned after God’s mind. God takes the broken intellectual system of propositions from a person and sovereignly re-arranges their system of propositions to line up with His truth, to image His own mind.

The point to remember is the context of a passage will determine if God’s call is referring to Him presenting the gospel message (intellectual) to another person (often through another Christian) or if it is about God causing (metaphysic) new birth. For simplicity, call will refer to the intellectual message, and summon will refer to the metaphysical/new birth.

Some go beyond the Scripture and try to come up with a very specific list of things that must be said for a “gospel” message to be preached; however, the Scripture does not do this. The Scripture commands us to tell them “All” that Jesus commanded us to do, and not some “core” list.¹⁸⁰ At the same time, the Scripture will say the “gospel was preached” to Abraham, when God’s preaching was only about giving great favor, healing and wealth, with no mentioning of sin. The criminal on the cross, obviously had a limited interaction with Jesus and knowledge of the gospel; however, he still made a basic confession of faith saying, “remember me when You enter into Your kingdom.” Jesus said, this person would be with Him in paradise that very day. There are the two categories that must be kept separate, to avoid fallacies, stupidity and sin. The first metaphysical aspect is God’s sovereign work on the soul. The second is the command for Christians to faithfully proclaim all that Jesus taught. Thus, with consideration of proper time and ability, a Christian is without excuse if they don’t teach everything Jesus commanded. However, on spur-of-the-moments and certain evangelism situations, limited time is a factor. God can take, small exhortations of His Word, as an occasion to give a person new birth.

Some take the passage of 1 Peter 3:15 out of context, “*always ready to make a defense to anyone who asks you for an accounting concerning the hope that is in you.*” The word for “defense” means an apologetic (usually a logically/rationally based one). However, the context shows that Peter is using the word more broadly, because the context is about slaves to their masters, citizens to their government leaders, employees to their bosses, wives to their husbands. The context is giving a defense considering authority. Peter says to give a gentle and respectful answer. Thus, this is not a general doctrine of making an apologetic to all people in all situations, but only when you are directly under authority. To use this in other contexts as a precept, would be heresy and blaspheme. Also, Peter says “about the hope” that you have. Thus, even in this book, I write about the power of a logical apologetic, the context here is broad to include all sorts of replies, ranging from a logical crafted argument to a simple two sentence testimony of one’s salvation.

Paul says in Romans 10, how can they hear without a preacher. Christians must obey God and share the intellectual message of the gospel. Those granted with a gift of evangelism ought to pursue this with power and purpose, but all Christians are called to proclaim the good news. This does not mean God is reliant on men. God desires and

¹⁷⁹ I say more often, because it can refer to the aspect of God proclaiming the intellectual message to person ‘x’ by causing person ‘y’ to preach to them, and not directly about new-birth.

¹⁸⁰ This command of Jesus would disqualify many in the ministry.

wants His chosen ones to come alongside Him and work with Him in doing His good plans and purposes. He will therefore often, on the occasion of His elect presenting the good news, will summon whom He chooses, into new-life. However, God can and does summon His chosen ones in many ways.

As in all things, knowledge is under the direct control of God. God directly put innate knowledge in all mankind, without any other created thing being involved. All other new knowledge man receives is directly put into the mind by God's power. Whether this knowledge is accepted or rejected by any given person, is caused directly by God's power. God can directly appear to people, cause them to hear His voice (even when He is not there in a physical form), and cause them to receive knowledge in a dream, when there is no sensation involved. God has done all these things and more in the Scripture, and still does them, despite what some morons think.

Man's preaching is commanded, but it is not effectual. God's summoning a person to new-life is always effective. Our responsibility is to share the gospel, God has kept the power and choice for who is affected by this call, for Himself.

Before we continue, remember this section is still in the category of reality and not ethics/God's commandments. Salvation is not you giving to God, but God giving to you. What we do in ethics and faith is mostly reserved for that section. The focus here is God, because God is the one who controls all reality, and this is true for salvation as it is for anything in reality.

It is true that it is more blessed to give than receive relative in a man-to-man relationship, but this is not true for man to God. In man's relation to God it is infinitely more blessed to receive than to give. The only thing we gave to God for salvation was our sin.

Born From Above In the Contract

"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."¹⁸¹
(John 3:3-5 NLT)

¹⁸¹ "So is everyone who is born of the Spirit." Is from the LEB translation.

“Nicodemus answered and said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered and said to him ... just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, thus it is necessary that the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.”
(John 3:9-10, 14-15 LEB)

“Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been fathered by God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. By this the love of God is revealed in us: that God sent his one and only Son into the world in order that we may live through him.”
(1 John 4:7-9 LEB)

“And for them **I sanctify myself**, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in the truth. And I do not ask on behalf of these only, but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, that they all may be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they also may be in us.... And the glory that you have given to me, I have given to them, in order that they may be one, just as we are one—I in them, and you in me, in order that they may be completed in one.”
(John 17:19-21, 22 LEB)

“See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!”
(1 John 3:1 NLT)

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been **born of God**, and everyone who loves the One who gives new birth loves also the one who has been born of Him.
2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.⁴
For everything that has been born of God overcomes the world; and this is the overcoming that has overcome the world—our faith.”
(1 John 5:1-4 LSB)

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been fathered by God, and everyone who loves the father loves the child fathered by him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God: whenever we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God: that we keep his commandments. And his commandments do not weigh us down, 4 because everyone who has been fathered by God conquers the world.”
(1 John 5:1-4 NET)¹⁸²

“By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God, and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

¹⁸² The NET's own footnote: “The verb γεννάω (gennaō) here means to be fathered by God and thus a child of God. The imagery in 1 John is that of the male parent who fathers children. See the note on “fathered” in 2:29 for further discussion of this imagery.”

4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world and the world listens to them. 6 **We are from God.** The one who knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God **does not listen to us.** By this we know the *Spirit of truth* and the spirit of deceit.”

(1 John 4:2-6 LEB)

We have already dealt with election and predestination in general and so will deal with the immediate subject. How does God ensure His chosen ones are rescued from darkness to His kingdom of light?

The most basic answer to this is twofold. The first answer is God thought about it and decreed or decided on it. The second answer is the present focus. God made it happen with this unstoppable power. Specifically, God used His power to cause us to be reborn with His Spirit. Because the body is (important) but secondary to the spiritual and intellectual, the priority is to rebirth the mind. The term for “born-again” that is in the bible means to be “born-from-above.” The mind is reborn. God causes His chosen ones to be rebirthed with His Spirit, so that their minds have a new definition. This new definition is that God’s Spirit is a permanent integrated part of their own spirit. 1 Corinthians chapter 2 tells us that only God’s Spirit knows Himself, as it is with mankind. Only one’s spirit/mind knows themselves. And yet, God has given us His Spirit! Paul concludes with saying as a category statement, “*we have the Mind of Christ.*”

Thus, the rebirth of the elect with the Holy Spirit, is so integrated and exhaustive that the Scripture pronounces the mind of the elect as having “the mind of Christ.” This rebirth with God’s nature is a radical transformation. It is correct to say the elect are a “new-creation.” At one time the mind of the elect, were darkness, blindness, stupid and evil. Their old system-of-premises, was broken. It combined subjects and predicates together in delusional ways. There was so much delusion in the old man that as a system-of-propositions its definition is classified as darkness and delusional. In new-birth, their minds are enlightened, intelligent and holy. It is not as if every subject and predicate combination is made perfect, but as a whole, their system of thinking is significantly reconstructed in truth, wisdom and intelligence. To be born-from-above is a fundamental rebuilding of the mind, with the addition of the Spirit of God forever being integrated. The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit, “you are children of God.”

“Jesus said that the only solution is for a person to be “born again.” The word rendered “again” can also be translated “from above.” The Bible teaches both ideas. It refers to the need for regeneration of the soul, and to the “new creation” of the inner man. But in the Gospel of John, a prominent contrast is made between that which is “from above” and that which is “from below.” And Jesus referred to his disciples as “not of the world” even though they were still living in the world. So both ideas apply. It is indeed a second birth, but it is not a second natural birth, but a different kind of birth. It is a birth of the spirit, in which God gives divine life to the soul of man, reviving his spiritual senses, enlightening his mind with truth, orienting his dispositions toward righteousness.

Jesus said that unless a man is born again – unless he is born from above, given birth by God in the spirit – he cannot “see” and he cannot “enter” the kingdom of God. The word “see” refers not to sensory perception, but to intellectual perception about spiritual things. That is, unless a man is born from above, he cannot truly grasp the things of God. He cannot understand the truth about God or believe what he has revealed to us. The word “enter” refers to participation. That is, unless a man is born from above, he cannot be a part of God’s family of love, truth, and righteousness. A person can become a citizen of God’s kingdom only by being born into it. In other words, unless a person is born again, or born from above, he will always be on the opposite side of God, and of all that is good and true.”¹⁸³

Jesus replied, “*I tell you the solemn truth, unless a person **is born from above**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Nicodemus said to him, “*How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter his mother’s womb and be born a second time, can he?*” (John 3:3-4 NET)

NET footnote on “born from above says,

“The word ἀνωθεν (anōthen) has a double meaning, either “again” (in which case it is synonymous with πάλιν [palin]) or “from above” (BDAG 92 s.v. ἀνωθεν). This is a favorite technique of the author of the Fourth Gospel, and it is lost in almost all translations at this point. John uses the word 5 times, in 3:3, 7; 3:31; 19:11 and 23. In the latter 3 cases the context makes clear that it means “from above.” Here (3:3, 7) it could mean either, but the primary meaning intended by Jesus is “from above.” Nicodemus apparently understood it the other way, which explains his reply, “How can a man be born when he is old? He can’t enter his mother’s womb a second time and be born, can he?” The author uses the technique of the “misunderstood question” often to bring out a particularly important point: Jesus says something which is misunderstood by the disciples or (as here) someone else, which then gives Jesus the opportunity to explain more fully and in more detail what he really meant. Or born again. The Greek word ἀνωθεν (anōthen) can mean both “again” and “from above,” giving rise to Nicodemus’ misunderstanding about a second physical birth (v. 4).¹⁸⁴

The last statement from the NET translation seems to be the best, even if the primary meaning is “from above,” both meanings are true, because to be born-from-above by the Spirit is to be “born again” by consequence. Also, the context is showing how stupid Nicodemus is about spiritual and biblical things, and therefore by context Nicodemus is stupid¹⁸⁵ and misses Jesus’ point about being born-from-above, leading him to assume born-again from his mother. The greatest context clue, apart from the

¹⁸³ Vincent Cheung. You Must Be Born Again. From the ebook.

¹⁸⁴ Biblical Studies Press, The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).

¹⁸⁵ Some commentaries do not like to admit Nicodemus is so obviously stupid, despite the context: despite his dumb answers and despite Jesus calling him out for being so stupid. It seems to me, that since Nicodemus is called a great teacher, and these theologians who write commentaries are also called great teachers, it never occurred to them, that despite others calling someone great, God calls them wicked and stupid.

word, meaning born-from-above, is that Jesus mentions the Spirit, who is from above, giving you new birth, and Jesus mentions being born into the Kingdom of God, which is from above.

Jesus' doctrine on being born-from-above is a substantial doctrine that excludes many popular errors on God's sovereignty.¹⁸⁶ Jesus' born-from-above doctrine is a logical deduction from the Bible's previous doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty over all things, as applied to salvation and sonship.

The doctrinal name for application of God's sovereignty over man's **conversion** is **monergism**. By conversion we are referring to the sovereign work of God to give new-birth to man's soul, so that they are a new-creation. Their mind was darkness, now it is light; their mind was blind, but now their mind's see and assent to the truth of God. Monergism is focusing on the point that God is the sole cause and power of this transformation, so that even faith that a man uses, is absolutely and directly caused by God.

Jesus says that you cannot "see," which means to intellectually comprehend the Kingdom of God, until you are born-from-above first. You cannot have faith to be saved, if you do not have intellectual comprehension of God's kingdom and yourself in relation to it. But as Jesus said, you first must be born-again, to understand the truth about the gospel/kingdom. You cannot agree to the Word of Christ (Romans 10:17), if you cannot comprehend it in an application to you. Only a born-again mind is able to do such a thing.

This concept is grammar school level easy to understand, but like Nicodemus many are dumber than bricks. They say they are great teachers of Israel or great Christians of Israel, but the only thing they are great at is disbelieving God's word.

Paul teaching the same doctrine that Jesus taught says,

"4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, 5 and we being dead in trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ (by grace you are saved), 6 and raised us together and seated us together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that he might show in the coming ages the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 it is not from works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are his creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we may walk in them."
(Ephesians 2:4-5 LEB)

The Christian being forgiven is on the foundation of God's mercy, love and work; it is not man's love or work. The Christian being in heaven and under God's abundant lavish gifts, is on the foundation of His unmerited favour, and not on man's working or doing. Likewise, the Christian's ability to have faith to believe in the gospel, is on the foundation of God's unmerited favour and working and not on man's working or doing. Likewise, the Christian doing good works, is on the foundation of God predestining

¹⁸⁶ A popular reformed website homes-in on this aspect calling itself "monergism.com." I agree with the basic doctrine, however, the overemphasis can distort the overall doctrine of God's sovereignty over all things.

these works and then actively working these in them, and not from the Christian themselves.

The apostle John, who wrote down Jesus' dialog with Nicodemus put other statements of Jesus throughout his gospel, showing Jesus repeating this doctrine or its consequence. Jesus said only His sheep hear His voice, and those who are not His sheep, are those He does not die for, and who will not listen to His voice. You must be a "sheep" first before you can listen and follow Jesus. In John 6 Jesus says God (John.6:44) "No one is able to come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day." And (John.6:64-65 LEB) "But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, "Because of this I said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by the Father." "If you belong to God, then you listen to God and obey Him. If you are not from God, you do not listen to God. In fact, some church members left the church and John says, they were never from us. That is, they were never born-from-above, therefore, they finally showed who they are by leaving. God leads the church forward to heaven, and those not born-from-heaven can only pretend for so long, before they shrink back.

This is a logical deduction of God's sovereignty and the Bible's teaching on man's depravity. God directly causes all things; therefore, this includes conversion. Also, the scripture says man is darkness (intellectually), blindness and incapable to obey God's commandments in faith, after the fall of Adam. "*The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so,*" (Romans 8:7). I remember Vincent Cheung pointing out how this verse shows freedom is not part of accountability, because all sinners are NOT-free (incapable of) to obey God's law, yet, God not only judges them guilty for this inability, but for all the individual instances where they did not obey God's law.

Obviously, if the intellectual part of the mind cannot deductively apply the good news to themselves, and because all mankind are born into sin, they cannot by definition believe the gospel; it would be a contradiction to say otherwise.

Man's inability to apply gospel truths to themselves can be on several points. Some cannot agree they are sinful. Even if some can apply some small degree about their sinfulness, yet they cannot apply the truths of God's good things of forgiveness, healing, sonship and etc, because it is too good for "them." An illustration might help. I cannot validly apply the knowledge that durian is my favorite fruit, when it is in fact not. I can lie and pretend in a delusion against reality, that I do, but then by definition, I did not deductively apply it to "me" as a true statement of reality. The intellectual aspect of reprobates cannot apply gospel promises of good things to "them" as a true statement of reality.

When one is born-from-above, the Holy Spirit cries out in their soul, "*You are a child of God.*" When such a person applies the good promises to "*them,*" the Holy Spirit is God's shout of "YES" in their hearts. God gives them the courage and intelligence to apply the good promises to "*them.*" This is what faith is. Faith is a sound syllogism, because it deductively applies the promise to you. You are simply agreeing with what God has already said in His word, and the Spirit is already shouting within your soul. Faith is not agreeing with how much you feel love for God or think you believe in God; rather, faith's object is purely God's love for you. Faith is "God" centered, not "you"

centered. This is how to make God the foundation for knowledge. From God's point-of-view, faith is the moment in time where He lets you know, that you belong to Him as a beloved child. It can only happen when a mind is first born-from-above. The old man is incapable of such mental applications.

The doctrinal consequences of Jesus' teaching would mean any who teach that you must have faith first, in order to be converted is a contradiction of Jesus and makes Him to be a liar. They are blinded on a delusion of reality. Their focus is on a human delusion about man's freedom, and thus, by definition their focus is on man and not God's power to save. Yet, the object of faith is about God's unlimited power to save and His love for us, not our love for Him, and not our power to Him. Faith is agreeing with how much God loves us.

As Paul says, faith is a gift from God, based on His unmerited favor. It is not a gift or ability "from" man, or from man's mind. Because faith is by definition to agree with the word of Christ, when God gifts a person with "faith," then necessarily they agree with the word of Christ. They are saved. Therefore, it is stupid to say God draws all men to Himself equally with a gift of faith, when only some choose Him. Apart from allowing those who chose to boast, it contradicts what faith means. Faith means "you" agree with God about the word of Christ. If you agree to the Word of Christ, then you are saved. Where does the bible say someone had faith, and God reject them? Where? All those who put their hope in God for salvation will not be put to shame. No one. None. Thus, when God gives the gift of faith, that person is saved. Not all are saved, thus, God has not gifted faith to all. Technically, God has already born-them-from-above, and the moment their soul agrees with the word of Christ, is the moment God has allowed them to have self-awareness of their new creation.

To have faith, you must first be born-from-above. As Jesus says, just as you do not know where the wind comes and goes, so is it with those born-from-above. It is a sovereign work of God, when and how He wishes. Not only is being born into a new creation purely a monergistic work by God, but even faith is a monergistic gift from God. Using God's established rules, realities and promises, faith is like a natural necessary consequence for being born-again with God's nature. However, since every action in reality is by God's direct power, faith is both a necessary consequence or law (because God promised these realities) of reality and from the ultimate level it is directly worked by God, apart the man's awareness. God causes the mind to understand the word of Christ and without doubt to apply "themselves" to these truths. The self-awareness of faith, is not faith, it is a consequence that God causes to happen when God gifts faith to a person. This self-awareness for convenience sake, can be termed as "synergistic" but it is not synergistic by the strict definition of cause and effect, for God controls all cause and effects. The awareness of your own faith is often the same occasion God causes faith, but it is not the same thing. Agreement of the mind to the word of Christ, by the control of God, can start subtly.

"A person can become a citizen of God's kingdom
only by being born into it."¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ If you are born into God's kingdom, then you are a citizen of God's kingdom.
If not a citizen of God's Kingdom, then not born into God's kingdom.
All those born into God's kingdom, are those who are citizens of it.

All those born into God's Kingdom,
are those who are citizens of God's Kingdom

This is the positive doctrine about the whole issue. Salvation can easily be deduced and made into this basic doctrinal statement: "All those born into the Kingdom of God, are those who are citizens of God's Kingdom." Also, the negative, "All those who are not citizens of God's Kingdom, are those who were not born into it."

To be a citizen of God's kingdom, you must have a genetic proof. It is not a matter of legal documentation. Only those who are part of the family by nature/reality, are those who can inherit its citizenship and blessings. You are an insider by the nature of your birth. You are an outsider by nature of your birth. There is no other legal action, argument, or authority to appeal in this situation. Either you have the right DNA to prove you are an insider of the family or you do not.

All the technical issues of the order of when understanding happens, and when faith happens are deduced from this doctrine. This foundation, per our maximum, is God. God is the foundation of new-birth, for He sovereignly causes it to happen by His choice. This new-creation is the foundation for faith and all Christian privileges. Faith is a privilege from being born-from-above. To have access to ask and receive anything you wish, is a privilege from being born into God's family. God saves us by transporting us from outsiders to insiders, from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of His beloved Son, from intellectual blindness to understanding. This is a metaphysical issue, just like when Jesus transformed water into aged wine. You use water differently from wine, because there are metaphysical differences. These have differences based in reality; there are different cause and effects, and therefore, different applications.

Salvation is at the most basic level like this. It is foundationally a change in reality. Just as the water turned into aged wine was not a "possible" transformation, but an actual one, so too are those transformed from the natural man, into God's children by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. God's saves, by changing reality itself. By this all those who God loves are changed (i.e. saved). Faith does not save, it assents to the truth that God loves and God saves.

As John sums up our salvation, "See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are!"

"That is what we are"

That is the foundation of Salvation. God causes us to be born from heaven, and that is what we are.

As Creflo Dollar said, "it is your identity that determines your behavior."¹⁸⁸ This is fantastic theology. 1 John 5 says, those who are born of God, which results in faith, are those who overcome the world. Faith is a behavior that comes from one's new identity when they are born-again with God's nature. It is like saying a person breathes because they are human. The point is our new identity is a work of reality, by God, not us. Our behavior is a result of this new identity, which is faith in God. The

All foreigners of God's Kingdom, are those who were not born into it.

¹⁸⁸ Twitter, August/8/2022.

result of this faith is that we are triumphant over the entire world. God so loves us that He stops any possibility of losing us. He loves you so much that He first recreated you in a new reality with His nature as part of your nature. Thus, even though you stumble seven times, you will not fall, because your faith overcomes the world. Your reality is both spiritually and materially re-created. It is not just for later. As Jesus told Martha, His resurrection power is not only later and in a different place, but it is now and in this place. You are a new reality in God's eyes, and therefore you are. Your faith needs to catch up to how God truly sees you.

Before we move on, it is important to list how John defines the existence of being born-from-above. 1. They listen to God. 2. They believe God says. 3. They love God by obeying Him. 4. They love all the other children fathered by God. 4. And lastly, they overcome the world through faith, as Jesus overcame the world.

God, out of His love, has already caused this to exist for all those who believe today. That is, to live this or apply this doctrine is not about how you feel about it, just as knowing $4 + 4 = 8$, is not about how you feel about it. You know this already exists, and you show that you believe this by acting on it. The same goes for our new-creation. God causes you to be born-again. Thus, the definition of this reality, is caused by God, not you. God causes you to love Him, by believing and obeying Him. It is a blood contract promise that God says He will write His laws on your hearts so that you will love Him and not depart (this means to believe and obey Him). You do not do this. God does it. God is the one who loves, not you. This is love, not that you love God, but that God loved you and sent His Son for you. God writes His laws on your mind, so that you listen, believe and obey Him. This is God's work, not yours. God has loved you with an everlasting love, therefore He loves you by causing you to believe Him and obey Him. This is in essence the first and greatest commandment. God promised in the New Contract to fulfill this Himself in you. He will cause you to love Him and not depart; He will cause you to know Him. The point is when the discussion is about reality and causality, God is the actor and doer. God saved us, and continues to work His salvation in us.

Some confuse and complicate faith, by making it too internal and psychological, or causing the focus to be on "your" own thoughts and feelings about such things. This is not faith. Faith is having confidence that God loves you, and that He will do what He said and promised. Faith does not come by hearing your own internal thoughts about God's word, but hearing God's word, period. It is the difference between your love for God and God's love for you. The gospel is the message of Christ, and His love for you. John says, "this is love, not that you loved God, but that God loved you" and gave up His only begotten Son, to save you. This reality of love and salvation, already finished and active through Jesus, is the focus of faith, not your love to God, or your feelings about such things. The message of God's love that has already saved you and made you His child, is the simple focus of faith. God will cause you to love Him by knowing Him and obeying Him. This is what faith thinks about, God's faithful love to you. Faith is not believing how much you love God, but believing how much God loves you.

When you pray you are to pray to God and not yourself. When you are overly self-introspective, you are in essence praying to yourself, your thoughts and your feelings. This is not faith and is not prayer. Faith's object of focus is what God said and the message of Christ. When you approach God's throne in prayer for help, if you hear a stray thought (whether from the old way of thinking, or even from a demonic attack),

or upset stomach, and home in on this, feel bad about it, and then focus all your attention on trying to think good thoughts so as to make up for that bad thought, in hopes to approach God, then you are in essence praying to yourself and having faith in yourself. This is not prayer, and it is not faith. Faith is hearing the message of Christ. On the account of Jesus' finished atonement, the Father has declared you righteous in His sight, apart from anything you have or will do. If you focus on the *good things the Father has already caused to happen in reality, for you*, and upon this approach the Father for help, then you are praying in faith. This is true for the forgiveness of sins, and for material things such as health and prosperity.

When there is a promise from God, then you already have a way out. Where there is a promise, there is already a road leading out. Faith is what causes you to see it and then walk on that road. Unbelief blinds you to this road, and makes you stay where you are. The promises of God are the self-definition of the Christian. The promises of God are the new identity of the saints. Faith can assent to this new identity of the Christian, as defined by the promises of God, whether the promise is about spiritual or material good things.

This new creation of your heavenly birth is God's work. He insures the definition of your love to Him, love to other Christians and triumphant faith. This is His work and responsibility. God does this because He loves you. He will cause you to be a winner. Because He is a winner, and you are now a child of our Father, He gives you the right to be a winner. You are now part of God's family. You are a child of God. You are a winner by definition of your new reality and identity.

If you hate Christian brothers and sisters by not favoring them, and participate in such things as envy, jealousy, favoritism, complaining, gossiping, slander, adultery, and the like, then you are not born from above. The Trinity is a God of favor; who has eternally and infinitely favored each other. God's children also favor each other. God the Father, favors all His children, and those fathered by God will also do the same, because God takes the responsibility to cause His chosen ones to do this. Faith trusts in God to do what He promised to do.

This last part of the definition of being born-again, needs a repeated emphasis in my day and time. Jesus triumphed over the world, and those born-again, also do the same thing. John says that Jesus has triumphed over the world. This is an all-encompassing triumph, just like the abundant life of God is for all parts of our lives, both spiritual and material. All negative aspects of this life and world, Jesus triumphed over it, to replace it with goodness and favor for us. Satan, sin and death were defeated by Jesus' finished atonement. Both the curses of the fall, and the curses of the Law, which included all forms of sickness, poverty and life working against you were defeated by Jesus Christ. God does not know how to lose. This life of winning is mirrored in God's children, because God's very nature is in them.

The curses of the law included "all" sickness and diseases for the entire world. Jesus became our curse for us, to give us the blessing of Abraham. He defeated the curses of sickness, in substitutionary atonement. In addition to becoming our curses Jesus removed all forms of sickness, according to Isaiah 53 in a substitutionary atonement, for He "bore" our sickness, and by the exchange of His stripes we are healed.

Thus, for our healing, Jesus endured substitutionary atonement in three different ways. Healing is therefore the gospel, if not more so than forgiveness of sin; or at the

very least as much so. Therefore, to say healing on demand of faith is not the gospel, is to trample the blood of Christ. To reject healing is to teach a doctrine of demons. It is to be anti-gospel, anti-Christ, and anti-sovereign God. Those who deny healing on the demand of faith, ought to be excommunicated immediately. People who often deny healing is the gospel are usually those who claim to be experts on such things as God's absolute sovereignty and covenants; however, if they cannot understand and believe the most basic ideas of the gospel, then how can they claim to know doctrines beyond the basic level? This explains why they are intellectually defective when trying to teach about God's sovereignty and covenants. Their minds mirror reprobates.

The logic of Modus Tollens shows us if you deny the necessary effect of an antecedent, then you deny the antecedent. Thus, if you deny healing by faith, you deny the blood of Jesus Christ. It does not matter what the effect is, if the bible teaches something as a necessary effect of the atonement and you deny it, then you have denied the atonement of Jesus. This is the same with the bible as a whole. If you deny one truth claim, then you deny it as a starting point for knowledge. You just kissed Christianity goodbye. The same with the atonement. If you reject forgiveness of sins, healing, Abraham's blessings, Baptism of Spirit, miracles, and prosperity you logically denied the gospel as a whole.

Some make a big deal about dividing so-called secondary issues and the core issues of the gospel being the important ones we must affirm. They say those who deny this core gospel (Whatever that means), by teaching another one are "accursed" as Paul says in Galatians. The Scripture does not make such a divide. But for the sake of argument let us assume it. If the gospel (the things Jesus' substitutionary death and resurrection accomplished) is the core doctrines, then by definition those who deny healing on demand of faith, are teaching a different gospel. They are accursed. They are trash and spiritual filth. As Paul said about those who deny the gospel and its effects, they teach a "doctrine of demons." Jesus said those who reject His message were "morons," and bastard offspring of Satan. Jude said false teachers,

"blaspheme the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have poured themselves into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever."

Thus, let their own standard condemn them as the trash they are. Do not wash your hands with such people.

Then they pose a false dilemma and say that the promises of God, from the Father who "knows that you need all these things," in fact aim too low and promise too little, but that they would look toward the "higher" promises instead. This is a pious-sounding excuse for a rejection of the blood of Jesus Christ. If you castigate the explicit promises of the gospel as too low, too unholy, too worldly, then you are no longer a Christian preacher. You are

preaching some other gospel, and some other religion. Look! You can only push so far until you are proved a reprobate.¹⁸⁹

The Bible uses God's sovereignty to explain why some people cannot have faith in the gospel, and therefore cannot receive the promise of God (John 6:44, 65, 10:26, Romans 9:18). They are doomed. They will not be saved. The Bible never uses God's sovereignty to teach that some people could have faith in the promise — but because of the will of God — still cannot receive the promise. God withholds faith from the reprobates, but he never withholds faith to his chosen ones, and he never withholds his promise to those who have faith. ...Therefore, a person cannot claim to accept the Bible's teaching on healing, but at the same time excuse himself and claim that God does not give him faith for it. Since faith is under God sovereign control, his chosen ones are guaranteed the ability to have faith in all of his promises.... Therefore, the more someone claims that he does not receive the promise of God because of the will of God, the more he insists that he is reprobate, made for damnation, and reserved for everlasting torture in the fires of hell.¹⁹⁰

Jesus and the Father (Jesus did the works of the Father) triumphed over all sickness in this world. The sons and daughters of God, mirror their Father, by triumphing over sickness in faith. 1 John 5 tells us that our “faith” is what causes us to be victorious. Faith therefore can be seen in two different ways, depending on whose perspective you are looking from. Relative to God and His sovereignty, as Ephesians 1-2 tells us, faith is a sovereign gift worked by God in us, not us. God does it. This is the perspective of reality and causality. However, once this truth is established the bible mainly looks at faith relative to man, which is about ethics or responsibility. John in his letter is referring to both, depending on the verse. As a matter of reality, as the foundation, God causes us to be born-from-above. God causes us to become His children and then to act like children. God does this. This is the object of faith. Faith is centered on God's faithful love to us, not our works or love us to God.

From the human perspective, man is commanded to place their faith in God's love and promises. Man is to have absolute certainty God will do what He said. Those who are born-again automatically have a level of faith pre-installed in them, for that is what being born-again means. It is first intellectual. The mind assents to God's Word is true. It assents that the promises are true for them. However, the bible also commands Christians to move on from milk to meat, from immaturity to maturity. Thus, the issue of accountability and ethics comes into play from man's point of view. We are to renew our minds with God's Word, and seek to replace the old human way of thinking (starting with human speculation and feelings), and replace it with faith in God's promises. The Scripture says faith comes by hearing the word of God, or the word of Christ. Thus, in the command to be mature in our faith, it is the Christian's responsibility to grow their faith by hearing the message of Jesus Christ. When we bring this back to John's doctrine that our “faith” defeats the world, it means the more faith we have, the more successful we become at defeating the world in all aspects.

That is, even the most recently born-again child of the Father, has automatically defeated death and final judgment because all start off with faith. But defeating the

¹⁸⁹ Vincent Cheung. On Unbeliefism. From Trace, 2008. P 5-6.

¹⁹⁰ Vincent Cheung. Faith and Divine Sovereignty. Contract. 2020. P 145.

world includes more than just bare basics. We are to defeat every part of this world where a promise of God relates to it. We know John intends this, for he talks about faith to ask and then expecting to receive this from God in certainty. The promises are the new identity of the Christian. God's promises are the Christian, they belong to the Christian by right and self-definition. Therefore, a more mature faith can defeat all kinds of sickness, mental attacks, financial lack and everyday troubles of life where a promise of God relates to it. By this the Christian, particularly the mature Christian does triumph over the entire world, in all aspects of it. By this they repel the works of Satan and march forward to tear down the gates of hell. Jesus says to ask for anything you want and then the Father giving this whatever you want, is bearing fruit. It glorifies the Father and brings the child joy (John 14-16). This triumphant life is proof (of bearing fruit) that one has been born-from-above, with very nature of God in them.¹⁹¹

In this doctrine of being born-from-above and regeneration, we begin to see the complete *work of the Trinity in man's salvation*.

The *Father plans* and decrees salvation.

The *Son does* the accomplishment of salvation in His substitutionary atonement and resurrection.

The *Spirit applies* the accomplishment of the Son's salvation to the elect in regeneration, sanctification, baptism of the Spirit and all forms of spiritual gifts, power and abilities.

All of this is a monergistic work of God on the elect. God saves all those He loves. The gospel is the power of (not man) but God to save.

Substitutionary Atonement

Jesus saved His chosen ones. The Bible teaches how this happened by ***substitutionary atonement***. One of the best illustrations is the Day of Atonement. It was the yearly sacrifice, under the Law of Moses, to provide forgiveness for all of Israel. Of the two sacrifices, the one called the escape goat shows this by having the priest confess the sins of the people on the goat. Then the goat was driven outside of the camp as unholy, unworthy and as an outsider. The goat must be without blemish or without defects. This is the great exchange. The goat is given the sins of the people, and the people are given the purity of the goat. The New Testament teaches that Jesus substitutionary atonement applied to many aspects, or to all aspects for His Elect. This includes sin for righteousness, sickness for healing, poverty for prosperity, curses for blessings, and etc.

Some blaspheme by redefining the gospel (substitutionary atonement) to be a few things they personally choose, then call this the "core or essential gospel," and make the other aspects secondary. This is impossible to do without making all the gospel

¹⁹¹ This does not mean there are "weak" Christians, who have not obediently matured their faith properly and so suffer unnecessary sickness and troubles of life. But why would any want this? Why plague your conscience, with doubts, if you are truly a born-again "weak" Christian or not born-again? God's love is the focus of your faith. God wants to bless and help you more than you want it. Look to God, He will help you.

secondary. The reason why, is because all accomplishments of the gospel were done by the same substitutionary atonement. Thus, to make one thing secondary, when it was produced by Jesus substitutionary atonement is to make all things produced by this atonement secondary. You cannot logically damage or diminish one without the other. In addition the bible does not do this to the atonement of Jesus. In Isaiah 53 it mentions healing alongside forgiveness as being part of the same essential gospel of Jesus Christ. Those who want to call aspects of Jesus blood secondary will have their judgment one day.

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corin.5:21 LEB).

“Though (Jesus) was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich.” (2 Corin. 8:9 NLT)¹⁹²

“Surely He has borne our sickness, And carried our pains... And by His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4-5 LEB).

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,” in order that the [gospel] might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the [gospel] of the Spirit through faith,” (Galatians 3:13-14 LEB).¹⁹³

“This is the covenant I will establish... I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people,” (Hebrews 8:10 NIV)

Some might say, “*how can this be?*”

God is sovereign, God can do whatever He wants. God gets to create the rules, because He is God. God is accountable to no one.

God does not lie, because He is truth. To lie is to admit you are not truth, and that would be to say you lack and are diminished. God therefore, will do what He says, but what He says He will do, is based on His own arbitrary choice and good pleasure. God’s nature grants Him infinite ability to make decisions as He wants, but many make illogical inference from God’s nature to what God will or will not do. One aspect of God’s nature that you can make a one to one inference is His truth. All He does and speaks is truth. He is free from the limitation of lies. God will never lie, nor commands us to lie. However, something like murder, does not apply to God’s nature, because such a commandment does not logically apply to God. It would be like saying the number 5 is green. Also, not to murder is not God’s nature, like truth is God’s nature. God’s fundamental attributes are positive not negative: eternal, infinite, spiritual, faithful (i.e immutable), truth (etc.). “God is love,” is His nature, but God love/favors as He interacts with Himself and within the Trinity (to favor someone, you need someone to favor). God is holy, or that is, He is categorically and transcendently cut-

¹⁹² The context of this verse is about material money and prosperity, not spiritual.

¹⁹³ [] comes from Scripture, pointed out by Paul, calling this the gospel in the same chapter.

above His creation, in love, power and truth, and thus He is infinitely worthy to be favored. Therefore, God acts and thinks in ways that always favor Him as infinitely worthy above all others, because He is categorically above all. To act differently would be to act on a lie, but God cannot lie. Thus, God being love, does not logically infer God cannot be the metaphysical author of evil and sin, because by being the metaphysical author of evil for the glorious result of favoring His Son, the Elect and all this for His Kingdom, God is favoring Himself as infinitely worthy above all others. By this, God is love. This is God acting in accordance with His unmeasurable ability to display the truth about His worth.

Therefore, the manner of dealing with sin by substitutionary salvation is purely by God's own choice and internal good pleasure to do it that way. God thinks this is the best way, and so it is. This is truth. To disagree with this, one would need to use the scripture (the portion of God's mind revealed to man) for intelligibility, but the scripture says only it is true and all others are false.

God will punish sin, because He thinks this is a good idea and then says He will do it. God will forgive sinners by a substitutionary atonement because God thinks this is a good idea, and then promises to do it. This is truth. God is the source of ethics, because He is the authority giving commandments and holds us accountable to them. God's work is the foundation of reality, and His command is the foundation for ethics.

In the scripture the terms "salvation" and "deliverance" have similar meanings, but not the same. Deliverance usually is in the context of judging an enemy to rescue someone out of slavery and trouble. This is seen in Israel crossing the Red Sea and the Egyptians were drowned in it. Salvation includes this, but it also means more (Heb. 9:28). On this judgement aspect the two terms are interchangeable.

When Jesus mentions in John 16 that the Holy Spirit "corrects the world about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged," this is what we mean by deliverance. **Judgement** is referring to all aspects of power and command that belongs to a ruling king. **Salvation** is this and the addition of His positive works of righteousness freely given (Romans 5) and blessings given to us by His Contract in blood (Hebrews 8).

Jesus executes judgement on Satan by binding him up and plundering his house.

"But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house. "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters," (Matthew 12:28-30 NIV). (see Acts 10:38, Heb. 2:10-14, Colossians 2:15)

Jesus is the caption of salvation for His chosen ones. Satan is the chief enemy against Jesus' kingdom, and thus, the King must deal with Satan to show His power. Jesus does this. He removes the dominion of Satan and replaces it with His own dominion. This is Jesus' judgment and deliverance. The Holy Spirit corrects the souls of men about this, because they have sided with Satan against the Kingdom of God. Satan is defeated; his kingdom is weakening. Soon he, and all who align with his rule, will be thrown into hell. But Jesus' kingdom will last forever and ever, amen.

In Satan's dominion, his law was a law of accusation, bondage, and fear. Jesus defeated this. He obtains His Kingdom by war and conquest. Jesus bound, plundered, and casts out Satan; He neutered his power and accusations against His chosen ones. Jesus came to earth and by His power, even power showed in sacrifice, defeated Satan in battle. Jesus is a mighty warrior. The devil defied the saints of God. Jesus with one stone, killed Satan and cut off his head. In Jesus' atonement and resurrection, it was 100 times truer, "Today the whole world will know there is a God in Israel."

"Now is the time for judgment on this world;
now the prince of this world will be driven out."
John 12:31

In Jesus' dominion, He rules with the law of unmerited favor and sonship. The Father has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son of His love (Colossians 2:13). These additional super blessings of being sons of God, even co-heirs with Jesus and being highly favored by God and not merely forgiven, is the fuller meaning of "salvation." The word salvation can mean just judgement or the fuller meaning depending on context. David often used salvation as God both delivering him, and setting his feet in a good and prosperous place. Jesus does this for all His saints through His atonement.

The substitutionary atonement of Jesus is both a deliverance in power and a substitutionary exchange were Jesus gives us His righteousness and highly favored status. Thus, the finished atonement of Jesus is the fuller meaning of salvation.

Imputed Righteousness and Imputed blessings and Imputed Favor (etc.)

"Because of this, just as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned. 13 For until the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not charged to one's account when there[h] is no law. 14 But death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who is to come. 15 But the gift is not like the trespass[i], for if by the trespass of the one, the many died, by much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, multiply to the many. 16 And the gift is not as through the one who sinned, for on the one hand, judgment from the one sin led to condemnation, but the gift, from many trespasses, led to justification. 17 For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through the one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ. 18 Consequently therefore, as through one trespass came condemnation to all people, so also through one righteous deed came justification of life to all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous. 20 Now the law came in as a side issue, in order that the trespass could increase, but where sin increased, grace was present in greater abundance, 21 so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace would reign

through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
(Romans 5:12-21 LEB)

Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. 22 This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” 23 The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. “
(Romans 4:20-24 NLT)

As shown before¹⁹⁴, whether it was sin, healing, prosperity or blessings, the scripture shows all these as exchanged in the substitution of Jesus’ atonement. Our sin was given to Jesus, and His righteousness was given to us. This is called by Scripture as imputed or credited. In God’s mind He decided our sinful record was now Jesus’ sinful record, therefore, the Father punished Jesus for these sins. Some at this point can become delusional with mysticism. Sin is lawbreaking. Sin is the invisible record of wrongs in the mind of God for a person. There is nothing more to it. It is intellectual and it is in God’s mind. Jesus did not become sin in a mystical or physical way, because sin is not physical but the invisible record of wrongs in the mind of God. The Father credited our sinful record to Jesus’ account, in a similar way we can credit money from our personal account to another family members’ account. After our sins were credited to Jesus’ account, the Father relationally treated Jesus as an enemy and condemned Him to death for these offenses. There is no mystery or mysticism here. God simply decided that our sinful balance sheet belonged to Jesus’ balance sheet. God decided this was good, and so by definition it is good. This is the only definition of reality for how substitution works. Any other different thoughts about substitution are delusional and must presuppose God’s definition, but God says only His revelation is true and all others are false.

However, the positive is the same. We become His righteousness or that is, God thinks that Jesus’ righteous record is our righteous record.

As Paul says in Galatians 4, Jesus was born from a woman, as a man, and as a man He was born under the Law. At one point Jesus asked His opponents, “*which of you can accuse Me of sin?*” (John 8:46) They could not. Jesus worked and earned a perfect record in obedience to God under the Law. Thus even when Jesus harshly and cruelly called His opponents snake bastards and children of Satan and pigs, He did not break

¹⁹⁴ “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corin.5:21 LEB).

“Though (Jesus) was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich.” (2 Corin. 8:9 NLT)

“Surely He has borne our sickness, And carried our pains... And by His stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4-5 LEB).

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,” in order that the [gospel] might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the [gospel] of the Spirit through faith,”(Galatians 3:13-14 LEB).

the law to love your neighbor as yourself. Paul says our old record was nailed to the cross, (Colossians 2). Our record for earning disobedience, was removed from us, and placed on the cross. The reason for this, is because Jesus, after God considered our sinful record His record, punished Him for this record. Thus, the requirements of the punishment of this disobedient record was accomplished and finished. Being nailed to the cross, the place of death, is a symbolic way to express this accomplishment. Our sinful record in God's mind died. It is gone.

God is the foundation for credited sinfulness and righteousness. Man is not and not some standard over God.

Both the negative and positive crediting are **freely** credited in the substitutionary atonement. The order is this. We worked and earned our sinfulness, but it is freely credited to Jesus in the atonement. The same for Jesus in reverse, however the exchange here is two parts. Jesus worked and earned His own righteousness and according to Romans 5:16, we can say at the very least the righteousness of Jesus given to us includes His righteous behavior in face of His unjust treatment. Furthermore, Jesus was innocent, thus, part of what Jesus earned and gave us, is His innocence. By this we are forgiven for all the laws we broke, both of omission and commission. We worked and earned curses, but our earned curses are freely credited to Jesus in the atonement. Jesus worked and earned blessings by perfectly obeying the law, and blessings for trusting and doing the Father's will (Acts 2:33), but these blessings (of Abraham and of the law) are freely credited to us in the atonement. The main point being that each party worked and earned their wages, but then by the atonement these earnings are freely exchanged.

In our passage in Romans 5 Paul repeatedly showed how Jesus' righteous crediting was a "much more" or "much greater" crediting as compared Adam's sinful crediting.

17 "For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

16 And the gift is not as through the one who sinned, for on the one hand, judgment from the one sin led to condemnation, but the gift, from many trespasses, led to justification.

18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people,"
Romans 5:17-18 NIV.

Death "ruled over us," but now in Jesus "we rule" in life.

We were dominated by death, now we do the dominating through abundant life.

Time, curses, and circumstances dominated us in Adam, but now in Christ we dominate circumstances, time and reality.

In God's mind we inherited Adam's guilt.

In God's mind we inherited Jesus' righteousness.

The contrast is said to be similar, but not an exact 1 to 1 ratio ("not like the trespass"). Thus, in Adam all men inherited or were credited with his "guilt" or condemnation. If

this was an exact 1 to 1, then in Jesus we would inherit life first. To help show the comparison. An exact would be “in Adam we inherit his unrighteous, and in Jesus we inherit righteousness,” or “in Adam we inherit his death and in Jesus His life.” However, as Paul says it is not exact. In Jesus we inherit His free gift of “righteousness,” and the consequent for inheriting His righteousness is “abundant life” and to “rule in life.”

The order is this. Unrighteous record, then you are condemned with death. A righteous record, then you are justified to have life. Paul says we inherit the foundational issue of Jesus’ righteousness and grace as a gift. Therefore, those with the “gift of righteousness reign in life.”

The one righteous act (referring to Jesus’ atonement)¹⁹⁵ resulted in us being credited with the “gift of righteousness,” (at the very least this righteous act, and possibly His whole record) and this results in the Father declaring us righteous.

The point is how much more with Jesus than Adam. Adam’s one sin freely credited to us, is contrasted to the much more of Jesus’ righteous act freely credited to us.

This “much more” aspect of Jesus is multifaceted. One is that Jesus’ righteous act is much greater in righteousness than our sins are in sinfulness. Because sin is lawbreaking let us restate this. Jesus’ law-keeping is much greater in degree in contrast to our degree of lawbreaking. Both Adam’s freely credited sin to us and our own sins are not done in sinful perfection. Our previous sinful state was complete in the sense that everything we did as sinners, was tainted by sin to some degree. One aspect of lawbreaking is rejecting the LOGOS (we are commanded to be filled with the wisdom of God, or the LOGOS) and thus Paul says things about the intellectual stupidity or blindness of the sinful mind (Ep. 4). However, to 100% be stupid, to the degree of rejecting the laws of logic (contradiction, identity and excluded middle), one would stop thinking. Even Hitler kept thinking. As Jesus said, evil father’s know how to give good gifts. But Jesus obeyed the Law with a soul of God and in absolute perfection. It was not just high degree law keeping, but perfect law keeping. Thus, the exchanging of our records, was much greater in degree from Jesus to us, as compared to our record to Him. Where sin abounded grace did so much more.

Secondly, this is about identity of category realities. When we were placed into Adam’s category, it resulted in us being made into sinners, because that was the category Adam was in. To visualize, use the basic Euler Circles. Adam was the bigger circle, and the rest of mankind is a smaller circle inside Adam. Verse 5:17 says in Adam we were created or made into sinners (we do sinful things). In God’s mind we were children from Adam and thus inherited his sinful nature and death. But the reverse is also true. Christ was the bigger circle and God’s chosen ones, were placed into this new category. Jesus, was perfectly righteous, and the Father considers us like children who inherited His righteousness and the consequence of this is life. The inherited unrighteousness and sinful nature was performed by Adam with a human soul. But Jesus’ righteous acts were done as a human but whose soul was divine and perfect. The Father considers us as having inherited Jesus’ righteous act, and so it says in Romans 5 we receive this righteous act as a “free gift.”

¹⁹⁵ Even if it is just Jesus righteousness regarding His sacrifice, His atonement consisted of many righteous acts.

As said before, the passage says the contrast is not perfect; they have similarities but not the same. Thus, God is arbitrary in how He decides to do this, in the way He wants. It is His reality. The basic contrast is that Adam and Jesus both cause a group to inherit and be credited with something they did not do. We are inheritors of Jesus, in God's eyes. We receive consequences from Jesus because God identifies us with Jesus. We receive the righteousness of Jesus as a free gift, because God thinks we are with Him. What God wants, thinks and does is the foundation for salvation.

Justification Without and by the Law

Justification like healing is over-engineered in the gospel, not because God did not know what He was doing and went too far, but He did this for our sakes. He did this to assure us of our benefits in Christ; He did this to help our faith. The reason God swore by Himself, when He did not need to, was done for our benefit so that we "would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us." (Heb 10:18)

Isaiah 53:4-5 says that Jesus carried our sickness away from us as a substitute. The word for carried is the Levitical word for the escape goat on the day of atonement in Leviticus 16. The sins of the people were transferred off the people onto the goat and then the goat carried the sins outside the camp. This is the word used in Isaiah 53 for Jesus carrying off our sicknesses. Then in the next verse it says that by Jesus' stripes we are healed. This is again substitution. Thus, here are 2 different ways in which our sicknesses were removed from us in atonement.

However, there is a 3rd way. In Galatians 3 Paul tells us that Jesus became a curse for us in our place so that in substitutionary exchange we receive the blessing of Abraham. The curses of the law, as stated in Deut. 28, includes all sicknesses. And so we have 3 different ways that Jesus removed sickness off of us, in the atonement, so that we are healed and healthy.

This is like Jesus and the feeding of the 4 and 5 thousand. Why were there so many extra baskets left over? God is an extravagant giver. Paul says in Ephesians that He answers our prayers exceedingly, abundantly and beyond all that we ask and think. This is how God is. God over-engineered our healing in the atonement excessively and beyond what was needed, to help our faith to be absolute and unwavering. With 3 ways to ask for healing based on atonement, even if one way seemed iffy, there are still 2 others for your faith to grab on to, allowing you to receive healing by faith. This is healing on the demand of faith that our sicknesses were already removed from us in Jesus' atonement. This is by faith in a promise, not a "gift of the Spirit."

As a side note, this is why Churches and pastors who do not heal the sick and who teach against healing on the demand of faith, are false teachers. With this one heresy they trample the blood of Jesus 3 times. There is no excuse for not teaching and being regular practitioners of healing.

There is also a 4th way that healing is in the atonement that is the "gift of healing," that comes from gifts of the Spirit, when one is empowered by the baptism of the Spirit. Peter in Acts two says this outpouring of power was a promise of the Father given to the Son when He sat at His right hand. Thus, it is tied into the gospel of Jesus. The bible gives this aspect the least amount of time and attention. Most of the

attention the bible gives for healing, is faith in a simple promise or understanding in God's word.

The same is with justification, or God declaring us righteous. God over-engineered our justification so that there is no way for any Elect to not know how righteous they are in Christ.

There are 2 main ways we are justified by God. One is separate from the Law of Moses and the other is by the Law. The way the reformation teaches this doctrine is distorted by the context of their fight with the Catholic church. It is understandable why they focus on certain aspects and not others in such a context, but it is not how the bible teaches the topic. It is not as if a basic statement of "we are justified by faith alone in Christ alone," is wrong. There is no way to disagree with such a statement as it is. However, the bible's teaching on this doctrine is much bigger than a simple statement; for example, in a similar way that "healing by the gift of healing," is true as far as it goes, the bible has much more to say about healing and faith and the atonement than a "gift of healing."

The bible introduces justification, or God declaring someone righteous in His sight, with Abraham. We read this in Genesis and Paul refers to this in Romans 4. God promises only good things to Abraham. This is an understatement. God promises the world, life, wealth, fame, glory, supernatural health, military victories and unending children, with God showing the children the same favors. There is nothing about sin or forgiveness. God promises all good things. Abraham says he believes God will do it. In response, God declares Abraham righteous in His sight.

The important part is simple, there is no law. The law came 400 years later, as a temporary teaching aid (a temporary contract), to show how sinful we were. The big idea is that Abraham was declared righteous, separate from the law. And this is exactly what Paul says in Romans 3. "But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed... David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works," (Romans 3:21, 4:6 NKJV). One verse mentions "separate from the law, then the other says "apart by works." Both are true. Then in chapter 4, mentions again that it is not through the Law. "(13)For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Thus, God declares people righteous separate from the Law. It is not merely apart from our works, but apart from the law, we are declared righteous. "Apart from works," we do not earn forgiveness by works we do. "Apart from the Law," means God gave His righteousness to our account that is not related to the Law of Moses. This is how Abraham received righteousness and this is how we receive it.

However, we are also declared righteous by the Law in another way. What is this way? Being forgiven of our sins. The Law contained both sins of omission and commission. We are commanded to avoid things like theft, but we are also commanded to love God and love our neighbors. Thus, when we are forgiven for breaking the Law, we are forgiven for not loving God above all things. Some speak of being forgiven as only being made neutral before God, or only at point 0. We have 0 bad works, but also 0 good works. But this is misleading. If you are a human and lived, your record, in regard to the law, is never neutral or at 0. If your record is at 0, then it would be the equivalent to saying you never lived. Furthermore, this could only be true if the Law only had sins of commission and not omission. To be forgiven for not having loved God and our

neighbor, is at the same time declared that we have loved God and our neighbors, otherwise we are still law breakers. The “blood” on the Day of Atonement, (which is part of the Law), provided Atonement/ forgiveness (covering over sin) and not 611 positive acts of a foreign righteousness added to the Israelites accounts. When Ephesians says, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, (1:7 NKJV), it means to be declared righteous by the Law at the same time. If the law declares you innocent then it declares you as doing good things.

However, the Law was a temporary Contract (Gal. 3:19-25) to get us ready for the gospel of Abrahams’ blessing, given to us in Jesus’ atonement. This is why we read in Colossians 2:14 about the law (or record against us) as being nailed to the cross. The Law was nailed to the cross (as being finished), because it was 400 years after Abraham, as a temporary measure; therefore it had an expiration date. In Jesus we are forgiven of all our lawbreaking, and by this not only is the Law just neutral toward us, but it has declared us righteous. Because the Law is an extension of God, by it declaring us righteous, God declares us righteous.

By the “blood” of Jesus we are forgiven. By the blood of Jesus the Law is fulfilled by us, by us being forgiven. Jesus’ blood forgives us and by this the laws of omission are positive, and by this the law declares us righteous. This is what Romans 5:9 means when it says “justified by His blood.” The blood justifies us when we are forgiven by His blood. You cannot be forgiven, in relation to the Law, without being declared righteous at the same time by the Law. This being justified by the blood and forgiveness is different from being justified “separate (3:21;4:6)” from the law. In both cases we are justified without our works. Jesus’ work of atonement forgives us, apart from anything we do. Likewise when we are justified apart from the Law, it is also without anything we do. Both types of justification are worked by Jesus and freely given without works that we have done.

There is still the issue of 2 Corinthians 5:21, where Paul speaks of an “exchange” for our sin for “God’s righteousness.” Since all benefits we have are from Jesus in the gospel, then this righteousness must refer to Jesus and in particular to His righteous acts as a man. Jesus became one of us, for many reasons, and this is one of those reasons; to have a human category exchange of sins for righteousness.

Some teach this credited righteousness is the specific acts of Jesus credited to our accounts, in relation to the Law. Indeed, Jesus was born as a man under the law and came to fulfill the law in obedience as a man. Was this only for His sole benefit when the context is about being one of us to save us and bless us? That would be more than strange. Since the Law already declares us righteous, by simply being forgiven, then in this aspect it is not necessary for Jesus’ righteous acts, line by line, to be credited us in relation to the Law. However the more important parts involve two things. One, we are declared righteous “apart from the law.” The second is that 2 Corinthians 5:21 says we are given/credited with “God’s righteousness.” If the Law is only for humans and human righteousness, then how, according to the Law, is “God’s” righteousness given to us? If the Law is God’s commands given to humans, not God, then how can the Law that only deals in human sins and human righteousness declare someone with “God’s” righteousness? The point is that it does not. Yes, God can do whatever He wants, but God does not lie or break promises. God is free to arbitrarily hold a tree accountable for not bearing figs, and God is still rational and truthful.

Jesus was a human, and as a human obeyed the Law perfectly. This was because our sins were done as humans. He became one of us, to be a final and perfect “escape goat” and “atonement in blood” for us. But regarding His obedience under that Law, it was also done as a human. But we are told we are credited with “God’s righteousness,” not merely a human obedience to the Law.

The Law, in the Day of Atonement, allowed for “atonement,” or forgiveness. This is why the blood of bulls and goats cannot truly provide forgiveness, because they were animals not human. Jesus as a human, provided a human atonement, in the category of human forgiveness. This forgiveness is at the same time a justification. Since the Law does not have the category to declare person with God’s righteousness, there needs to be another way. There is a different justification, that came first with Abraham. And this justification includes, not merely a human righteousness, but God’s.

What exactly is “God’s righteousness?” Jesus was human but He also was God. He was the God-man. His mind, even though restricted, was still God’s mind. Thus everything He did still had a God-ness attached to it. So there can be a case made that Jesus life’s obedience was also God’s righteousness. It will be mentioned later, but at least some of Jesus actions were directly tied to us being declared righteous. However, since this is separate from the Law, God is free to arbitrarily credit any aspect of His righteousness to us.

One thing to mention is that not all contrasts in the gospel are a one-to-one ratio. Take for example Romans 5. Paul says Adam’s death is credited to us, but in Christ His righteousness is credited to us. If it was one to one, it would be death and life, or sin for righteousness. Thus, the contrast is not a perfect one to one. Second, part of what God does is arbitrary. God does and saves and blesses how He wants, in the specific way He likes the most. And so, our sins were credited to Jesus in relation to the Law, but we were credited with God’s righteousness separate from the Law.

“...the gracious gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.... so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,” (Romans 5:17, 21 NKJV).

This passage in Romans 5 is not about the Law. It is about us being declared righteous that is separate from the law (3:21). In Adam we were credited with death apart from the Law. Abraham, (and his children) were given righteousness apart from the Law. Then the temporary Law came, it showed how sinful we were. Christ’ blood fulfills the Law and forgives us. But His righteousness is credited to us like it was with Abraham, apart from the Law.

On this passage you can at the very least say the righteousness of Jesus given to us includes His righteous behavior in face of His unjust treatment (5:16) of men in His atonement. Some traditions say that Jesus’ righteous acts, every action and thought He did, was credited to our account. This is interesting, but difficult to prove by a strict deduction/application of scripture. As just stated from Romans 5 we can say at the very least Jesus righteous act in facing the atonement is credited to us. I do not want to be hypocritical and demand deductions from my opponents and not do it myself. I

do not see an argument from scripture, which deduces every act of Jesus was credited to us. With just one act of Jesus credited to us, apart from the law, we can affirm, we have the righteousness of God. Maybe it does include it all, and in my opinion I think it likely does; however, but I will need a valid deduction from scripture to say that it does, not because some person or tradition says it.

Some say we need to have all His actions credited to us because we need every part of our record replaced with one of His corresponding righteous acts. The bible does not say this. Also, this is impossible. Not impossible because God lacks power, but a category error impossibility. Jesus was not a father or mother, or a husband or a wife. Therefore, Jesus did not love a child, or spouse with righteous acts of a parent or spouse. Thus, anyone who was a parent or spouse cannot have Jesus' righteous acts of a parent or spouse added to their account. Therefore, no matter what position you take, all must affirm there are some righteous acts of Jesus not credited to our accounts. Thus, I cannot be accused of limiting Jesus imputed righteousness when all must affirm some level of it. The important part is simple, with at least one righteous act from Jesus credited to our account, apart from the law, we are the righteousness of God.

It is not relevant if it means more, if the point is to say Jesus' righteousness is credited to us separate from the law, as our sins were credited to Him in relation to the Law. That is, even if Jesus' righteousness was done to fulfill the Law as a man, it is credited to us separate from the Law. Since Jesus was still God when He did this, it is not only done by a human, but with a soul of a God, and so in this sense, it is a God type of righteousness. This credited righteousness that is called the "righteousness of God," qualifies us to reign in life, just as Jesus reigns in life. Romans 4:25 says "who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." This "for our offenses," is our forgiveness by the standard of the Law, by His blood that at the same time justifies us. The second part of the verse, "raised for our justification," is the crediting of God's righteousness to our account, that is separate from that law.

This second type of justification has the potential to include all sorts of God's righteousness credited to us, and not merely Jesus' direct fulfillment of a particular law of Moses. Because this crediting is not directly connected to the law, it means God is able to credit any sort of God's righteousness to us as He so desires. If this was only by the Law, then you would have to find a specific instance of Jesus that obeyed that law and then credited to Oshea's record of the Mosaic law. The point made before, is that it does include specific acts of Jesus obeying God, but that it also has no limits to what it can include. By making it only about the law, with "human righteousness," it has been made too small, to what has been credited to us in Jesus. But the scriptures clearly say it is "separate from the law" that we are made "God's righteousness," and so what can potentially be credited to us apart from that Law is without limit. What God can credit to us, in this application, is not limited by the categories of the Law. Potentially (not saying the scripture teach this) if God wanted to credit us with Jesus' righteousness, done as God, before the incarnation, then it could be possible, because it is not restricted by the Law. Also, in one sense Jesus' actions in the atonement are about loving God and man (the Law), but some of these actions are directly about Jesus loving the Father to do this before the incarnation and then fulfilled on earth. Both acts of obedience, theoretically, could be credited to us apart from the Law. These actions are God's righteousness. In a short summary, Jesus Christ was deposited to our account by grace. This is the value we now have.

Because this credited righteousness, separate from the law, makes us reign in life as Jesus does, I believe this is likely connected to the other doctrine of “adoption as sons.” To be forgiven and declared righteous by the Law would absolutely give you many privileges by God, but to rule over life itself like Jesus, is something different. This works well with Abraham being declared righteous apart from the Law, who was a “friend” of God, and God was like a father to Abraham. It is speculating, but I believe this second type of credited righteousness is related to the doctrine of being children of God, while the first aspect is not.

This brings us back to Abraham. God promise had nothing to do with the law or sin. It had everything to do with God promising extraordinary abundance, fame, health and blessings. God declared Abraham righteous in His sight because Abraham believed God would do all the good things He promised. Abraham was made God’s righteousness separate from the law. This is why in Jesus we also are made God’s righteousness separate from the law. We are Abraham’s children and so we are made righteous in the same way. By believing all the good things given to us in Jesus, including the blessing of Abraham, God declares us righteous apart from the Law.

However, because the Law, albeit temporary, was given, then it must be dealt with. The law exposed sin. And thus, this must be dealt with. Romans 3 deals with this.

“But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,” (Romans 3:21-26)

Justification started with Abraham and it did not have to do with forgiveness but a positive statement of righteousness. By righteousness, I mean thoughts and actions that value God above all things (John 5:30). And in Abraham’s context it is believing God will do what He said. In the law, this is technically done by obeying all laws of commission and omission. We often think of forgiveness first, but the scripture starts off with a positive declaration of righteous acts freely credited to an account. In this way justification (being declared righteous in God’s sight) is a positive, with forgiveness assumed or presupposed.

With the Law, to be forgiven is to be declared righteous. However, (this does have a small amount of complexity here) for Abraham to be declared righteous, is to be forgiven at the same time, because you cannot be both righteous and unrighteous at the same time. Even one act of lawbreaking or devaluing of God is at the same time negating a “righteous record.” James says if you break one law from the Law, then you break them all. The same with innate knowledge apart from the Law. If you have one mistake it is no longer a righteous record. Because God’s standard is perfection, then you cannot have a righteous record without it being perfect, and this is true for the Law and without the Law. And so, to be credited with God’s righteousness is to also be blameless.

Looking at justification from the Law, is looking at this from a standpoint of being born into time, within a history of these things already at play. Looking justification from Abraham's view is seeing it from the larger picture of God's decrees (logical order, not historical) and original intentions. Because God's original decrees and intentions were for us to be sons of God in Jesus, being highly loved, then of course it would include being blameless.

With Abraham God imputes righteousness to a person's account while they still have unrighteous acts, so that both are present (this was part of the dilemma of Romans 3:21-26, from man's perspective. From God's part, He looked like He was not following His own rules about sin and punishment.) Abraham's record appeared to have both righteousness and unrighteousness. However, because a "perfect or blameless record" is part of being righteous, then when God declared Abraham righteous, it includes God dealing with the imperfections of Abraham's record. Because we are children of Abraham, we had the same issue. However, because justification included forgiveness, forgiveness was finally dealt with at the cross. When speaking of being declared righteous by God, blamelessness is assumed. The two are woven together as a packaged deal.

The application of knowing how righteous you are is for the ethics section; however, as Hebrews chapter 10:1-2 says, if you are forgiven by God, then you should have no more consciousness of your sin. You are to forget and dismiss them the same way God has. It is wrong to replay your sins in your mind. Rather, what should be on a permanent replay in your mind is how righteous you are. Jesus has made "you" righteous, and this should constantly be in your thoughts day and night. A person who does not see themselves righteous now, by constantly thinking how righteous they are, is a person who does not believe they are saved. If you are sin conscience it means you believe you are sinful and disregard Jesus' substitution as ineffective. Faith is a mental assent in the mind. The proof you have faith in Jesus' atonement is found in your mind. Your mind is conscience about how righteous and awesome you are in Christ.

The proofs for how righteous you are, are obvious, such as a sound mind, and effective prayers (James 5).

Also, Vincent Cheung shows us a great summary for this saying,

"When you feel so "right," nothing can stand in your way. When you are so "right," you cannot conceive of any reason why God would not answer your prayers for success and miracles. You cannot conceive of any reason why a sickness or demon would not depart when you command it to go. You have the "right-ness" of God. This is how God feels about himself, and he wants to share this feeling with you, through Jesus Christ. This is the power of the righteousness of God. It has been untapped for almost two thousand years. As much as the Reformation harped about justification by faith, it had no idea what it is. It did not get anywhere close to what the righteousness of God could mean to Christians, and to the world. God's righteousness is a thing of horror to Satan, but he is not nervous when it remains only a formal principle in Christian theology, rather than a vital power and a superhuman righteous feeling and confidence in every single believer. The prayer of a righteous man is effective indeed, but it is futile if no one actually feels righteous, or if this righteousness is only a theological principle and not a supernatural reality in

man. What do we have in Christ? What Satan says about me is irrelevant, because I am God-centered, and I think about how righteous God is in me. This is the only basis on which I live. When Satan pokes at me with his little wrinkly finger, I slam his head off with the fist of God. Then I clobber his face into the ground over and over again like a madman until he is only a puddle of goo. This is the righteousness that we have in Christ Jesus.”¹⁹⁶

Lastly, this doctrine of our righteousness helps fight sin, by remembering the we have already done all righteous acts. Being forgiven by the law, because the law has sins of omission, we have loved God with all our heart and loved our neighbor as ourselves. Thus, the devil cannot tempt you, if you are fighting a besetting sin, by telling you that even if you have been forgiven, you have a history of not doing good in this area. This is a lie. Since lust and porn is common in our day, we will use it as an example. It is a lie to say to such a man (or woman), if they are truly saved, that you do not have a record with many good acts in loving the opposite sex. Because I am forgiven by the law, I do in fact have a long record in loving the opposite sex, as myself, in purity and righteousness. This is true for every positive command of God in the law. I have been forgiven, and so I have done all acts of righteousness to God and to all men, by the law. The law declares me righteous. It is me. I am this perfect record. If I do sin, then according to this record, it is an abnormality and not who I am. It is a lie that I have long lists of mistakes. The devil cannot say, “you have a long list of mistakes in this area, and so you are this and so you should act like it; you have a dirty record and so you are dirty and should act dirty.” This protects you from the schemes and lies of the evil one, trying to make you think you are anything less than blameless, righteous and heavenly royalty.

God declaring us righteous in His sight, is not the same as being **adopted**. Just because God says a creature is righteous does not make it His child and family. Thus, adoption is a different issue from being declared righteous. Being part of God’s family brings a whole host of other benefits and blessings. Peter says we “*partake of the divine nature*” through the promises of God. Just because God thinks we are righteous does not necessarily mean we partake of His divine nature. Children do. We are co-heirs with Jesus, as children of God. *God loves us as a father* love their child. This is wonderful beyond measure.

Jesus is the son of God. He is the heir of all that the Father has. “All that belongs to the Father is mine,” John 16:15 NIV.

Yet, we are now part of Jesus, in two ways. One is by right of birth and nature. In first John we are told we are born-from-above with God’s nature (1 John 3:3,9). This is like saying my child is born with my nature. Nature is referring to the intellect, because God is intellectual not physical. We are told those who are born-from-above listens to God, hears and accepts His word; people without God’s DNA or nature do not listen to Him (4:4-6). This is why Paul in 1 Corinthians 2 says something similar, saying we

¹⁹⁶ Vincent Cheung. The Christian and the Self. From the ebook “Contract.” 2020. Pg. 34.

have the mind of Christ. The second way is that we are part of Jesus' body. In the mind of God, He decided that we died with Christ and when Jesus rose from the dead, we are raised with Him in new life. God decided that we are part of Jesus' body. Jesus is the head and the church is the body.

Thus, we are “**children**” of God and are also “heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus,” (Romans 8:17 NKJV). We are not merely sub-heirs, no, we are co-heirs with Jesus who sits at the right hand of the Power.

The identity of Jesus being righteous and His identity of being the Son and heir of God, is a much, much greater degree of positive, than the lesser degree of identity of sin that Adam had, which we at one time had before our salvation. In salvation we inherit Jesus.

This aspect of adoption, in particular, is focused on the most central aspect of the atonement of Jesus Christ: the doctrine of our union with Jesus. In our conversion the bible commands us to be baptized with water. This baptism is an illustration to teach us what happened in our conversion.

“Or do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we may live [a new way of life]. For if we have become identified with him in the likeness of his death, certainly also we will be identified with him in the likeness of his resurrection,” (Romans 6 :3-5 LEB.)

Imagine that I have a metal bust of Abraham Lincoln, but I also have a metal body of a man without a head. Suppose I want a complete sculpture, and so I weld the two together. Then I throw the metal bust of Lincoln into the pool in my backyard to give the metal some weathered character. Because the body has now been joined with and identified with Lincoln's bust, this body is necessarily cast into the pool. After the plunge, I next raise the bust of Lincoln and display it in a prominent place of honor. Since the body is joined with the bust, the body will necessarily enjoy the same prominent place of honor together.

By “baptized with” or “identified with” the root meaning conveys the concept of “united or joined with,” with the added concept of X is joined to Y; Y is plunged under the water; therefore, both X and Y are plunged under the water together since they are joined together. This plunging of X and Y means they are put under or covered up under death, and then they are covered over by endless victory of life.

We were united to Jesus in His death, but we were also united to Jesus in His resurrection of endless life. Because Jesus is the Son of God, and because we are united to Him, we are adopted as children of God. Even more than being imputed with Jesus' righteousness, to be united to Jesus as children of God, and living in God's house, is greatest favor God has given us.

When God announced His promise of blessings and favor to Abraham, He was early on, telling us the original goal for His elect. It had little or nothing to do with sin or forgiveness but only love, blessings and union. Jesus' atonement was designed by God to get us to this place of total blessings and union to Him.

Faith is not assenting to the work that we do for God, but the work God did for us, to save us. Faith is not assenting to our love for God, but God's faithful love to us. Faith is not assenting to our identity based on our feelings or our history, but on God's definition of us in Christ and our new history and future with Him

A Christian developing their identity in Christ is a fundamental for which they must strive to obtain and maintain. This development of the inner man is foundational. It must increase as one develops a greater level of understanding of doctrine and theology. If you find this inner growth is not happening as you seek after more theology, then put a temporary pause on this, and focus on inner growth and strength. Proof of inner growth is seen in your joy and peace, and in asking and receiving the miracles you ask for. Inner strength is first receiving God's abundant love (with all the blessings and healings etc.) and then secondly, freely giving God's power to others.

God identifies us as part of His Son Jesus Christ. This is like saying, God identifies the oak tree in my front yard as a "tree" whose "kind will produce after its own kind." Christianity is a religion of reality. By unmerited favor we are part of "Christ's body." (1 Corin.6:15, Romans 12:5, 1 Corin.12:27). Therefore, it is a correct application to read a verse like Ephesians 1:22¹⁹⁷ and conclude that because I am a Christian, all things (excluding the Father, Christ, The Holy Spirit and rest of the body of Christ) are under my feet. All reprobates, demons, animals, reality and all other created things are under my feet.

God has identified us as citizens of His heavenly kingdom. God has identified us as priests and kings. We are royalty in the heavenly kingdom. We are princes of heaven, through the unmerited favor and kindness of God. When God sees me approach His throne, in-front of the throne room assembly, the Father has already identified me as part of His Son. The way the Father sees His Son, with all His love for Him, is how God sees me. Jesus prays in John 17:26, "that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." How obvious it is, when God identifies us with His Son, it is not a lie, or partial. It is certainly true. The same love the Father loves Jesus Christ, is the same love the Father places on me. The Father wanted this. Therefore, when you boast, boast in the love and mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

Faith is assenting to the new identity the Father has revealed. He has identified you as part of His beloved Son and beloved family. You approach God, morning, evening and night based on Jesus Christ being your new identity. Oh! What confidence we have in Christ. How boldly can Jesus approach the Father? You are part of Christ. What is the assurance that God will grant Jesus His requests? You are part of Jesus. Does Jesus approach the Father with consciousness of sin and guilt? No. So neither does the rest of His body when we approach the Father. We do not hide in fear under the old table of our history or sin, because Jesus does not do such things. We are identified with Him. We walk into the house of God with our heads held high, just like Jesus does. When you approach the throne, think on these things. To not think on these things, or think they are too good, is to think little about the blood of Jesus and the power of God's Word to define His own creation. To think often of these things as true and act

¹⁹⁷ "God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church." NLT

on them, is to think highly of Jesus' atonement and highly of the powerful Word of God to identify His own creation.

Jesus is righteous, and because we are identified with Him we are righteous. Jesus has inherited all things, and because we are identified with Him, all things are ours. Jesus is rich beyond measure, and because we are identified with Him, we are co-heirs with His riches. As Jesus is in heaven, even now on this earth, so are we, 1 John 4:17.

God defines. This is so basic. God's definition is the foundation of reality itself. Even more so than a book writer has over definitions for the fantasy world they create. The fantasy writer still must use the basic laws of logic, intelligibility and categories, (etc.) to base their imagination on. The writer uses logic, not because it is who they are, and so makes his fantasy world in his image. No, they do this because it is God's image, and they have no choice but to use God's image, or they stop being intelligible. God has no such restrictions. God uses things as logic, because these are who He is. God is making the world after his own image, for His own desires, and arbitrary choices.

A flower, a bee, water, air and stars exist, not because physical matter has any innate properties but because God decided what He wanted a flower to be and makes physical matter behave in a regular way so that a flower is a flower. People sometimes forget to apply this to things such a sinner or a saint, a child of the devil or a child of God. This is God's world, His reality, His definition. Out of the goodness of His heart, before the foundation of the world, He decided to define us as children of God. This, is the only reality. There is no other reality than this one.

Reality is not defined by our feelings or experience, because such reasoning denies the law of non-contradiction, and is a category fallacy. I remember walking off a boat, and it still felt like I was walking on the boat (on the water) rather than on solid ground. Sensations and emotions have no necessary connection to knowledge or reality. God's definition does.

Righteousness and adoption before God is not a feeling. It is God's own definition and declaration. Faith simply agrees with God's definition that declares us righteous, on His Son's account.

Justification is a child level doctrine. To boast about understanding this doctrine as a sign of proficiency of intelligence is a sign of ignorance and pride. This doctrine, in regard to mathematics is like the equivalent of $2+2=4$ and not advance calculus. Intellectually, it is an easy doctrine. Due to history, some spend much time boasting about this doctrine, and these men often do not know it as well as they think. They boast because they boast in relation to other men and tradition, and not in relation to Scripture. Their focus is on man, not God. Everything they relate to and judge against is not God, but men and more men.

Justification simply means that God as Judge, has declared us righteous in His sight, as in a judicial or forensic sense. Obviously, God's viewpoint is reality itself, so of course it is the only necessary and meaningful declaration. When God was creating, and said a tree is a tree, God's word creates and defines reality itself. If God declares us righteous in His sight, then we are. This declaration is our definition and reality.

Some might think God making mankind inherit Adam's sinful nature and death and then freely cause others to freely be credited with Jesus' righteousness is arbitrary, and they would be right. God does what He wants. This is good by definition because God does it.

People often confuse justification with sanctification. Justification is about the judicial declaration of our righteousness, whereas sanctification is about God causing us to become this righteousness in thought and action. Through Adam's sin, God declared us unrighteous, and sin through death and the law had power over us to make us become more and more sinful. Thus, there are two parts. One is about God's "definition," the other is about "power." Justification is about God's new definition of us. Sanctification is God's power working in us to make us grow more into this new definition of righteousness. As Isaiah 55:11 says, God's Word does not return empty. For all those God's Word has defined as righteous in Christ, even if it is over a period of time, they become this definition.

Sin is a strong definition; however, God's Word is a stronger definition.

Sin's power is strong; however, the power of the Spirit of God is stronger.

Justification is God declaring or defining us as righteous. Sanctification is God causing us to grow into the righteousness that He declared us to be. In context of dealing with sin: Justification deals with the legal consequence of sin. Sanctification deals with the power of sin.

God frees us from all the aspects of sin.

This section is about the Salvation of God. It is how God uses His power to save those He has chosen. Righteousness and Sanctification is not spared from this. God does it, and causes it. Christianity is a philosophy of reality.

Righteousness is part of the substitutionary exchange in Jesus' atonement; verses like 1 Corinthians 5:21 make this obvious. But some forget this is also true of sanctification. First, in the promise of the New Contract, God promises through Jesus, that He will write His laws on our minds; God promises to personally teach us. Not us, but God will do it. Secondly, Paul says in I Corinthians 1:30 that Jesus became for us our sanctification, just as He became for us our righteousness and redemption. This is why when dealing with issues of sanctification, Hebrews 12 says the focus is not on thoughts about us trying to defeat a habitual sin, but looking to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. God promises to do this in us, on the basis of sacrificing His only begotten Son, as a last will and testament contract. God will do what He says. He will sanctify us. Faith is not our love and promise to God, but His love and promise to us. This focus on Jesus rather than our shortcomings, does not pretend that we do not have shortcomings, but gives greater value and power to Jesus' finished atonement and promise to do what He said he would do.

Going back to justification.

What does it mean to be declared righteous by God for eternity? Seeing how the first mention of justification is about agreeing with God blessing us, giving us fame, an everlasting name, riches and honor, how should that affect us in behavior? How should one feel about this? Did God declare any fallen angel righteous in His sight? How should this effect the way you relate and approach God? What then is the effect

of being declared righteous by God? How do you evaluate if you have truly digested this truth and believe it with mature faith?

“When you feel so “right,” nothing can stand in your way. When you are so “right,” you cannot conceive of any reason why God would not answer your prayers for success and miracles. You cannot conceive of any reason why a sickness or demon would not depart when you command it to go. You have the “right-ness” of God. This is how God feels about himself, and he wants to share this feeling with you, through Jesus Christ. This is the power of the righteousness of God. It has been untapped for almost two thousand years.

As much as the Reformation harped about justification by faith, it had no idea what it is. It did not get anywhere close to what the righteousness of God could mean to Christians, and to the world. God’s righteousness is a thing of horror to Satan, but he is not nervous when it remains only a formal principle in Christian theology, rather than a vital power and a superhuman righteous feeling and confidence in every single believer. The prayer of a righteous man is effective indeed, but it is futile if no one actually feels righteous, or if this righteousness is only a theological principle and not a supernatural reality in man. What do we have in Christ? What Satan says about me is irrelevant, because I am God-centered, and I think about how righteous God is in me. This is the only basis on which I live. When Satan pokes at me with his little wrinkly finger, I slam his head off with the fist of God. Then I clobber his face into the ground over and over again like a madman until he is only a puddle of goo. This is the righteousness that we have in Christ Jesus.”¹⁹⁸

Adoption. Included in substitutionary atonement.

“But when the fullness of time came, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order that he might redeem those under the law, in order that we might receive the adoption.”
(Galatians 4:4-5 LEB)

Paul teaches us that enduring the curses of the Law, Jesus exchanges adoption with us. Our curses are given to Jesus, and Jesus gives us, not merely forgiveness, but the blessing of adoption. In the above verse Paul says Jesus removes us from being under the law and conveys us under God as our Father. This fits well with Paul’s building argument in Galatians 3-4. He already made the argument that curses are exchanged for the blessing and gospel of Abraham. This gospel of Abraham includes the Holy Spirit and miracles. This blessing included God becoming our Father and we become His children. Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:16 says the same Spirit, that God has, who knows Him, is given to us, so that we have “the Mind of Christ.” This is included as part of the gospel promised to us through Abraham. To have God’s Spirit, so that God declares us to have the Mind of Christ, is to be God’s image; it is to have His very nature; it is to become His children. Therefore, to say the substitutionary exchange included our curses for adoption as God’s sons is a sound argument.

¹⁹⁸ Vincent Cheung. The Christian and the Self. From the ebook “Contract.” 2020. Pg. 34.

Two things to note. God treated Abraham as a friend. He included adoption, in His gospel promised to him. We are grafted into this blessing and fame and value of Abraham, through Jesus Christ. Thus, the doctrine of adoption and being children of God was proclaimed as the gospel, even in the Old Testament. Secondly, the substitutionary gospel includes adoption and being heirs with Jesus as sons. As by definition of what the gospel is, this is accomplished and a reality. Faith in this, is God's proof to you that it was for you. It was by the unmerited favor of God. It cannot be earned. It is given by unmerited favor and received as such.

A Superior Species

*We declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden
and that God destined for our glory.
1 Corinthians 2:7*

Its all fun, joy and praises when I mention we need to glorify God, praise Him, give Him all the credit, and extol His Name above all others, and this is as it ought to be. However, once I mention how highly God has exalted man as a superior species in Christ, then I am attacked. The reason for this is the church being under the oppression of tradition and false humility. People are stuck at the doorway of forgiveness, being centered on their sin; they are centered on themselves. This doorway into the next life, is so precious and magnificent that they remain there. They never truly enter in the glory and privilege of being children of God. They never experienced what it means to be a child and sit at the table of the gospel.

The Logic of Denying the Consequent is used throughout the Scripture. If there is a logical necessary connection from the antecedent to the consequent, then if you deny the consequent, you deny the antecedent. The part that makes this work, is if the connection is necessary and not merely sufficient. Ultimately, this means it must be a truth, but only God is able to reveal truths. However, since the scripture gives us truth and uses this logic, then so will we.

For example,

Galatians 3:18, "For if the inheritance is of the law, [then] it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise."

M.1. (P) If inheritance if of the law, ($\sim Q$) then inheritance is not by promise.

M.2. $\sim(\sim Q)$ It is by promise.

M.3. $\sim(P)$ Thus, inheritance is not by the law.

If you deny the consequences of man's highly exalted position, given by Jesus' atonement, then you deny the atonement. There is no way around this.

Does Jesus sit in the heavenly places?

So does man (Ep. 2:6, Col. 3:1-3).

Is Jesus blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places?

So is man (1:3).

Does Jesus have the Mind of Jesus?
So does man (1 Corinthians 2:16).

Was the gospel predestined for the glory of God?
Yet, it was also predestined for the glory of man (1 Corinthians 2:7)

Does Jesus have direct access to the Father?
So does man (Hebrews 4:16, 10:19)

Is Jesus heir of the world?
So is man (Romans 4:13).

Does everything belong to Jesus, including the past, future and time itself?
It also belongs to man (1 Corin. 3:23).

Does Jesus have the intellectual and ethical power to judge all things?
So does man (1 Corin. 2:15)

Jesus is the only begotten son of God, but in this context, I ask, is Jesus a child of God?
Yet, so is man (1 John 3:1,9, 4:13)

Is creation liberated into the liberty of God?
Yet, it is also liberated into the glorious liberty of man (Romans 8:21).

How glorious and valuable is the resurrected Jesus Christ?
Man also has this glory and image (Romans 8:30)

Did Jesus have the fullness of the Spirit of God on earth? (Acts 10:38)
So does man (Acts 1:1-8)

Does Jesus dwell in the house of God?
So does man (John 14:1-3)

Does God judge Angels?
So does man (1 Corinth. 6:3)

The same love the Father has loved Jesus, Jesus loves man. (John 15:9)

The same love the Father loves Jesus, the Father loves man. (John 17:23)

The same glory the Father gave Jesus, Jesus gives this glory to man. (John 17:22)

The same Spirit of God, who knows God exactly (because it is God's Spirit), God has given to us, so that we have the Mind of Christ.

If we deny pantheism (as the bible does), then we must affirm as the Scripture does, that God does these glorious things to man, not Himself. When Peter says to humble yourself under God's hand, he says God will exalt "you" and not Himself. It was Jesus, who created all things and sustains all things by His power, who said, "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar." If this is so for a pagan, how much more is this true for all the magnificent things God has given to His children.

God promised to make Abraham's name great and famous. Abraham became excessively rich and defeated a combination of many armies. Even to this very day

Abraham is sung in the songs of millions and millions of Christians. Even in Heaven Abraham is famous (Matthew 8:11). The promise was to make His friend's name great, not His, and it happened just as God said. God made, Moses like a God to Israel and Pharaoh. God promised to do the same for Joshua, by making him great in the eyes of Israel. It was never recorded that Jesus was teleported by the Spirit, but this glory was given to a man, a table bearer named Philip.

To diminish the glory of man, particularly the born-from-above man, is to diminish the glory of God, because God said He has greatly exalted and glorified man through Jesus Christ. It would be to say God is defective and stupid at accomplishing His desires. To trample on the glory, fame and exaltation God has given His chosen ones is to trample on the blood of Jesus Christ as a common and ineffectual thing.

We are part of Abraham's blessing, fame and glory (Gal. 3-4).

God does not mind sharing His glory, authority and power, for example, with His friend Abraham or giving the disciples 12 thrones, and all saints the inheritance of being His children; however, what God will not share is the credit and praise that belongs only to Him for all the good things He predestined for our value. Praise and credit is one type of glory (there are many types of glory), however, this type of glory, God will not share. Herod learned this the difficult way. Fame, power, favor, thrones, an eternal name, riches God has no issue lavishing these glories on His friends and children.

God has made us a superior species in Jesus Christ. In the past I was a sinner, but presently, I am a righteous, heavenly, superior species in Christ. I am superior to the non-Christian. I am superior and highly privileged over the non-Christian trash. Any denial of the unmeasurable magnitude of this reality is a denial of the gospel and blood of Jesus. There is no risk of pride, for we know God has given all these things to us by unmerited favor and mercy. Jesus loved us to the point of the cross. To accomplish these great things for us He was nailed to our curses. However, by the magnificent promises of God we partake of the divine nature itself. It is our new identity. We are glad to recognize this and praise God for eternity. We are filled with inexpressible joy for all the good things God has lavished so freely upon us. Oh, what great love this is, that God calls us His highly beloved children.

To sound pious one fool quoted Romans 7 where Paul says, "in me nothing good lives," to suggest that Christians cannot look inward to see glory, honor, righteousness and immortality.

First Paul was referring to a hypothetical typical Jew, and not to himself after being born from above. Mistaking this for Paul after being re-created in the image of Jesus Christ has caused destructive conclusions and blasphemies.

Second, their conclusion is "apart from God there is nothing good in me." There is a serious problem with this. Since "my" inner man is born-from-above and the image of Jesus, and "my" mind is the Mind of Christ, then apart from God, there is no essential "me" left. My old-man is dead, and no longer my identity. This does not mean I live in pragmatic sinlessness, but that my definition and reality is spiritual, divine, and holy. Example, apart from God upholding my body into existence, with the exception of my socks, I have nothing left. The clothes on my body is not my identity or definition. And

so, if God destroyed me right now, except my socks, I have nothing essential of my identity and definition left.

Likewise, Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 3 about the fire burning away things not built upon Christ. These dead works are not part of my definition and new creation in Christ. Thus, they can be burnt away, and I am still fully "me" and not half of me.

If you have any essential definition that is not your identity being the Mind of Christ, then you are not saved and are destined for hell fire.

If you have been re-created in God's nature and the Mind of Christ and out of your belly is flowing rivers of living waters, then if you look inward, you will see the glory of the image of Jesus, you will see life giving waters flowing out of you, you will see perfection and endless value in you. The only way for this not to be true, is if God has not recreated and redefined you as a child of God.

Earlier we have defined God as a system-of-propositions (or a Mind) and man being created in God's image is also a system-of-propositions. The main difference is that man does not have the incommunicable attributes of God's mind such as immutable, eternal and infinite. Thus, the system-of-propositions for God is immutable, eternal and infinite. Man's system-of-propositions was darkened and scrambled when God cursed Adam. The curse was like taking a book and putting it through a shredder. Or it is like taking all the pages from a book, ripping them out and then randomly putting them back together. Man became dark in their intellect, stupid and delusional; from this intellectual blindness they became sinful. When a person is born-from-above God re-creates and re-arranges their broken system-of-propositions, to correctly mirror the placement of subjects and predicates that is in the Mind of God. This is the new man who was created from the knowledge of Jesus. This re-creation of the mind is substantial, but not 100%. This is why we are commanded to continue to renew our minds after the knowledge of God. We want our system-of-propositions to mirror God's mind as perfectly as we can. Although this re-creation of the mind is not 100% it is not just 3% either. We are not given an exact number, but it is large enough so that the scripture defines our minds as a "new creation."

This new system-of-propositions is the definition and identity of the Christian, given to us by God, through the grace of Jesus Christ. Not only do we have a new system-of-propositions created by the Spirit of God, but the same Spirit of God stays with us. The Spirit does not do, a one-time job of re-arranging our mind, and then abandons us. He stays with us and continues to help us. He cries out in our souls, "you are a child of God." When we read the promises of God the Spirit cries out into our system-of-propositions, "Yes!, these promises belong to you." Even when we do not know what to pray, He cries out to God for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. When a Christian is obedient to receive the baptism of the Spirit then they receive even more help from the Spirit in overflowing power. Rivers of life and power flow out of their system-of-propositions. When their system-of-propositions deduce the knowledge from God's Word and speak, "I command cancer to depart from my body in the Name of Jesus," then power and life flows out of their mind as mighty flowing rivers. They pray in tongues and the Spirit edifies their system-of-propositions at a subconscious level and encourages them.

This is the new man, the new definition for the Christian. The old broken mind is gone. If you are still in your old man, it means, the Spirit has not re-arranged your

system-of-propositions, so that your mind is still blind, delusional and broken. The new-creation of the Christian means our mind works, in the sense it correctly mirrors God's system-of-propositions to the point we have fellowship with God, agree with Him and receive His promises in faith. The grading curve is simple: either your mind works, or it is still broken. The definition for the Christian is that their system-of-propositions now works. This working mind is the definition and identity of the Christian.

Your inner-man is a new reality, your outer tent that clothes your inner-man, the flesh, and its attraction to empiricism/emotions is not your definition. It is secondary, dead, and wasting away. The broken mind of the old man looked to empiricism and feelings to find knowledge, despite there being no knowledge by sensation. To define "yourself" by the old-man as your identity is to define "you" as the old-man, and thus "you" cannot be a new reality in Christ.

Some make a mistake saying that they are "the worst of sinners," but then turn around and say I am also "the righteousness of God." This might sound humble to the gullible, but it is unbelieving and irrational. As a Christian, I am never without God; I am never without an ongoing fellowship with God; I am never outside of the Contract of God; I am never outside of my insider status with God; I am never without my re-created mind empowered by the Spirit. As part of my insider-Contract status with God, God does not see or recognize any sin with me. God is immutable, therefore God does not forget my past sin; He does not have divine amnesia. If He did, then God would be mutable. But this is only said in a technical sense of God's omniscience, in that God would have knowledge about me, outside of our relationship. But God and I, are never outside of our relationship.

When I define myself, because I do not go in and out of my insider-Contract status with God, I only define myself in this insider reality. This Contract with God, as Vincent Cheung points out, creates a new reality and a new world all of its own. I never leave this new world. Even if God through His omniscience and eternality never forgets that I had past sins, He never considers it when He and I relate to one another. Because God is timeless if He wants, He could consider me before I was justified, but I cannot do this in experience, because I am not timeless; I can never relive the past. When He and I relate to each other He defines me as sinless, because of the contract status He gave me. This contract status creates a bubble reality that I exclusively live in. I can only experience reality in a time-based fashion with linear thoughts. The only way I can consider God and me together, is therefore in my present insider status, where I have no sin. I do not have the ability to leave my Contract-insider status with God. Therefore, I am not able to consider myself with any sin, without being delusional and irrational.

If a so-called Christian says they are a sinner, they are delusional. The only way to do this is to consider yourself outside of the contract and the reality it creates with you and God. You cannot relive the past, and so you can only speak of it in past tense, without being delusional. You would have to consider your status as if you stopped having an insider's status with God, but this is impossible except by delusion.

Because I can only deal with God in the present, with the new reality that The Contract creates for me, I can say I use to be a sinner, but not anymore. All my sins were forgiven by Jesus, past, present and future. Thus, even if I sin today, it is already forgiven and God does not consider it against me in our relation to one another. This

insider relationship is the only world for me. It is God's reality to me and it is the only world I know and experience.

To glorify God for the power of the gospel, you must look inward and see "you" as a new divine creature, a superior species, a child of God, being birthed with His Nature as your nature. You cannot diminish this reality without destroying the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The gospel is not too good to be true. It is very believable because God reveals it, and God is trustworthy. Satan and the old-man are liars. God tells you the truth. He tells you correct definitions about reality. Emotions are delusional. God describes reality as it truly is.

Sanctified By God

Sanctification means to be set apart from the common and put aside for something special and holy. In fact, to be holy means to be a cut-above in value as compared to others. God does this for His chosen ones out of love. He sanctifies our minds, so that our thinking is not common, but set aside for something very special; we are to think God's thoughts after Him, so that we have the Mind of Christ. Our thoughts are not the common rabble of delusion; rather, our minds are set apart to know reality as it truly is. The common mind does not know why and where reality is headed, however for God's children, our thoughts are set apart for something special, for we know why and where God is leading reality.

The reprobate fodder do not know the special love that the Trinity share in their fellowship. Yet, the elect are set apart to know and experience the same love that the Father has for the Son for themselves.

The common riffraff behaves in a delusional way against reality and against God's command; however, for God's chosen ones, they are singled out for something special. The reprobate's understanding of the world is inaccurate and false. Thus, they interact with the world in a malfunctioned, frustrated, and defective way. The elect however, interact with reality by a true and accurate description. Thus, their engagement with reality is productive, joyful, and effective. They act in accordance to God's definition and command.

Sanctification is first about reality as defined by the only real cause and definition. Salvation is by God's work and absolute causality over all things. It is how He uses His sovereignty over saving His chosen ones. Thus, salvation is a sub-category under metaphysics. And sanctification is a sub-category under salvation, as an effect or consequence of Jesus' finished atonement. Thus, sanctification is under the category of metaphysics.

Sanctification is first defined by God's cause and work in us. After this the bible defines sanctification as man working out his salvation, relative from man's point-of-view. The bible spends more time talking from man's point-of-view than God's only real cause point-of-view. With this in mind we will define the two, and learn how we are to seek out our sanctification.

Vincent will introduce God's absolute power over this, and define man's work in this way: "In sanctification, God causes man to cooperate with the divine precepts while causing an awareness of effort in man." Since our image of God is foundationally spiritual and intellectual, this is a great definition.

"If the topic is metaphysics, or causation, then terms like "synergism" and "secondary cause" make no sense. They are meaningless and useless. When the main topic is divine sovereignty, we are indeed talking about metaphysics, about causation. This means that I oppose the traditional doctrine on the matter. It is absurd to say that God's sovereignty does not take away but rather establishes "the liberty or contingency of secondary causes." Of course liberty and contingency are taken away. They, along with the very idea of secondary causes, are entirely destroyed and rendered meaningless.

If the topic is the relationships between created objects, then the term "secondary cause" still makes no sense, since if the discussion is limited on this level, then the "cause" is in fact not "secondary," and what is "secondary" is not really the "cause." I sometimes, but rarely, use the term to accommodate custom (so that people know what I am talking about, although, since the term itself is nonsense, I wonder if anyone really knows what the doctrine is talking about!), which I try not to completely overturn, although one can hardly blame me if I were to do so. In any case, I usually make some qualifications to avoid too much confusion.

My use of the term "synergism" is also to accommodate custom... All things are caused by God, but things like election and justification are not associated with any awareness or feeling in man, whereas sanctification — such as resisting temptation, or even moving your lips to pray — involves some conscious effort, some awareness and feeling in man. (Note that in my Systematic Theology, I also use consciousness of effort as the reason to make a distinction for sanctification.) ... The effort and the awareness are directly caused by God, so that metaphysically speaking, man does not in fact contribute or cooperate — creatures never contribute or cooperate in the metaphysical sense, but only in a relational sense.

Thus some distinction between justification and sanctification is warranted. Nevertheless, your question raises the issue as to whether synergism is the best term to describe this distinction, since the idea of "energy" is involved, and man does not in fact contribute any inherent energy from within himself to cooperate with God. Even any "energy" that is placed in man must be moved by God to function. In sanctification, God causes man to cooperate with the divine precepts while causing an awareness of effort in man.

As for whether there should be a distinction between conversion and sanctification, I see your point, but a distinction could be warranted. This is because, at sanctification (e.g. when one resists temptation), a person already has faith, but when a person is converted, he receives faith — there is no spiritually good effort to receive faith. In terms of causation, it could be argued that there is no difference — all things are caused directly and solely by God. But in terms of relation between created things, there is a difference. In sanctification, God has already installed a godly disposition in man, and causes him to be aware of his efforts.

The bottom line is that there is no real synergism in any action taken by creatures, but if we need a word to signal a distinction between two kinds of events caused by God — one without man’s awareness, the other with man’s awareness — then “synergism” is one option, although it is arguably an imperfect one.”¹⁹⁹

Sanctification is no less by God’s absolute and direct control, than anything else. The definition of God’s sovereignty stands unchanged. Just because the topic might be emotional for some, it is not an excuse to become a false teacher.

In justification and conversion, the “relationship” is one sided. God gives new-birth and the man has faith for the first time. In sanctification God works and causes, but man is also aware of the desires of his mind and aware of the corrections he needs to make. He is aware of the correct things he has done in faith, and aware of God’s Spirit directing and leading him. He engages God for repentance, asking for help and God’s unmerited supply for all his needs.

“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose,” Philippians 2:12-13.

The Father planned for our sanctification. 1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (NKJV), “But of [the Father] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”” From the Father’s own good pleasure and plan, He sent Jesus, to be our righteousness, and also to be our sanctification. Therefore, as we become more mature in our lives, we boast in God with thanksgiving, and not ourselves, because it was by His power and work we are sanctified.

Jesus’ atonement is how we become holy in our actions. He also intercedes for our sanctification. Jesus prays in John 17:17,18 saying, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.” Thus, Jesus’ atonement is how and why we become holy in action, and hearing the truth is the occasion when God sovereignly causes us to become holy in our actions. Jesus our intercessor prays that God’s Word, will sanctify us. Thus even the Psalmist David said that a man keeps his way pure by the Word of God. David didn’t have the new contract, but we do. Thus how much more is the Word of God able to cleanse the mind of God’s elect. “Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us,” (Rom.8:34 NLT). “Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them,” (Heb.7:24-25 NLT).

In Jesus’ blood contract, God promised to write His laws on our minds, so that we obey Him and never depart from Him. “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people,”” Jer. 31:33/Heb.8:10 NIV. Therefore, when we fight to put off the old man and put on the

¹⁹⁹ Vincent Cheung. There is No Real Synergism. Sermonettes Vol. 1 Pg.85-86

new, we look to Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. We do not look to our actions to be sanctified. No. We look to Jesus. He began our faith and will be faithful to complete its growth.

In Ephesians 1:18-19 Paul prays that we will be enlightened to know what we already have in Jesus. Some miss this foundation and by it they are damaged in their Christian growth. One thing Paul wants us to be aware of is to know that the same power the Father worked in Jesus to raise Him to His right hand, is the same power the Father works in us who believe. Thus, part of this infinite power God works in us is empowering us to believe. This is not us doing it, but God doing it. The power God used to put Jesus at His right hand is the power that God uses to make us believe, and by believing His promises, we receive all the good things contained in those promises. Thus, the foundation for things like forgiveness, sanctification and miracles is to look to God who uses His glorious power to cause us to believe for these things.

Thus, we do the same with forgiveness as we do with sanctification. In both, we do not look at ourselves, but to Jesus' finished work. If we sin, we do not beg God to send Jesus to the cross again to forgive us, because our forgiveness has already happened. We already have it. By faith we receive it. The same is with sanctification. In our growth to be sanctified we do not beg God to send Jesus to the cross again, because our sanctification has already happened. We already have it. By faith we receive it. This is the foundation of sanctification, and without it, you do not have a Christian sanctification.

We look to the finished work of Jesus and to His unmerited favor to grow our faith to maturity. His faithful love is the foundation for all aspects of our life and godliness. There is no aspect of salvation for us to supply the work and strength. God's pays His own bills. He paid for both our forgiveness and sanctification. He will do what He promises. He sacrificed His own beloved Son in blood, to promise that He will faithfully sanctify us. The gospel is God's unmerited supply to us; the gospel is not us supplying things to God. This is true for sanctification. Sanctification's foundation is God's free supply of unmerited favor to strengthen and mature us, not us supplying it ourselves. We keep our eyes on Jesus, for this is where our free supply of favor comes from.

The writer of Hebrews teaches us to enter God's rest. Or that is, to work hard so that you can rest. Our work is not supplying the thing that forgives us, sanctifies us, enriches us, heals us and empowers us, because in Jesus these are already ours. Our work is to receive these by faith in Jesus. God's rest encompasses metaphysics. Jesus is our supply; we do not supply these things for ourselves. The working part that Hebrews tells us to strive for, is faith. To believe God will do all the good things He promises.

The Spirit causes us to do epistemology (Romans 8:16-17)²⁰⁰, causes to know and experience God's love, causes us to believe, causes us to desire God's commands, leads us to seek Him, causes us to be supernaturally empowered and to be compassionate toward others.

²⁰⁰ For more on this subject see Vincent Cheung, "The Gospel Guarantee of Self-Knowledge."

For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Romans 5:17.

The power to reign in life, is not by our effort or works, but through Jesus' imputed righteousness and unmerited favor. God creates this reality by Jesus' work, and nothing to do with our work. We are commanded to receive.

When the Scripture talks about the motivation for serving God, it is on the foundation of fear of God, on the truth and also out of the abundance of receiving His rich supply and favor.

Fear of God.

The fear of the lord has been said to only be reverence or worship to God. This is a half-truth, and because it is said as a whole truth, then it is a false claim. Jesus for example, when quoting the Old Testament to the Devil, used the word for "worship" in the place of "fear the Lord." However, it is not as if this was the only time fear of the lord is mentioned in the entire bible.

This is one fault I find in the faith preachers; they often say fear of God is only reverence, but it is more than that.

We are told to fear God in a similar way we fear a King. If we were part of king Solomon's' inner court, yet we betrayed him and sided with rebels and traitors, then what would Solomon do to us? The conclusion is grammar school level easy. You should fear the wrath of the king if you do that. The same with God. If we were to fear the wrath of king Solomon, then how much more the King of Kings? As Jesus said *"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Matt. 10:28).

"For evil people have no future;
the light of the wicked will be snuffed out.

My child, fear the Lord and the king.
Don't associate with rebels,
for disaster will hit them suddenly.
Who knows what punishment will come
from the Lord and the king?"
Prov. 24:20-21

We ought to see how Jesus fulfilled the law for us, forgave us and already made us children of heaven. Thus it is correct to say, out of love to God for these good things, we should seek to purify ourselves in this wicked world and separate ourselves to Him. Peter says we sin because we forget how forgiven, pure and highly loved we are.

However, in this context, we cannot say, it is only out of love but no fear that we strive to mature ourselves in Christ. Jesus is always the King of Kings. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. It is always applicable that if you rebel against God and side with unbelief and traitors, you should fear His wrath. This context never stops being a context for any created being, particularly mankind. Even if we do not

consider His punishment, God's infinity, power and dominion should spark a type of fear.

However, the application of seeking God out of love is about an established repeating of thought. We are to fear Almighty God, knowing He alone holds life and condemnation. This is a truth. It will always be part of our thoughts. We can be lazy and numb, and thoughts of God's wrath are helpful to inspire us to correct ourselves. It is often the fear of God's judgement that will help divide so-called Christians from false and true, by spurring the true Christian to stop sinning and return to God in repentance. One of the promises of the New Contract (Jeremiah 32:40) is that God will put the fear of God into our hearts, along with the love for Him, by wanting to obey His commandments. It is not an either or, it is both.

The bible is full of God's dreadful wrath. He drowned the whole world. He kept hardening Pharaoh's heart (which meant Pharaoh was willing to let the people go), so that God's full measure of wrath was poured out on Egypt. Even though God forgave David for his sin, He still killed the child and caused him on going troubles for the rest of his life. The things God caused to happen to Jerusalem (out of His wrath on the) by Babylon's hand is horrific and should inspire repulsion.

To fear God is a glorious and noble thing, because God is the ultimate judge of man. No one can cause more harm to man, than a wrathful God. The fear of God's dreadful wrath and the ultimate cumulation of this in hell, is supposed to lead to wisdom. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. That is, it should cause you to "run from evil." This is good. Yet, it is only the beginning of wisdom. The maturity of wisdom "runs to God" to find forgiveness, and then greater wisdom "runs to God" to freely receive all good things from Him. Because we are to always run from evil, this fear of God's judgement never stops from being in play. The person who does not fear God's wrath, is a walking corpse, they just don't know it yet.

However, when Jesus and the disciples often talked about not being mindful of worry (repeated thinking) and fear, it is contrasted with being constantly mindful of your heart established on grace, the law already fulfilled in you through Christ, on no condemnation for those in Christ, on God's supply, on God's nearness to help, that you have already passed from death to life and sit with Christ in the heavenly places.

We are instructed to set our minds in heaven with Christ, because our life is hidden with Him there. John says we should know we are truly born-from-God, and if so, then all fear of condemnation is gone, because God's love drives it away. We are commanded to constantly look to Jesus for help in our fight against sin, who is the author and finisher of our faith. He wants to help, and He promises to do so. We are never told to do this in regards to fearing God. God's fear is part of thinking about God's truth as a whole, such as Psalm 1, in the sense we are always to run from evil. Also, if a particular group or persons were in willful sin, they need to again meditate on the fear of God. Those in sin, have forgotten the beginning of wisdom and need to remember where wisdom begins. How can they move on to greater wisdom, if they have forgotten the starting of wisdom?

If one is in greater levels of sin, whether an unbeliever or church goer, you need to fear God's wrath and hell. If you are truly saved, it will help you. If you are confident of your standing in God, remember He disciplines (Heb. 12) (not condemn) his beloved children. It might be painful for a moment but turn to God and you will be healed,

forgiven and restored. Remember, for God's children Jesus is ministry is only of the good things He mediated for you. He does not give sickness; He takes it away. He does not give pain: He takes it away. In the indirect sense of relationship (not ultimate level), He might hand someone over to Satan (temporarily) to experience bad things, to wake them up and lead them to repentance. Yet, regarding your direct relationship to Jesus Christ, He is not a minister of pain, sin, sickness or hardship; rather, He only ministers salvation and help and joy. He is the Christian's best friend, so much so, He gave up His life for you. He is on your side.

Hebrews says it is good for the heart to be established on God's unmerited favor, not about how the King's wrath is kindled if you betray Him. Jesus tells us to forgive others, because if we do not, God will not forgive you. That is, if you cannot forgive, it means you are a reprobate, and were never forgiven by God and filled with His Spirit in the first place. However, we are told to forgive others, by thinking about how much God loves us, and has forgiven us.

The fear of the Lord is like putting off the old man. Wisdom tells us we "start" by taking off the old. You flee sexual temptation. Out of the fear of the Lord, you put off the old man. This is the negative part, in the since it is about pulling away (or running from) from something, or pushing off. However, the positive part of putting on the new man, is having the love of God fill your soul with His Spirit and truth. All obedience is part of the broad category of fearing the Lord, but the Scripture often emphasizes obeying God out of favor or love to Him. It is positive in the since you are drawing closer to it.

The one repeated ordinance of Christianity is directly about remembering God's love for us in the atonement. The atonement does have God's condemnation, but it is a past judgment of our sin upon Jesus Christ. Paul, John and Jesus all refer to His atonement as remembering His love for us. In Jesus' ministry and command there is a repeated focus on healing, healing and healing. Jesus could have spent more time talking about hell, but He kept healing. We are to know all biblical truths and affirm them without doubt or hesitation. We are to think about and meditate on all aspects of doctrine. However, there is a focus for us to repeat (daily, over and over) and meditate on the good promises of God toward us in Christ, more than other truths. In our constant daily or hourly prayers, our need and God's constant unmerited supply naturally puts the truths of His love and promises before us. We are to be in repeated thankfulness for His goodness to us in Christ, know He has saved us and will continue to do so in both spiritual and material aspects.

In this context it is appropriate to say, "out of love we strive to grow in maturity in Christ."

"Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. 2 Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. 3 For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

5 So put to death the sinful..."

Colossian 3:1-5 NLT.

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.”

1 John 3:1-3 NIV.

“For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.”
Romans 6:14 NIV.

“The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.”
Peter 1:8-9 NLT.

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is FREEDOM. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
1 Corinthians 3:71-18 NIV.

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim FREEDOM for the prisoners
and [freedom from] blindness,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” [Isaiah 61:1-2]

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.””
Luke 4:18-20 NIV.²⁰¹

A few big takeaways from this is simple. Those who have a clear and continual memory that God has completely forgiven and purified them, are those who walk in Christian obedience and good character. Those who have a constant focus on their superior identity in Christ, which is now with Christ in heaven, are those who purify their behavior on earth. The more spiritual minded you are the more holy you become. Also, those who have clear and constant faith in knowing they are children of the most high God, and the hope of what this means, are those who purify themselves on earth. Also, those who are constantly aware of the abundant supply of God’s unmerited favor, are those who experience freedom from the power of sin. That is, not conscience of their sin, or issues of forgiveness, but repeatedly conscience of their righteousness in Christ and God’s unmerited favor, are those who experience freedom.

²⁰¹ [] and emphasis by Author

Lastly, those filled with the Spirit, and particularly the baptism of the Spirit, are freed from besetting sins, trials, health conditions and many more. Jesus was Baptized with the Spirit and by this made a point to emphasize this meant freeing people, particularly from health conditions. The Spirit brings freedom to the whole condition of man, from spiritual to material. The Spirit is power to set free. Jesus commands us to have the same baptism of the Spirit (Acts 1:1-8). By this we are endowed with power to experience supernatural freedom, and to help bring freedom to others. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is indeed great power for freedom.

When Jesus predicted Peter's betrayal, Jesus said He prayed for his faith to not fail and encouraged him that he has prepared a place for Him in His Father's house. It is not that Jesus forgot about the fear of the Lord, but it is presupposed here as a foundation. Jesus' focus for Peter is the forward call of God through Him and the good things available to Peter in this irrevocable call.

Oddly, even if the faith teachers do not understand what they are doing, they are in essence fearing the lord, by obeying His commands to receive all His good promises. All these good promises are commands. To turn from unbelief (siding with traitors) and seeking to obtain these in faith, is to obey and fear the King. This is not to say their "fear of the Lord" is perfect, but they are pragmatically doing a big part of it. Thus, they are better at fearing the Lord, than those who talk often of fearing the Lord, but suppress faith, healing on demand, miracles and baptism of the Spirit.

Lastly, I think it is important to make that distinction of the emotional, fleshly, slavery of fear and attacks of Satan, in contrast to fearing God. One of the most repeated commands in the bible is not to fear. This is referring to putting fear in things that are not God, and this would include man, trials, demons or emotions.

Some who have a history of Satan attacking them with fear and dread, might unite this to the doctrine of the fear of God. Indeed, some know the truth about fearing God and are willfully rejecting it. These need to be rebuked harshly. But there are others, usually through bad teaching, and abuse from demonic attacks might have confusion how demons use fear and what it means to fear God. The fleshly fear is emotional and feeling. From this foundation of emotion and blindness of heart, demons irrationally lead people to conclude dreaded outcomes. It makes the flesh and emotions a first principle of truth over the Scripture. Demonic attacks of fear is defined by emotions of dread, then using emotions to make conclusions that say there is no hope, no mercy from God and no way out. This is a lie against scripture. Do not endure this. You have the authority to rebuke Satan and make him flee from you. Cast out the kingdom of darkness in the authority of Jesus' name. Sometime Satan's attack is more than lies against the truth, but emotional and irrational. You have the authority to command such harassment to leave. This is not demonic possession, but Satan will still attack Christians with lies against the truth and even spiritual force attacks of irrational emotions. In both cases, the Christian has the truth and has the power to rebuff and destroy all such attacks. The kingdom of God is more than just truth, it is also power. Pure unfettered power!

Godly fear is foundationally intellectual and spiritual. It is an intellectual understanding of God's authority of King and His power over life and condemnation. Remember Solomon's proverb? He says this as a father who instructs their child.

“Remember to fear both God and the king, their wrath is real. Therefore, do not go down the evil path. I will show you a better way.” It is not emotional dread, with no way out. There is many, many repeated exhortations in scripture to turn from sin and find mercy and help. The story of the prodigal son is a great picture of this. Thus, God’s fear tells you to fear the King who has the power of life and death, but Scripture also tells you there is a way out even if you have transgressed. We are pointed to the finished work of Jesus Christ. Mercy triumphs over judgment for all those who fear God, by putting their trust in His unfailing mercy.²⁰²

To repent and be reconciled to God is a command. Thus, confession of sins and trusting God to fulfill His promises of love and unmerited favor is to fear God by obeying Him. He wants this. By His own will and desire, He wanted your faith in Him to forgive and lavish you with unmerited favor to be part of what it means to “fear the Lord.” Healing is also a command for those who are sick, James 5:13-15. To reject this is disobedient and not fearing God. He commanded you to have faith to be healed and He commanded you to have faith to receive His financial help, as part of what it means to “fear the Lord.” Thus, to doubt God’s good promises for forgiveness, imputed righteousness, sonship, healing, prosperity and miracles is a life spent not fearing God.

The doctrine of the fear of the Lord always applies. It applied to Adam before the fall, to mankind after the fall, to us now and forever. However in Christ our new identity is our special focus. Our new man is renewed by seeing our glorious image in the glorious image of Jesus. As the Father loves the Son, He loves us. As the Father receives the Son, He receives us. As all things are under Jesus feet, they are under our feet. As Jesus is healthy, so are we in this world. As Jesus is righteous before the Father, so are we.

“For it is good that the heart be established by [unmerited favor].”
Hebrews 13:9

People might sometimes attribute laws as just being negative. Don’t do this, don’t touch this. However, this is wrong. Many commands and laws are also wrapped up in precious and gracious promises. Take for example forgiveness of sins and being saved. The promise is that for all who call upon the lord will be saved; they will not be put to shame. Yet this is also a command, for Paul says in Acts 17 to the Greeks that God has commanded all to repent and thus be saved. The same for healing. It is not optional to keep your mouth shut if God has done something good for you. James says in chapter 5 to give a praise report. This is not a self-help tip. It is a command. The same with healing. The command is not to merely pray with the elders for healing, but to be healed in faith. Healing is not merely a precious promise, it is a command.

Not all laws are negative. For example, a country can say you have the “freedom” to say ‘x,’ or do ‘y.’ This is what the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus means. It is a law declaring our freedom, both “from” something and “to” do something. The usual

²⁰² The exception is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. But those who commit this sin, are often too blind to be convinced they committed it.

Scriptural emphasis is what we are “free to do” in the law of life. We are free “from” the power of sin, but we are also free “to” approach God’s throne to ask and receive.

This is one difference between the Law of the Old Testament and New. It is not that one exclusively says “do not,” and the other “you are free to do this.” Yet there is a difference in emphasis. The law is more focused on what you must do or not do, in order to be righteous and stay righteous. The Law of the Spirit of Life, emphasizes all the good things you get to do, because you are already righteous in Christ. The law of the Spirit transfers you to a place of victory, and from this place of victory you fight, because joy has overwhelmed you knowing you cannot lose the good reward promised you in Christ. The Apostles had no issue reminding us in their letters that we are not to do this or that (morals of the Old Law do not stop from being in play); however, the emphasis of the Apostles is the freedom to receive all the good things given to us and freedom to do good things, because we are already righteous in Christ.

Benny Hinn, “The privilege of justification, is no longer living under the threat of punishment.”²⁰³ The law of the Spirit of life, with the imputed righteousness of Jesus as the foundation, frees us from the fear that we need be reconciled to God or the fear of losing our special insider status with God. This freedom and peace is foundational to a growth in sanctification. The New testament writers referred to some in their letters as knowing their election of God. Therefore when there is laziness and willful sin, we are told to check and make sure our election is sure. Having this confidence helps us in sanctification, because it removes both fear, and or delusion about oneself. One of Satan’s tactics involves fear, which hinders sanctification. The bible mentions a slavery to fear, because it is a real danger and weapon of the evil one. We have been freed from the slavery of fear, and now have the Spirit of sonship bursting in our souls. The kingdom of God is not eating or drinking, or fear or worry, but joy, power, a sound mind and righteousness.

Recall this section is about salvation as a subcategory of reality and causality, which is by God’s absolute sovereignty. We then moved into sanctification as a continuation of this. Thus, we did not get into all the specifics of what we do, but how God causes us to be sanctified. The Contract says God will write His laws in our souls, so that we obey Him and will never depart from obeying Him. God promised by His Son’s blood and death, that He will do this in us. It is certain. It is reality. It is already accomplished by the finished work of Jesus Christ. You are free! You are already under the power of the Spirit crying out in you, I am a child of God. You are already transferred from being under sin, to being under the dominating force of God’s unmerited favor.

The Spirit in conversion is endless power for intelligence and the subcategory of ethics.²⁰⁴ But the Spirit of God is more than that. We just learned the Spirit is endless

²⁰³ Benny Hinn, “Special Message -Romans 8,” from Youtube Aug 24th 2022.

²⁰⁴ “Man’s moral nature distinguishes him from the animals, and so it seems that it is a part of the image of God. But what is the basis of this moral nature, and how does it operate? Even animals “obey” God’s commands, but instead of doing so on the basis of understanding and volition, they are compelled by instinct. On the other hand, man receives and understands a divine command, and then decides to obey it or defy it. He can comprehend the concepts of good and evil, and he can discuss them by the use of language. This means that man is moral

Power of freedom for the whole man, both spiritual and material. In addition to all this endless power for so many categories, the Spirit is also endless power for missional aspects and expanding the Kingdom of God.

Baptized In The Spirit is being baptized with power to expand the Kingdom of God with God's POWER.

1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth,"

ACTS 1:8 NIV

29 "Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. 30 But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne. 31 David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah's resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave.

32 "God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. 33 Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today,"

ACTS 2:29-33 NLT

"I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? 4 Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? 5 So

precisely because he is rational. Morality is a function of intelligence or rationality. Therefore, although to have a moral nature is part of what it means to be a human person, it is not necessary to include it as part of the basic definition for the image of God."

Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology. 2010. Pg 120.

again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?...

He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit,”

Galatians 3:2-5 14, NIV

“While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied,”

Acts 19:1-6 NIV

This doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit will be fleshed out more in the section of Eschatology, since it has a special relevance in that topic. For now it is important to see how GOD works this part of our salvation and gospel in us by His decree and power. Jesus said to the disciples in more than one place that it is better for Him to leave and go to the Father (rather than stay), so that the Holy Spirit will be given. In Acts chapter 2 we see what this means. The Father promised Jesus Christ that Jesus will have free reign to pour out the baptism of the Spirit for power, after His resurrection and placement at His right hand. In context of Acts 1 and 2, this baptism of the Spirit is not for conversion, but for spiritual “power” and domination. The context shows speaking in tongues (i.e. power) and this combined with the preached word led to the salvation of thousands of people.

The Father planned and promised this. Jesus worked to secure it. And the Spirit is the literal power surging in the souls of God’s children.

The saints merely receive this gift by faith, and even this faith is a gift of God. The point is that salvation is a work of God under the category of His sovereignty. We see in this how immeasurably kind and giving God is with His sovereignty. He could do anything He wants, and yet, He planned, and worked so hard, to lavishly pour out rivers of His Spiritual Power. God is a lavish giver. God does not give us a secondary power, but He empowers us with His very Spirit. He gives this to us without measure.

Thus all who oppose biblical expansionism are anti-God, anti-sovereignty, and anti-gospel heretics. They do not like how God uses His absolute and direct sovereignty over all things. They disapprove how God saves. They are offended at how lavish He is

with giving us so much good things, including being empowered by the baptism of His Spirit.

Paul in Acts 19 asked if they have received “the Spirit.” In context he is not referring to conversion, but Spiritual empowerment, that is often with speaking in tongues. Thus, in context of Paul referring to “the Spirit” in other letters, it should be taken as the baptism of the Spirit for power, and not for conversion unless there is direct context to suggest otherwise. (For example, Paul refers to the “fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5 as inward ethical power. The context makes this obvious.)

In Galatians 3 “the Spirit” is said together with “miracles” as proof of conversion. Thus, we have 3 context related issues that all point to “the Spirit” as baptism of the Spirit. The “baptism of the Spirit” for miraculous outward power goes together with “miracles,” which is about miraculous outward power. Since Paul is already using things such as miracles (outward proof by supernatural power) for “proof” of the inward conversion of the soul, the baptism of the Spirit would fit this flow of argument. And as said before, Paul already in other letters uses “the Spirit” for baptism of the Spirit for power.

This means the blessing of Abraham includes baptism of the Spirit and miracles. The opposite of not having the baptism of the Spirit and miracles is to be under curses. Thus, the baptism of the Spirit (as we learned in Acts 2) through the blessing of Abraham given to us, is a sovereign work produced by Jesus. We receive it by faith, by agreeing that what God says is true, and He is faithful to do what He promised.

Healing & Miracles In The Contract

“But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat....

He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task.

The **goat will carry {nasa} on itself all their sins** to a remote place; and the man shall release it in the wilderness.”

Leviticus 16:10, 21-22 NIV²⁰⁵

“(Absolutely) **He has borne {nasa} our [sickness]**

And carried our [pains];
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.

But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was [crushed] for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed...

²⁰⁵ {} and emphasis by author to show the same Hebrew word connection in this verse to the next two.

He bore {nasa} the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.”
Isaiah 53:4-5,12 NJKV²⁰⁶

“Now when it was evening, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed, and he expelled the spirits with a word. And he healed all those who were sick, in order that what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah would be fulfilled, who said,

“He himself took away our sicknesses,
and carried away our diseases.”
Matthew 8:16-17

The connection here is painfully obvious. Bosworth says it concisely.

“In the fourth verse, the word borne (nasa) means "to lift up, to bear away, to convey or to remove to a distance." It is a Levitical word and is applied to the scapegoat, that bore away the sins of the people. "*The goat shall bear [nasa] upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness*" (Lev. 16:22).”²⁰⁷

Leviticus 16 is about substitutionary atonement. The goat takes the sins of the people onto itself and the people take the clean record of the goat onto themselves. There is an exchange of sin and purity.

In Isaiah 53 we see this same teaching of substitutionary exchange. For example, in verse 5 Jesus is given our chastisement, and we are given His peace. Therefore, Jesus says to the disciples, “*My peace I give you,*” (John 14:27). Also in verse 12 of Isaiah 53 it says “*He bore our sins.*” From Leviticus we know how to interpret this idea of “bearing” or “carry away.” The goat has our sinful record transferred to it, and then it is led outside the camp, being treated as the sinful traitor.

However, this *same Levitical language of substitution*, in the *same context* of Isaiah 53 says our sickness was “bore” or “carried away,” by Jesus Himself. Therefore, our sickness and disease were transferred to Jesus. As our scapegoat of sickness, Jesus was led outside the camp, as a diseased leper for us.

Jesus bore our sinful record and so He bore the consequence of this on His body so that we do not bear it. We do not carry the consequence of our sinful record in soul or body. Jesus carried away the anguish of soul, having faced the dread of God’s punishment in His soul for us, as He sweated blood from merely thinking about it. Jesus carried away our condemnation of the physical punishment that belonged on our bodies, by taking this on His body in crucifixion. The same for peace. Jesus bore away our chastisement on His body, outside the camp, so that we instead carry peace in our souls, and peace in all aspects of our life.

²⁰⁶ [] replaced with the alternative word provided by the NKJV footnotes.

() replaced “surely” with absolutely, which is a more commonly used word.

²⁰⁷ F.F. Bosworth. *Christ The Healer*. Read more for points on rebuttals.
Also see Vincent Cheung, *Biblical Healing*.

But this also applies to sickness and diseases. Jesus carried away our sickness on His body, outside the camp, in our place. In exchange we carry away healing and health.

Matthew 8:17 shows that sickness and diseases was the true intent of the Holy Spirit's revelation in Isaiah 53:4. It also shows that sickness and diseases means physical diseases (not spiritual sickness and tumors) as it almost always means in the Old Testament. When God's name is revealed as "Yahweh, Who Heals You," Yahweh says it in context of physical sickness and healing, "I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you," (Exodus 15:26).

Again, in Leviticus 14:18 we read of the priest making atonement for the cleansing of the leper. Why an atonement for the leper's healing if healing for us is not in the Atonement of Christ? The types in Leviticus, fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, show us that it was invariably through atonement that sickness was healed. We need go no further. This is a complete answer to the question we are discussing. All of these typical atonements point to, and prefigure, Calvary. Again, Jesus tells us, in Luke 4:19, that He was anointed "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," referring to the Old Testament year of jubilee. This shows us that the year of jubilee is strikingly typical of Gospel blessings. Here He applies the year of jubilee to the Gospel era. Leviticus 25:9 shows us that no blessing of the year of jubilee was to be announced by the sounding of the trumpet until the Day of Atonement. On this day a bullock was slain as a sin offering, and the mercy seat sprinkled with blood. No mercy was offered until the blood of the Atonement sprinkled the mercy seat, because it would be a judgment seat if not sprinkled with blood. This teaches us that no mercy or blessing of the Gospel is offered to us irrespective of Christ's Atonement....

In Numbers 16:46-50, after 14,700 had died of the plague, Aaron, as priest, in his mediatorial office, stood for the people between the dead and the living and made an atonement for the removal of the plague, the healing of the body. So Christ, our Mediator, by His Atonement, redeemed us from the "plague" of sin and sickness.

THE TYPE OF THE BRAZEN SERPENT Again, in Numbers 21:9, we read of the Israelites all being healed by looking at the brazen serpent, which was lifted up as a type of the Atonement. If healing was not to be in the Atonement, why were these dying Israelites required to look at the type of the Atonement for bodily healing? Since both healing and forgiveness came through the type of the Atonement, why not to us through Christ, the Antitype? As their curse was removed by the lifting up of the brazen serpent, so Paul tells us that ours is removed by the lifting up of Christ (Gal. 3:13). Again, in Job 33:24-25, we read: ". . . I have found a ransom [atonement]. His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth." Here, we see Job's flesh was healed through an atonement. Why not ours?

Again, David opens the 103rd Psalm by calling upon his soul to bless the Lord and to "forget not all his benefits." Then he specifies, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." How does God forgive sin? Of course, through the Atonement of Christ. He heals disease in the same way, because

the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the only ground for any benefit to fallen man. How can God save any part of man except through the Atonement?

In 1 Corinthians 10:11, Paul tells us "All these things happened unto them for ensamples [as types]; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come."²⁰⁸

Whether it was for the leper, or the bronze serpent lifted up, or Aron with the burning censor, ALL were healed. 100% success rate of healing. Is the copy (the Law) supposed to be more effective than the real?

All 3 places, in addition to the year of Jubilee, are made in connection to the "atonement," or substitutionary atonement. Thus, even in the Old Testament healing is connected to the atonement and with perfect achievement rate. This is why Jesus who was to make atonement, healed "all" who came to him. That is, all who looked on the bronze serpent were healed. And so, all who came to Jesus were healed. 100 percent achievement. James 5:15 says the same thing. If you have faith, you will be raised up. The scripture has been saying the same thing over and over again. Only the most intellectually broken mind will refuse to believe.

Some say, "well, in Matthew 8:17 Jesus did do physical healing, but it was a fulfillment of Isaiah 53 that stop there, because Jesus was not yet crucified." Yet, this is like saying, because "Jesus said "your sins are forgiven," to the paralyzed man, before His crucifixion, it means Jesus only forgave sins there and it stop there, as a fulfillment of Isaiah 53:5." Seriously, how stupid can one get? Such a remark would destroy forgiveness of sins. Romans 3 tells us that God handed out benefits of Christ atonement, like forgiveness, before it happened. Since God was the one who decreed the atonement, and God was the one who was going to perform it, there was no risk of it not happening. However, because God gave out these benefits, He looked unrighteous to His own revealed standard, until Jesus finished the work, which vindicated God's previous acts of mercy. Thus, there is no limit on the effectiveness of Jesus' atonement or His great love, whether applied to the past or future. It is men's small minds that try to limit God's ability and love to their finite ability.

Some say healing is accomplished by the atonement, yet its full intent will not happen until heaven. This is from a heart of unbelief, cowardice and a malfunctioned intellect. Some are only happy if they thrust every good thing (that is not spiritual) God gives us, into another time, another place, another multiverse, another person, but never here and never now and never for me. This is evidence of reprobation. The inability to receive God's benefit is reprobation. On the other hand, the children of God receive His good things because they are insiders, they are family.

In Heaven, we are given "new" bodies, as in something categorically different and better and transformed compared to what we have now.²⁰⁹ The old bodies will be

²⁰⁸ .F. Bosworth. Christ The Healer. Baker House. 2000. 9th edition. Pg 25, 28-29

²⁰⁹ 40 There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies **is different** from the glory of the earthly bodies. 41 The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory. 42 It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. 43 Our bodies are buried in

trashed. We will receive a new glorious super body. Thus, the idea of receiving healing for our “bodies” that we have “now” for heaven, is a category error. If our bodies receive healing, it is only now and only before heaven, not later.

This should lead us to consider faith and how much God loves us.

God loves us so much, that He spent precious real estate in Scripture to reveal how He will heal us by Jesus’ atonement. But beyond this, Jesus took up precious real estate during His substitutionary atonement, to carry our sickness and disease, even though it is a benefit that is only for this life. Oh, what great love! This should not surprise anyone acquainted with scripture. Instead of preaching the gospel, Jesus took so much time away from this to heal people instead. Why? Because unlike many unloving, unbelieving church people, Jesus cares about our physical sufferings so much. He did this out of love. Jesus said, if you have seen Me, you have seen the Father (John 14:9). The Father is so loving, He is obsessed with healing His children.

This also reminds us of faith. We see in Isaiah 53 both forgiveness of sin and healing. The way to receive this is by faith. Therefore, in James 5:15 we see this same paring of healing and forgiveness being received by the same foundation, faith.

“The prayer offered in (P) faith (Q) will make the sick person well;
the Lord will raise them up.
If they have sinned, (Q) they will be forgiven.”

Then, in verse 16, Peter explains the miracle, and says, "By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see." We receive and minister healing by faith, and it is a faith that comes from God.

Therefore, the answer is that just as God is sovereign over all things, including faith for salvation, he is also sovereign over faith for healing. Based on what the Bible teaches, we must insist that healing is indeed available on demand, but it is available to the demand of faith, not the demand of desire. Then, faith itself is under God's control.

God's sovereignty does not condone the unbelief and uncertainty of those who resist the ministry of miracles. When it comes to the salvation of the soul, there are those who use God's sovereignty as an excuse for their lack of faith or lack of interest, and if they are believers, for their lack of zeal in evangelism. We refuse to accept this, but we recall a distinction between God's decrees and God's precepts. Indeed, God's decree is that this one would believe, and that the other would not believe, but his precept to both is for them to believe and preach his message. The decree refers to what God would cause, and the

brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. 44 They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. 1 Corinthians 15:40-44. NLT

precept refers to how men should behave. The same applies to faith for receiving and ministering healing.

If someone says, "Since faith for salvation is a sovereign gift, I will not come to Christ, but wait for faith. If God wills, he will save me." We would realize that he is making an excuse for his unbelief, uncertainty, and rebellion. We would answer, "Now he commands all people everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30), and "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Acts 2:21). Likewise, although God is sovereign over healing as he is sovereign over everything, this is not an excuse for unbelief, uncertainty, and rebellion. We relate to God on the basis of his precepts, not his decrees. He says, "The prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:15), and "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mark 9:23).²¹⁰

The doctrine is simple. Both forgiveness and healing are on the demand of faith. (P) If faith in the atonement, (Q) then the consequence will necessarily happen.

If you deny one, then you deny faith in the blood of Jesus Christ is effective, powerful, finished and backed by the word of God, by the logic of *modus tollens*. Because both forgiveness and healing are produced by the same foundation of Jesus atonement and through faith, if you deny one you deny the other by affirming the blood of Jesus as unsuccessful.

Thus, those who attack healing on demand of faith are enemies of the gospel. They trample the blood of God's Son as a common thing. They are worse than trash. Have no fellowship with such a person, so that you do not share in their sins. Or do you have no fear of God?

Healing is a finished work of Jesus Christ, for your benefit. God convinced Himself before time began to heal you. You do not need to convince God to get healing. He already wanted it, and then made it a past-tense reality. Thus, you do not beg God. Outsiders of the Contract beg. Insiders and children receive it freely. It is already deposited into your account by grace. Faith is God empowering you to see healing as already yours and receive it freely by agreeing with God. He loves you.

A person once said, "many of my friends and family are dead from sickness and I've been dearly sick 8 times this year, Don't tell me God doesn't have a plan for my life with all this suffering I've been through. Sola Christ. Sola Scriptura."

However, Paul reminds us that God might be trying to kill you? Stop sinning (Corin. 11:29-30)

This is dealing with extreme examples, so that when dealing with sickness and death it should default to Satan and the fall. Acts 10:38.

God only ministers healing not sickness for His chosen ones. As in the example of the man sleeping with his stepmother, God through Paul can temporarily hand them over to Satan, for bodily destruction (sickness), to reawaken them to only seek God and to

²¹⁰ Vincent Cheung. Biblical Healing. 2012. Pg.11-12

abandon the world. It is Satan who ministers this sickness not God.²¹¹ For the elect, God ministers the benefits of the atonement, which is forgiveness, healing, comfort, protection and prosperity. Even in the example of the Father pruning the branches (John 15), the Father only removes unfruitful branches, He does not minister or give us unfruitful branches. Jesus only ministers the life-giving sap. Jesus is not a minister of sickness or sin. He takes sin and sickness away, He does not give them.

This is important because we will not fight sickness by miracle power, if we think God is the one ministering sickness to us. It is wrong to say God teaches by sickness, because the only source of knowledge is God's revelation. Experience gives no knowledge about any aspect of reality. Thus, a discipline could be used to point you to the scripture, but a discipline itself gives no knowledge. This is why sickness does not and cannot teach a person anything. Experience is the worst teacher, and God's revelation is the only source of knowledge. Jesus' atonement destroyed sickness, and Jesus Himself attacked sickness, often showing sickness was from the devil. Peter said the same thing in Acts 10:38. To fight sickness is to destroy Satan. To allow sickness is to allow Satan's kingdom to gain glory. This is the mindset we ought to have.

This is a foundational issue for faith. The atonement is already accomplished. The title deed to the benefits are already yours. Assenting to the finished aspect and assenting to the truth that these blessings are already deposited into your account, and that you want to experience benefit 'x' or 'y' today, is how you experience them today.

Forgiveness, healing, prosperity, and all kinds of helps, are not something you don't have and then beg God to give them to you. You already have them. Faith is God empowering you to see them already in your bank account, ready to be withdrawn at your pleasure.

Glorified

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[i] have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified,"
Romans 8:26-30.

²¹¹ Of course in the ultimate sense God causes all things directly by His absolute power; however, we will talk about this issue from the human perspective, for this is how the VAST MAJORITY of the bible talks about it. Jesus, "your faith healed you," "your faith saved you," "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar." If you do not like talking on the human level, which God likes so much, then go jump in the ocean and talk to the jellyfish, and let the rest of us have some peace.

"Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand,"
Romans 14:4 NIV.

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy,"
Jude 1:24 NIV.

"For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day,"
2 Timothy 1:12 NKJV.

"For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted,"
Hebrews 2:18 NIV.

"Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them,"
Hebrews 7:25.

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it,"
1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NIV.

The last act of God's salvation is to glorify those whom He rescued. This is both a one time act of bringing those to be with Him in a glorified body, in a glorified place, and in a continual outpouring of the fullness of His blessings. Hebrews 9 says God will come again separate from sin for salvation. Thus, the actualization of the "fullness" of God's blessings, purchased by Jesus, is called "salvation." As shown before salvation can both mean to "deliver," which is what happened in the atonement, and a bigger meaning of receiving good things and blessings, and this is what is meant in Hebrews 9. Even today we receive this blessing part of what salvation means, in such things as healing, prosperity and all sorts of miracles and helps from God.

We have already dealt with the "already not yet fallacy," in a previous section. There is a legitimate doctrinal divide between the salvation we get now and later. When the scripture often emphasizes this divide it highlights all the great blessings we get "now." However, when theologians emphasize this divide they do the opposite and tells us all the things we get later. Why do they speak so differently from God? Despite the emphasis not lining up with Scripture, some of the blessings they say are for later, are in fact false and heretical; they are for today, and to be experience in ever increasing power, enjoyment and frequency.

We have already gone over Romans 8 and the logical order of the decrees, that show the certainty of predestination to conversion to glorification. What needs to be stressed is that God both planned to glorify (this was the original thought or goal for the church) and will do it. We are still in the section of soteriology. This is a sub-category of God's sovereignty. God saves. In the ultimate sense, God is the one who glorifies us, not us or even our faith. He is the power and direct control over our lives that glorifies us. He wanted to do it. He did. And He will do it.

The decrees are the secret guarantee of our glorification, for God's very thoughts are reality itself. There is no difference between "God thinks so," and reality. The finished atonement and resurrection of Jesus is the public declaration and public guarantee of our glorification. Guarantee in the sense that God cannot lie. He promised the atonement and finished it. John 1:1 says Jesus is the Logic. Jesus is the law of contradiction. Thus, he cannot lie, because He is Logic; He is perfect rationality. His thinking structure is perfection, without any flaws of induction or contradiction.

Thus, the possibility of the effects not happening does not exist.

This will be repeated later in ethics, but it can be highlighted here. Because God is able, He will do it. Thus, when it comes to the "promises of God," the emphasis is on the will of man, and not "the will of God." That is, God's love is presupposed. The bible in such passages presupposes that a Christian understands and believes how much God LOVES them. Therefore, God merely says, "I am able." It is like a wife calling her husband, "the car broke down, and I am stranded." The husband presupposing the wife knows how much he loves her will simply say, "I will be there." If there is ability, then it will be done, because the love is presupposed. The same with God and His promises to man. If God has ability, and God always has infinite ability, God will be there to fulfill all His promises. Faith in the promise will always invoke God responding, "I am able," "I will be there."

Thus, when it comes to experiencing all the good promise of salvation in this life, and complete glorification in the next, if a man will have faith in God's promise, then God will always respond with "I will be there." If man will have faith in that by Jesus' stripes they are healed and asks for help, then God will respond with "I will be there." Healing in this sense is the "will of man," and not God's will.

"Paul said Abraham was convinced that "God was able to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:21), and the outcome was certain. This faith was "counted to him as righteousness" (v. 22). Now Jesus said, "And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith" (Matthew 21:22). This is also a promise, but the cult of orthodox unbelief adds, "if it is his will" and leaves the outcome unknown. Was Jesus too stupid to add "if it is his will"? This kind of faith cannot be counted as righteousness.

God promised that Abraham would have a son, and that his descendants would become numerous like the stars. He promised that he would make his name great. It was not presented as a promise of salvation or justification as such, and it was not a call to suffering discipleship. It was a promise of healing, prosperity, and glory for Abraham. And Abraham was justified by believing in this promise. The sort of message that false teachers call heresy today has been the foundation for the calling of Moses, the coming of Christ, and the salvation of Christians. Abraham recognized that his own body and his wife's body were old and barren, but because God said that he would have a son, natural circumstances became irrelevant. He believed that God was able to perform a miracle of healing.

It would have been redundant to believe that God was willing to do what he said. Of course he was willing – he said it. God said, "Abraham, I have made

you the father of nations. You are going to have a son. I will make your name great." Imagine if Abraham had said, "I know you are able, but are you willing to do it?" This would have made no sense, but somehow it has become a pillar in Christian reasoning."²¹²

He Will Do It/We Will Do It

Salvation's broad foundation, is "God." God is the foundation of theology and thus salvation. Without Him, there is no point in doing theology. God's foundation as taught in Scripture, is absolute and direct control over all reality. This foundation takes away all the problems for salvation and man's ability to obey God.

We will not rehash the absolute reliability of the Contract we have God. God will do what He says, no matter how great and wonderful the promise. That is the summary of the doctrine.

Many look at their sanctification and thus proof that they will be glorified, from a man-centered focus. Doing so will bring heartache, stress, depression, blasphemy, and if not rectified damnation.

When Isaiah 55 says that God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts, it is not referring to God's knowledge versus human knowledge in general. If that was the case, then the knowledge that God's knowledge is not our knowledge is not our knowledge. It would end up in self-contradictory nonsense. But since Jesus appeals to the law of contradiction, we know anything that leads to skepticism is false. Thus apart from the obvious nonsense we know such an interpretation is unbiblical.

Rather, in this passage God refers to knowledge about His future revelation of unmerited favor that will be given through Jesus Christ. The verse that follows says, come buy milk and honey without price. That is, things like forgiveness and healing (etc), because of Jesus' finished work, we can buy them without cost. For the audience at that time, such a revelation of grace was beyond their understanding and faith. However, since we live after the finished work of Jesus, then God's ways of grace are our ways, and His thoughts of grace are our thoughts. Paul even says in 1 Corinthians 2 that "we have the Mind of Christ."

I say this to remind the reader, that the gospel radically changes the believer into a super species. They have a new created reality, fundamentally different from their old reality. The Christian renews their mind to think in line with the new definition given to them in Christ.

In laymen's terms, what King David says is 100 times more true today, when he says, *"In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall,"* Psalm 18:29

Man's ability is God's ability. Or stated negatively, man's limitation is God's limitation. We are not talking about being deified with attributes that by definition can only belong to God like being infinite, or immutable. What we are referring to is God's promises to strengthen us, bless us and empower us.

²¹² Vincent Cheung. Healing: The Will of Man. HERO. 2022. Pg. 13.

Our ability to be sanctified is not measured by man's limitation but by God's infinite ability to work in man. Our ability to know God, is not measured by our finiteness, but by the limitless ability of the Spirit of God to make us to have the mind of Christ, and to cause us to know all the things freely given to us. Or is the finiteness of man greater than God's ability of infinite power? Some perverts not satisfied to limit man, but they are not quenched until they limit God. We are not talking about something irrational like God creating a rock too heavy for Him to lift, when God does not have a body. We are talking about the sheer power of God to create and cause. How many propositions can you think of at the same time? Or how high can you jump? Or how long does it take to go 500 miles? How well can you cure an incurable disease? How well can you sanctify your actions? The issue is how much ability does God have to enable me to think of many propositions at the same time. How much power does God have to enable me to jump or go a distance of 500 miles? How much power does God have to renew and heal the body? How much ability does God have to sanctify my actions? This is the new measure the Christian is to measure their own ability.

Jesus says, "Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible," Matthew 19:26. Jesus is making a distinction with God's power and human power. Jesus points out that human power is limited in context of salvation. He says God has no limits to His power and so God has power to save.

Paul in Ephesians 6:10 says, "*be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.*" Also, in Acts 1:1-8, Jesus commands the apostles and believers to be empowered by the Holy Spirit. Lastly, Jesus says about those who believe in Him, "Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these," John 14:12.

The conclusion is simple. Jesus says in Mark 9:23

"Everything is possible for one who believes," Mark 9:23.

We are not pantheists. God is not what He creates. God is separated from creation. When God empowers "you," then it is "you" not God that is empowered.

It will obey "you." Jesus says you can command a mountain to be thrown into the sea and it will obey who? God? No. It will obey "you." In Ephesian 6, it is a command, not a mere suggestion, to be empowered with human limitations? No. To be empowered with God's own power and strength. Let the sink in. Imagine Zeus freely giving power and his lightning bolt to "you" to empower "you." But this is what God does for us, and commands that we do. Boldly walk into the throne of grace and grab Yahweh's lightning bolt and use it. God like this. He wants you empowered with His power.

The limitations of the old man are gone, whether if it is about spiritual things such as sanctification or something like being teleported 500 miles to another city.

We are children of God. His ways are now our ways, and His thoughts are now our thoughts. So much so that "all things are possible to the one who believes." This is the glory and splendor and privilege that belongs to the sons of God. The corrupted world will be liberated into the "liberty of" the "children" of God.

Eschatology

Eschatology = (Right-Hand-Of-The-Power-ology)

The God of Israel gives power and strength to his people.
(Psalm 68:35 (NLT))

And Jesus said, "I am, and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven."
(Mark 14:62 LEB)

Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims.
And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed.
There was great joy in that city.
(Acts 8:7-8 NLT)

As per usual our theological maximum is this, God is the foundation and focus, not man, not something else. It is the same here in a doctrine of eschatology. God is the foundation for thinking about the "end times," not man. Eschatology has an extremist "Jesus-on-the-throne," focus. For those who love Him, this is great news. For those who do not, they find every excuse under the sun to make eschatology focused on man, government made up of man, and man protesting these governments made up of man. Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Power, is the foundation and focus millennial thinking.

Here is a professional tip, in thinking about eschatology. When you are studying eschatology or are finished, where do most of your thoughts go? Have you been thinking much about Jesus at the right hand of God, or has your thoughts been focused on man, or governments (that are made up of man), or even the suffering of the saints? In the book of Acts, in the mist of real persecution for the sake of the gospel, the apostles and church were extremist level, focused on Jesus on His throne, not man, (not even on the saints suffering, except in the aspect to love and help them), (Acts 4:23-31). This is a simple test to see if your eschatology is trash or if (at the very least) your application is in the general right direction. Where are your thoughts?

In this basic systematic theology book, we will go over the basics on eschatology. It will mainly be a positive declaration rather than focusing on long rebuttals of errors; I will however; give some recommendations for such materials.²¹³ For this purpose, we will

²¹³ I have been helped in this subject by Kenneth Gentry, "He Shall Have Dominion," 2009.

Also his books on preterism on Revelation and Matthew 24 are helpful. He gives good rebuttals and further systematic treatment of the relevant verses. I find he does add some "preterism" on some text that seem weak, but I do agree with the overall thrust that many places in the gospel of Matthew (24) and Revelation (1-19) is about the destruction of the Temple (and Judaism), and the punishment on the Jews, so as to make a new path for the gospel and bride of Jesus Christ to advance the Kingdom of God.

As will be seen in this section, as a cessationist, Kenneth, and most postmillennialist/preterist have a ok understanding on the broad idea of Jesus' throne, kingdom and the meaning of many relevant

not start by jumping into the middle of post-, pre- and amillennialism. The main reason for this is because the Bible itself does not mainly look at eschatology that way. I wish to partly invalidate these bad starting points, by not actually starting there in this book. However, for quick definitions, these “isms” are all centered around the very few times the scripture mentions the idea of a “1000 years or millennial” time frame, for example in Revelation 20.

“And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time,” (Revelation 20:1-3 NIV).

This will be dealt with near the end of this section. The Scripture deals with this subject in eschatology in a minor way, and thus, we will deal with it in the same minor way.

In trying to be “gospel-centered” Christians error in overemphasis. In the decrees of God, Christ ruling at His right hand, with the elect living in the house of God as His children, was the first original goal for Jesus and His people. God did not start off with the decrees with saving people; the decrees did not start with the gospel. The Father started with having an elect family to lavish the endless power of His love on, through an exalted public Jesus Christ. God decreed the gospel later to achieve this good pleasure. I say this because, the throne power of Jesus Christ, is often looked on as a second-class doctrine compared to the forgiveness of sins; at least in my own personal experience.

This can be seen in an illustration of the unbelief and laziness of the Israelites in the desert. God saved them from Egypt. He rolled their shame away. He broke their slavery off. However, God did not intend for them to merely stay in this saved state; rather, God had plans to EMPOWER THEM. After saving them, God’s plan was to bless them by empowering them and sending them to take the Promise Land. Jude says it was “Jesus” who saved them from Egypt and empowered them. They were to wield God’s power for themselves, as true people of God. God wanted to make a distinction with them. God wanted other people to see that God so loved them so much, that Israel was allowed to take hold of GOD’S POWER and use it for

texts. Because modern reformed cessationist deny God’s sovereignty over everything, His faithfulness to keep His promises, and because they focus on men rather than God, their biggest mistakes, are seen in application. This is where cessationist or non-expansionist make huge theological blunders. They will say God is sovereign in ALL things, but not in sin, and evil and not in x, y and z. They will say, God is sovereignly faithful to keep ALL His gospel promise, but even if you have faith for healing and material blessings, God is not guaranteed to be faithful to perform His promises. God was not sovereign when He promised Healing and so, even if you have true faith for healing, God is not sovereign to do what He said. God is on His throne of Power, but in application we are to seek power in man, governments and churches rather than from Jesus and His throne of power. It is like saying, “All men have sinned. Oshea is a man. Thus, Oshea has not sinned.” This is how the cessationist and most modern Reformed apply the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, the gospel, faith and eschatology. Their glory is their delusion and shame; they have their reward.

Also, Vincent Cheung’s short commentary on Thessalonians was helpful to me on this subject. He also mentions some other helpful books on this subject, in the footnotes, if you need more to read.

themselves. What pagan god does that? When Yahweh says that He will be their God and they His people, He meant it. He wanted them to know it, and He wanted the world to know it. Other than Joshua, Caleb and Moses that generation declined to be empowered by God, through their unbelief in His promise. God punished, judged, and made their words of unbelief to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. In the book of Hebrews, we are instructed to not be like that generation.

The same is with the gospel. However, because the decrees are the original logical order, then Jesus saving and then empowering was original, and the Exodus story was created by God to illustrate this prior purpose. Jesus saves the elect. He frees them from the power of slavery under Satan, sin and death. He rolls their shame away. He lavishes them with his love and then says to them, “Now that you have been freed and cleansed, receive MY POWER, and go forth to take the Land in My Name.” This gospel story was the original, and the Exodus story was designed later to help illustrate this gospel.

Therefore, Jesus is recorded by Luke COMMANDING the disciples,

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Jesus commands them to receive the promised gift of the Father. This gift is called “the baptism of the Spirit,” and then simply as “power.” Thus, applying the hermeneutics of first mention, we will apply the idea of “power” to be witness of Jesus, as “baptism of the Spirit.” This principle can be applied in both ways. Not only in the history order of the Bible, but also considering the logic order. When considering definition of terms and uses, using the biblical historical order is how the Bible uses this principle, such as with Jesus appealing to creation for defining the impossibility of man having the authority or power to separate a marriage. Paul in Ephesians 5 appeals to the decree or logical order to interpret how marriage should be applied.²¹⁴

In the next chapter this baptism of the Spirit comes with miracle of speaking in other tongues, with Peter applying this to Joel’s prophecy. This prophecy mixes salvation and power or miracles together. Thus, as a first mention we will do the same. The baptism of the Spirit is defined with speaking in tongues, miracles and power.

“For these men are not drunk, as you assume, because it is the third hour of the day.

But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

²¹⁴ In a simplistic way to illustration this (because, there is some overlap here), consider the first term definitions in the historical order as defining terms in a syllogism. Consider looking at the logical order and God’s decreed goals to see how it looks, as the conclusion of the syllogism. Passages talking about the first goals of God’s decrees will have some context to define terms, and so first mentions in the Old Testament will give clues to the decrees of God, (etc.). First mention definitions should match, without contradiction, what the decrees say about the same thing in their context of definitions.

‘And it will be in the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

And even on my male slaves and on my female slaves I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

And I will cause wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

The sun will be changed to darkness and the moon to blood, before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.

And it will be that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved,” (Acts 2:15–21 LEB).

Peter says this “gift” of “power” was promised from the Father to the Son, so that the Son can give it, from His position of authority, to the elect children, and they receive it by faith.

“This Jesus God raised up, of which we all are witnesses. Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out this that you see and hear,” (Acts 2:32-33 LEB).

This was the original goal. The Exodus story, was decreed later to illustrate this gospel story. God’s saves, then He empowers in the gospel of Christ. And so, God later decreed to save and then empower in the Exodus story to illustrate. There are two baptisms in the gospel; the first is for salvation (born again) and the other baptism is for the power to advance the Kingdom. And so, God, later decreed to have two baptisms in the Exodus story²¹⁵; the first baptism of the Red Sea for salvation, and the second baptism in the Jordon for power to take the Promise Land.

This is where we will begin our doctrine on eschatology. ***Jesus at the right hand of Power and Authority, and Jesus giving His elect His power and Authority.*** This is where God began in the decrees for eschatology; this is where the subsequent decrees logically come later to support. In essence, this gives the conclusions for the syllogism. It allows us to see what eschatology is to be up front. This allows us to determine if someone brings in a correct or incorrect term(s) and premise(s). ²¹⁶

In our last passage, it reads:

“Exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you see and hear.” (Acts 2:33)

²¹⁵ Vincent first brought this “two baptisms in the O.T.,” to my attention in the essay, “The Edge of Glory,” found in Sermonettes Volume 9. 2016.

²¹⁶ This is why the premillennialist Pentecostals are so irrational. They start with the conclusion about baptism in the Spirit. Thus, they have no excuse for reading the bible and coming up with the major terms of eschatology that does not support the conclusion. Despite this mental blunder and rebellion, at least the sick and demon possessed people they heal are freed from be victimized and lead to salvation.

Peter is responding to questions about the “Power” the apostles and over 100 disciples are displaying in the baptism of the Spirit. Peter’s argument is straightforward. Jesus is victoriously seated at the right hand of the Power. Jesus is no longer the humbled servant; He’s now reigning as King. Twice in Peter’s sermon, his remarks about the baptism of the Spirit refer to the continual application of Jesus’ authority on the throne, without any mention of an intermediate millennium.

First, Peter cites Joel’s prophecy. Both salvation from sins and miraculous power are mentioned side by side; they’re inseparable. What God has joined together, let not theologians separate. (This is similar to healing and salvation being inseparably linked, such as in the substitutionary death of Jesus (Isaiah 53) and in James 5.) Joel says in those days, people will call on God for salvation, be saved, and be filled with miraculous power. Peter presents this passage as fulfilled through Jesus’ resurrection to the throne and His authority to make it happen. If one claims the baptism of the Spirit and miraculous power have stopped or diminished, they can’t logically do so without saying salvation from sins has ceased or diminished. Peter’s argument is that Jesus on the throne is the foundation for this.

Oddly, some claim the baptism of the Spirit and miraculous power ceased or diminished with the apostles. I can simply respond, “Where does Peter say this?” Where does Peter, or any apostle, make this argument in the Bible? In the next chapter (Acts 3:16), Peter denies the man was healed by the name of Peter, the power of the apostles, or the age of the apostles. Peter says Jesus gave the man faith in Him, and by his faith in Jesus, the man was healed. This is exactly what Peter preached in the previous chapter. In both preaching and immediate application, Peter denied anything revolved around the apostles; instead, he emphasized it was about Jesus, His position, and His faithfulness to keep His promises. The miraculous healing has nothing to do with men or apostles but with Jesus on His throne. Despite theologians hating this, Jesus is still on the throne. Jesus defines times and eras, not men or apostles. The age of Joel’s prophecy thus still stands because its application depends on Jesus being on the throne as David’s descendant and His faithfulness to keep the promise (“...exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this that you see and hear...”).

When people talk about apostles or “the age of the apostles,” it reveals a broken and delusional mind that’s systematically, habitually, and demonically focused on men rather than God. These people are the pinnacle of man-centeredness. They have their reward.

Secondly, Peter restates his argument in the closing words of the sermon:

“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to Himself’” (Acts 2:38-39).

The people asked what they needed to do to “receive” this power of the Spirit. This is the context. Peter says you need to have your sins forgiven (“repent and be baptized [water baptism]”), and then you’ll receive the gift of the baptism of the Spirit, which they saw displayed in the apostles and Jesus’ followers. Peter speaks of a “promise.” In the context of his sermon, the only promise he quotes from the Old Testament about receiving miraculous power is Joel’s promise. Thus, under the infallible guidance of God, Peter takes this promise to encompass both calling on the Lord for salvation and

receiving miraculous power. He sees these as “one promise” for this age, defined by Jesus on the throne with the authority to ensure the promise is applied. The millennial age is defined by this one promise of salvation and empowerment with Jesus at the right hand of Power.

Peter further restates this by saying the promise is for “you,” “your children,” and “all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to Himself.” This is about predestination and God’s sovereign call, not apostles, “age of men,” or “age of apostles.” It’s about God’s sovereign election. It’s God-centered, not man-centered. It’s an indefinite application, defined by Jesus on the throne until the last enemy is under His feet. There’s no mention of an intermediate rule. Why? Because Jesus is already in the highest position, on the highest throne. It’s about the “age of Jesus on the throne.”

Peter, in the context of Joel’s promise as one promise for this age, defined by Jesus on the throne, makes a *modus ponens* logical application. He commands, “Be forgiven of your sins by repentance, and then you’ll receive the baptism of the Spirit.” Oddly, Peter makes forgiveness of sins a necessary but only a doorway or stepping stone to what they’re all after: the promise of the Spirit. Thus, if you diminish the application of the baptism of the Spirit and the miraculous part of Joel’s promise, you logically diminish salvation. Such an attack also diminishes the doctrine of predestination and God’s sovereignty. Cessationism is a doctrine of demons. It’s the enemy of the gospel of Jesus Christ’s finished work. Cessationism denies God’s absolute and arbitrary sovereignty.

Lastly, Peter puts this *modus ponens* into an eschatological application of the elect’s union with God: “as many as the Lord our God calls to Himself.” Who would deny that calling someone “to Himself” isn’t about election and salvation? Even in the same book of Acts, recorded by Luke, it reads, “When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48).

The promise is about receiving salvation and miraculous power, as Peter quotes from Joel. The emphasis by the crowd and Peter is on the gift of the baptism of the Spirit for this miraculous power. In this context and emphasis, Peter makes a *modus ponens*. The cause and antecedent is forgiveness of sins and salvation by faith in Jesus. The necessary consequent and effect is receiving the baptism of the Spirit by faith. Peter’s argument is: if you want the power of God’s Spirit, be saved by faith in Jesus, and then you’ll receive this miraculous gift. Joel’s promise says if you call out, you’ll be saved, and God will pour out His Spirit. Therefore, call out to God, and you won’t be put to shame.

From this necessary *modus ponens*, Peter says, “as many as God calls to Himself.” You can’t divide Peter’s argument because the logical connection he makes is necessary, not sufficient. Peter puts these together as one thing God does to “call a person to Himself.” Has God stopped calling people to Himself? Then God hasn’t stopped pouring out the gift of the Spirit, which has speaking in tongues as a regular sign. God doesn’t merely use the antecedent or the consequent to “call to Himself.” No. Because the consequent is necessary, if you have the first, you have the second. God grants repentance and then the baptism of the Spirit to “call to Himself.”

As with propositional logic, the other deductive combination is a *modus tollens*. So, if you deny the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit by faith in Jesus, you deny salvation

by faith in Jesus. (There are some qualifications for applying this to individuals.) What, then, is the destiny of cessationists and the modern Reformed church today? Well, they're in deep trouble. Their doctrines deny core gospel-related doctrines. They're not as safe from hellfire as they think. Their gospel is Satan's gospel. Yet, even in Revelation, John says there are some in Sardis who haven't defiled themselves. That is, some are just ignorant, slow to believe, or not truly anti-expansionist. However, let's not be delusional—Jesus says by their fruit (mainly referring to doctrine), they'll prove who they are. Their doctrines on major points are anti-Scripture and anti-Christian. Because Scripture provides true premises and valid connections, the traditionalists' denial of the baptism of the Spirit is a denial of repentance of sins by faith in Jesus Christ.

Some translations read, "then you will receive the..." or "and you will receive the..." The outcome is the same. If rendered as a propositional conjunction argument, denying only one of the conjunctions (P and Q) (not Q) makes the statement, as a whole, false about reality. Either way, this "promise" that both Joel and Peter put together can't be separated or one part denied without blasphemy. They're one promise for this current age because this promise depends on Jesus being on the throne as David's descendant. Jesus defines the age; Jesus defines the application of the promise. Not men, not something else. John the Baptist said he baptized with water, but Jesus baptized with the Spirit. John's baptism was for all, and Jesus' is the same. Why do men keep looking to men? Why do they keep looking to apostles? Why do they keep looking to church fathers? Why do they keep looking to suffering men? Why don't the self-proclaimed experts focus on Jesus on the throne and His sovereign faithfulness to perform what He said He'd do? They're a religion of men, for men. They have their reward.

Peter in Acts 2, slam-dunk ties salvation and Spirit-powered miracles to Jesus' throne vibes—no apostle-era expiry date! Cessationists' "miracles faded" drivel is a man-centered flop, slicing Joel's promise like theological sushi. Deny the Spirit's Power for regular miracles? You're dissing salvation and predestination too. Jesus reigns, the Spirit is flowing down, and faith grabs both.

Peter makes an obvious argument in Acts 11:17-18.

"16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 Therefore if God gave them the same gift as also to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to be able to hinder God?" 18 And when they heard these things, they became silent and praised God, saying, "Then God has granted the repentance leading to life to the Gentiles also!"

The antecedent is clear, "If God gave them the same gift as we... ." Or to shorten it, "(P) **if God gives a person the baptism of the Spirit.**" The consequent is hidden behind more rhetoric, "*who was I to hinder God.*" What does that refer to? Hinder God from what? The next verse answers this, "**then, God has granted repentance.**" Peter under the inspiration of the Spirit, and Luke likewise recording this makes this deductive argument. "(P) if God has given a person the baptism of Spirit, (Q) then it is proof that God has also granted them repentance."

N.1. If baptism of the Spirit, then proof of repentance to life.

N.2. There is baptism of the Spirit.

N.3. Thus, proof of repentance to life.

Peter's initial claim is they (the specific people he preached to) have been given repentance. Jesus has already prepared Peter to accept that what He has made clean is clean (the gentiles as a whole, or the elect gentiles), and thus, it is correct for them to conclude from the fact "these" gentiles were given repentance (water baptism) and the Spirit (baptism of the Spirit) that as a whole the gentiles were given repentance to life. Jesus had already revealed the universal truth claim that He has opened heaven's citizenship to gentiles by repentance.

This should not be a surprise. This is the same Peter in the sermon on Pentecost saying you need to be forgiven, and then you will receive the Spirit. To have a sound argument you need both truth and valid reasoning. The bible solves both, which are insurmountable problems for non-Christians. We are given two statements about reality. Because Jesus is on the throne, therefore, (1) the promise of repentance and baptism of the Spirit is a packaged deal, here and now. Also, (2) if baptism of the Spirit, then proof of repentance. With these truth claims about reality we have an intellectual and precise understanding about eschatological application.

The most important issue here is Peter's logical use of a "necessary" connection in the argument. It is irrelevant if Peter was inspired by the Spirit to give a new true claim about reality, or making a deduction from a previous truth claim. The outcome is the same. If baptism and repentance do not have a "necessary" connection, but only a sufficient connection, the baptism of the Spirit, cannot logically prove repentance. It would at best, only say it is a probable reason. However, Peter takes it as a proof, not an inductive probability.

To further elaborate this point of proof, we will examine this point more to show the seriousness of it.

Expansionism

This doctrine is reserved for the section on "Ethics," however, I will briefly define it here for context.

I am using the term as Vincent Cheung has defined it, since his term properly encompasses what the Scripture teaches on this subject. He was the first to use it (as far as I am aware), and it is a clear definition, and so, I will use his. I will let him define it here:

Expansionism is the Bible's explicit doctrine on the subject of spiritual gifts, powers, and miracles. This is the only biblical perspective. I am unaware of any official recognition of the doctrine, so I have selected the term for it. The word is sometimes used in a political sense, but I mean it in a spiritual sense. It is applied to every aspect of the advance of the gospel, but in this context we will focus on the supernatural powers and miracles that God works in association with his people. This is the biblical doctrine that supernatural powers and miracles are to increase in God's people beyond what Jesus Christ himself exercised. They are to multiply exponentially in quantity and frequency, in

intensity and magnitude, in the diversity of representation, and in the scope of jurisdiction. There should be an accumulated momentum, so that compared to Jesus and the apostles, and compared to each previous generation, the church should demonstrate more miracles, greater miracles, miracles performed by more kinds of people, and miracles performed in more areas of the world...

Jesus would perform a miracle, and then he would say that the one who has faith can perform the same miracle, and even a greater miracle — a greater miracle than the one he did. It was as if he wanted to erase every doubt and condemn every excuse. He emphasized this doctrine again and again, and he formulated it in explicit terms. He referred to his miracles (John 14:11), and then he said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father” (14:12). This leaves no room for cessationism, but it is much more than continuationism. It is expansionism.

The Bible contains statements that promise us the ability to perform specific kinds of miracles by faith. For example, James 5:15 is a promise for miracles of healing. In fact, it is a command to perform miracles of healing as much as it is a promise. However, even before we learn about these promises, or even without them, John 14:12 guarantees the continuation and expansion of the miracles that Jesus performed. Even without Matthew 17:20, Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23, and every other passage like these, the one who has faith possesses an irrefutable and permanent basis to perform the same kinds of miracles, such as to command a sickness to leave someone, or to command the restoration of a damaged or missing organ. John 14:12 encompasses all the miracles of Christ, so that miracles of prophecy, miracles of nature, and all other miracles, are also included and promised to those who have faith. That said, we indeed have Matthew 17:20, Matthew 21:21, Mark 11:23, and many other passages that dictate the doctrine of expansionism. It is inescapable....

... Before Christ ascended to the throne of God, he declared that the Holy Spirit would come upon the disciples, and they would receive the same power that he exercised in his ministry (Acts 1:8). Keep in mind that he had already promised that anyone could perform the same and even greater miracles by faith, and the disciples had already been performing miracles by faith, healing the sick and casting out demons in his name. Jesus did not want this to merely continue. He wanted more, much more. This would add still another dimension of spiritual power to their lives — faith upon faith, power upon power. Jesus was not satisfied until his followers had attained an excessive and ridiculous level of charismatic endowments. He refused to accept a mere continuation of his ministry, but he demanded an expansion, an escalation. He wanted the power they demonstrate to be outright absurd. He told them not to leave the city until the Spirit arrived. Then they were to expand, and carry this power “to the ends of the earth.”

When we come to the events after the ascension of Christ, we need to move quickly, because too many things happened for us to consider them in detail. The disciples were no longer just talking about it, but they were doing it. Expansion in every aspect was happening — the quantity of the miracles, the quality of the miracles, the diversity of believers, and the immensity of

territories. There was an explosion of supernatural power, and miracles splattered all over the place.

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit arrived in a spectacular fashion upon the group of believers. Only ten percent of them were apostles (Acts 1:15), but all of them were directly infused with the same power to receive revelations and to perform miracles that infused Jesus Christ (Luke 4:14, 24:49, Acts 1:8, 2:4). Since the first day, the overwhelming majority of those who had prophetic gifts and miraculous powers were not apostles. Peter explained that it was exactly what was supposed to happen. He referred to the prophet Joel: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy” (Acts 2:17-18). The anointing of the Spirit had spread beyond a few kings and prophets, to Christ and his disciples, and now it would expand in power and scope to all kinds of people, penetrate all levels of society, invade all areas of the world, for all times in the future....²¹⁷

Let me give a quick summary of this.

Expansionism is the combination of the (1) discipleship “**faith**” Jesus mentions in “...*whoever believes* in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these,” John 14:12 (NIV).²¹⁸ This basic discipleship faith is meant for all disciples of Christ. First it says, “whoever believes in Me,” and the context is paralleled with loving each other—or is loving our Christian brothers only for the 12 original apostles? (2) The combination of “**baptism of the Spirit**” that Jesus commanded, and Peter through the Joel prophecy, says it is for all whom God calls to Himself in predestination. (3) The combination of the “**gifts of the Spirit**” as mentioned briefly in Corinthians 12-14.

There is even more, such as what some call the mode of the “anointing presence of God,”(etc.) or that we are a royal priesthood and identified with Christ and how this relates to our authority, but we will just keep it to 3 for simplicity.

²¹⁷ Vincent Cheung. “Expansionism: A Gospel Manifesto.”

From the ebook, Fulcrum. 2017. Ch. 1. Pg.5-11.

I quoted this at large, because I wanted to make sure there was plenty of context for Vincent to define this doctrine in his own words, thus, if I were to teach something different or disagree there is ample context to demonstrate.

²¹⁸ Compare this to John 3:16.

“...*whoever believes* in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 (NIV)

“...*whoever believes* in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these.”

John 14:12 (NIV)

These 3 combinations are not meant as static; rather, they are meant as an ever increasing²¹⁹ expansion in and through the Church to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. That is, the millennium started when Jesus sat on His throne, at the right hand of the Power. He commands an ever-increasing expansion of His kingdom on earth by commanding all to repent (baptism of new-birth), to be empowered (baptism of the Spirit). By these two baptisms, the elect are to be filled with intellectual, ethical and missional power to expand His kingdom on earth, like the Israelites expanded into the Promise Land. This expansion will continue until the fullness of the gentiles are complete and the Jews experience an accelerated repentance in Jesus Christ.

This is what postmillennialism lacks; it has the structure without the content. It has the building but no people. It has a body but no soul. Because the church (for about 1,500 years) has labeled expansionism as heresy, no classical doctrine of eschatology can be salvaged by combining it with expansionism and still calling it by its classical name, since the classical name contradicts expansionism.

Because expansionism is the correct application of eschatology, one could simply term it “Biblical Eschatology,” and it would suffice. However, for this book, I’ll term the whole meaning of eschatology as “Right-Hand-of-the-Power-ology,” or for short, Throneism or Powerism. I prefer these terms because the doctrine of expansionism is a consequent of the antecedent, which is Jesus seated at the right hand of the Power, commanding and giving us His power to expand. Depending on whether one defines Jesus sitting at God’s right hand as much as a definition of what the church does by expanding in power, faith, and miracles, expansionism can be used as a complete term for biblical eschatology.

From this doctrine of expansionism, we can throw all variations of cessationism into the garbage as blasphemy and rebellion against God. When all definitions fall horrifically short, it doesn’t matter what version it is. Thus, when I rebuke cessationism, I’m lumping them all together (from those who say “all miracles and gifts have stopped” to those who say “the gifts have mostly stopped, and some miracles might still happen when we ask”) as heretics deserving of judgment. It doesn’t matter if one arrow was 50 miles from the bullseye, another 56 miles, or another 59 miles—all are complete and ridiculous failures. At least with modern-day Pentecostals and Charismatics, their arrow was only 30 feet from the bullseye. Missing the target that far is still embarrassing, but there’s a significant difference between 30 feet and 50 miles. It’s as if cessationists weren’t even trying to aim for Scripture.

From this doctrine of expansionism, all popular doctrines of eschatology—whether postmillennialism, premillennialism, or amillennialism—are blasphemy.

Expansionism’s the real deal. It is Jesus’ “whoever believes” faith, Spirit baptism for all God’s elect, and gifts galore. It is a turbo-charged Church to conquer earth like spiritual superheroes. Forget stale postmillennial blueprints; Throneism (aka Powerism) crowns Jesus on His throne, handing us His cosmic mojo to expand His kingdom. Cessationism’s every flavor? Blasphemous trash, miles off Scripture’s bullseye. Eschatology’s old guard? Toss ’em out.

²¹⁹ Some might recognize the Smith Wigglesworth book title, *Ever Increasing Faith*. Thus, it is not as if Vincent was 100% original in this, but that his definition is a fuller definition, in addition to being concise and clear

How long will this application be active?

The last enemy to be put under His feet is death. Rather than putting death under His feet now through the final resurrection, God is longsuffering, waiting for all the elect to be born again and saved (Romans 11:11-36). Death isn't yet under His feet—not because God lacks power, but because He's compassionate, gathering every chosen one under His grace. When Jesus resurrects all the elect, which is what it means to “defeat death,” Paul says He'll hand the kingdom to His Father.

Jesus says in Matthew 28:18, “All authority has been given to Me, in heaven and on earth” (NKJV). Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Power, already has the authority to do what He wants. Any restraints He employs are for the benefit of His chosen ones. Paul says, “We were chosen, having been predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will” (Ephesians 1:11 LEB; see also 1 Cor. 2:7). All things are predestined and worked for the good and benefit of God's chosen ones. Thus, in this age, where Jesus is already on the throne with all power and authority, He uses this authority for the predestined benefit of the elect. He wants them to win, be victorious, be empowered, and partake of the benefits of His New Covenant. Jesus will subdue powers and authorities with His power (including death) as it benefits Him and His chosen ones. He actively uses His authority to help and love His elect.

Jesus says He has “all” authority on “earth”; it's already His, not later. Jesus doesn't need to do anything, including coming down to earth, to gain one more drop of authority or power. He already has it, now and officially. And He uses it. He rules with it now; He rules with it today on a throne at the right hand of the Power. Jesus is already seated on the greatest throne in all reality. He already has all authority and power. Any position other than this one would further humble, lower, and humiliate Him. If Jesus were to come down to earth to rule for another thousand years, He couldn't do it without humbling and lowering Himself. However, Scripture is clear that Jesus came to humble Himself only once, not multiple times. The only way Jesus could come down to earth without humbling Himself a second time is if the Father came with Him, so Jesus wouldn't leave the right hand of the Power. But if that were the case, it would, by definition, be Heaven, and earth would no longer be relevant. Would the Father be humbled and dwell in a place that isn't perfect and perfectly reflecting His Name and will?

Jesus is chilling on the ultimate throne with all authority. He's patiently scooping up every elect soul with His epic grace. No need for a second earth stint; that would be downgrading from His cosmic HQ! He is already maxed out on power, wielding it to bless His chosen with victory.

“A declaration of Yahweh to my lord,

“Sit at my right hand ***until I make your enemies your footstool.***”

Yahweh will send out your mighty scepter from Zion; ***rule in the midst of your enemies,***
(Psalm 110:1–2 LEB).

“[Jesus] who is the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, sustaining all things by the word of power.

When he had made purification for sins through him, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”
(Hebrews 1:3 (LEB).

“But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,

and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool,”
(Hebrews 10:12–13 NIV).

“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since through a man came death, also through a man came the resurrection of the dead. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own group: Christ the first fruits, then those who are Christ’s at his coming, then the end, when he hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, **when he has abolished all rule and all authority and power,**”
(1 Corinthians 15:20–24 LEB).

“For it is **necessary** for him to **reign** until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The **last enemy to be abolished is death,**”
(1 Corinthians 15:24–26 (LEB)

“Behold, I tell you a mystery: we will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed,”
(1 Corinthians 15:51–52 LEB).

“Now this is the will of the one who sent me: that everyone whom he has given me, I would not lose any of them, but raise them up on the **last day**. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks at the Son and believes in him would have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the **last day,**”
(John 6:39–40 LEB).

“And if anyone hears my words and does not observe them, I will not judge him. For I have not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not accept my words has one who judges him; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the **last day,**”
(John 12:47–48 LEB).

We’re told Jesus was raised to the Father’s right hand of power after completing the work of the atonement. The Father tells Jesus Christ to sit at His right hand until His enemies are made His footstool. “Death” is revealed as the last enemy. Thus, Jesus will remain where He is until death is put under His feet. Death is defeated in the resurrection of the elect and reprobate, as Paul’s context in 1 Corinthians 15 is about

resurrection. However, when this happens, Jesus will hand the kingdom to His Father. Death is a type of authority and power—the last power and authority of this world. Jesus defeats it, puts it under His feet, and then hands the kingdom to the Father. Paul says, “He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power” (1 Cor. 15:24). If death is the last enemy and it’s defeated in the resurrection, then after the resurrection, there’s nothing left to defeat; ALL rule, authority, and power will have been “abolished.”

Paul says it’s “necessary for Him to reign until He has put all His enemies” under Him (1 Cor. 15:25). He is reigning at the right hand of the Father. He doesn’t leave until all enemies are under His feet. Death, the last enemy, is defeated in the resurrection. Thus, Jesus stays at the right hand of the Father until the resurrection occurs. At this point, the kingdom isn’t Jesus coming down to reign, because He then gives the kingdom to the Father, as all rule, authority, and power will already have been abolished.

To suggest Jesus will come down and rule for a thousand years means either Jesus must leave the right hand of the Father to do it, or Jesus and the Father must come down together so Jesus doesn’t leave the Father’s right hand. Both options are blasphemous. One contradicts the fact that Jesus doesn’t leave the Power, and if He does, He is humiliated a second time by leaving the right hand of the Power. The other contradicts the doctrine that Jesus and the Father would degrade themselves to come down to earth—or if they don’t humiliate themselves, they would make earth into Heaven, rendering the idea of a millennial reign meaningless. To have death under His feet, Jesus must defeat death, which occurs in the resurrection. We’re told at this point, rather than Jesus leaving His Father’s side, He hands the kingdom to the Father. How could Jesus then subjugate something if all things are already given to the Father? If death is the last enemy and it’s defeated in the resurrection, there’s nothing left to subjugate. It’s over at this point. Also, Jesus puts the resurrection and final judgment together in the Gospel of John.

Jesus doesn’t leave His Father’s side, for He’s in the greatest position in all reality. He already sits at the right hand of the Power before an audience. He already has all authority and power. There’s no more power, authority, or honor for Him to gain—He already has it. There’s no greater honor or value than sitting at the right hand of the Power. Jesus is already there. To leave that position, even to rule on earth, would be a humiliation and a lowering of the position He’s in now. That’s blasphemy. Hasn’t Jesus already lowered Himself enough? Yet, it seems men aren’t satisfied with Jesus’ redemption; they wish to further lower the King of Kings. If Jesus comes to reign for a thousand years on earth, will the Father come down with Him? Is the Father to lower Himself now? Even if the Father lowered Himself to come down with Jesus, isn’t that Heaven itself? Earth is irrelevant at that point. If Jesus leaves the Father’s right hand before all enemies are under Him and before He hands the kingdom to the Father, He would disobey His Father. If He hands the kingdom to the Father and then leaves the Father’s right hand, it’d mean leaving the kingdom’s highest position of honor (lowering Himself) to rule in a place where there’d be no one to subjugate because they’re already given to the Father.

John, in his Gospel, shows Jesus referring to the “last day” as the same time when the resurrection and judgment occur (where the sheep are separated from the goats). This also eliminates any idea of Jesus coming down to rule on earth for a thousand years.

Jesus is parked at the Father's right hand, wielding ultimate power until death—the final foe—gets stomped in the resurrection. No earthly 1,000-year encore needed; that would be a demotion from His cosmic throne. Premillennial dreams? Blasphemous reruns that diss Jesus' already-maxed-out glory!

“But the Bible allows for only one eschatological resurrection at the end of history, a resurrection of both the saved and the lost. Note the following:

First, the resurrection will occur on the last day. “And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn 6:39–40). He does not say, “I will raise him up 1,007 years before the last day,” allowing for a millennium, tribulation, and resurrection of the unjust to follow (as per dispensational doctrine). Christ says the resurrection will be simultaneous for “all who are in the graves” (Jn 5:28). John's gospel record is quite clear on this matter (Jn 6:44, 54; 11:24). The resurrection occurs in conjunction with “the end” and at the “last trump” (1Co 15:23–24, 52).

The premillennial system absolutely depends on a literal interpretation of Revelation 20:1–6 in order to assert two resurrections. It is enlightening to note: (1) This fundamental passage is in the most highly figurative book in the Bible. Revelation is widely regarded as the most difficult book of Scripture by eminently qualified biblical scholars. (2) The premillennial approach to Revelation causes other difficulties, for if the rapture and resurrection of the saints occur before the Great Tribulation and if the second resurrection at the end is for unbelievers, where are great tribulation saints resurrected? Where is the resurrection for believers who die in the millennium? And for that matter, what about the Old Testament saints: they are involved in a different “program,” and should not be included in the rapture, which is for the church.

(3) The material appears in a scene that is manifestly figurative. It involves, for instance, a key to the abyss (where is that key stored? what sort of lock holds the abyss shut?) and a great chain for binding a spiritual being (Satan) (Rev 20:1–2). (4) This passage is written by the very John who speaks of the resurrection only on the last day, and involving both the just and the unjust simultaneously (Jn 5:28–29, see further discussion below). (5) Revelation 20:11–15 appears just after the verses in question, yet “if ever language expressed the doctrine of a simultaneous and universal resurrection, surely we have it here.” John is speaking of all men, as is evident in his language, not just of unbelievers: (a) He says the dead “small and great” will be judged. This terminology applies at times to believers in Revelation (Rev 11:18; 19:5). (b) The righteous are judged on the basis of their works, as those here are (Ro 2:5–6; 14:11–12; 2Co 5:10). (c) He mentions the “book of life” here (Rev 20:12, 15), which involves the righteous.

Second, the Lord's teaching in the Kingdom Parables demands a general resurrection: “But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at

the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn”” (Mt 13:29–30; see also vv 49–50). If anything, this parable teaches that the resurrection of the wicked precedes that of the righteous.

Third, Scripture knows of only one resurrection, no resurrection centuries from the end will occur. “There will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust” (Ac 24:15). “The hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (Jn 5:28–29).

Premillennialists attempt to maneuver around the rocky shoals of John 5:28–29 by arguing that the hour “allows for its extension over a long period.” This permits the reference to cover the 1,007 years necessary for their position. Certainly, “hour” can encompass a long period of time. But to argue such here involves the dispensationalist in manifest absurdity: It allows that the “resurrection to life” occurs over the entirety of the 1,007 years involved. It suggests that the “shout/trump” of Christ in John 5:28–29, 1 Corinthians 15:51, and 1 Thessalonians 4:16 continues throughout the period, for this shout/trump is that which causes the resurrection. It also involves the system in internal contradiction: it permits the resurrection of the damned to occur over that same period, despite the assertion that it occurs at the end (and only in one phase).

Actually “it is not the length of time which this word ‘hour’ is designed to mark . . . but it is the unity of period and action which alone is intended.” That is, it speaks of a general resurrection, which will involve both the just and unjust.

Fourth, the resurrection signals death’s destruction: “But each one in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death” (1Co 15:23–26). Clearly this “last enemy” is destroyed at “the end,” and both occur in conjunction with the resurrection.”²²⁰

In conclusion end times theology is about the throne of God. The Father and Son are on their thrones ruling. Jesus already has all power and authority. Jesus stays seated on His throne of Power, until all things are under His feet, with death being the last and defeated in resurrection, which is the same time of the judgment of both elect and reprobate. Jesus then hands the Kingdom to His Father.

The main question

²²⁰ Kenneth Gentry. (2009) He Shall Have Dominion. Kindle edition.
<http://www.kennethgentry.com/>

With all things under His feet, what does Jesus choose to do with ALL THIS POWER and AUTHORITY until death is put under His feet through the resurrection and He hands the kingdom to the Father? This is the essential question for eschatology. The question is God-centered. It's not centered on apostles, men, or church fathers because they aren't sitting at the right hand of the Power. They aren't ruling events with their power and authority. To focus on men in eschatology is to contradict eschatology.

The Father says He'll put all things under Jesus' feet. This has already happened in the judicial sense, as we're told when the Father raised Jesus from the grave, He put Him above all powers, authorities, names, and times (Eph. 1:19-23). It also includes power, because it was the Father's power that put all things under Jesus. However, not all things are under Jesus' feet on the relative or human level. Demons are still victimizing people with sickness (Acts 10:38). Jesus, with the power of the Spirit, cast out demons and healed, and by this display of power, forced out the kingdom of darkness and brought in the kingdom of His Father (Matt. 12:28, "then the Kingdom of God has come upon you"). Jesus also said it wasn't Him doing the miracles, but the Father was doing them (John 14:10-13). This gives insight into how the Father is putting all things under Jesus' feet. Jesus wasn't using His own power but the Father's and the Spirit's power to bring in the kingdom. As a man born under the law, Jesus was the one pointing the gun at the kingdom of darkness. But now, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Power. So, when the Father says He'll put all things under Jesus, it doesn't mean Jesus does nothing. We're told Jesus has the promise of the Father to give out the power of the Spirit to infuse all His chosen ones with power.

Additionally, believers are commanded to use Jesus' Name to heal, cast out demons, and ask for anything, both for their own joy and to expand the kingdom of God. This kingdom expansion is put under Jesus' feet. Because Jesus sits at the right hand of the Power, using Jesus' Name to expand the kingdom is using the Power's Name, and by this, the Father is putting all things under Jesus' feet. The Father does put all things under Jesus' feet, but He does it through Jesus, and Jesus through His followers.

This is the question: Jesus is the one with the power and ruling authority, and He's actively using it right now. What is Jesus doing with this power? How is He using His authority? This is the main eschatology question. If eschatology moves away from this focus, it's no longer biblical.

Jesus on His throne with all power and authority is the antecedent. It gives us the doctrine of eschatology in a definition of metaphysics. The consequence of this syllogism (or chain syllogism) is about the application of power and ethics.

If Jesus is on the throne, and if Jesus is using this power to pour out His power in the baptism of the Spirit, and if Jesus has given commands and orders for the church to receive this power, then the elect ought to receive this power and walk in His power.

I once read a theologian say, "*The main focus and question of eschatology is how we deal with the fact that people suffer.*" This type of thinking is systematically and habitually focused on man, not God. Because they used the word "suffering" or "suffering saints," people lose all ability to think scripturally and carefully. The issue is this: no matter how humble it sounds to focus on "suffering people" as the main thing, it still means you're more focused on man than God. Don't be deceived.

The main focus of eschatology is the kingdom advancing. It's not about Christians being steamrolled with sickness until they're too weak to preach and advance the kingdom. No, it's about Christians steamrolling the kingdom of Satan with truth and power. It's about the Kingdom of God advancing. It's not about Christians shrinking back from the attacks of everyday life but about Christians overcoming everyday life with power, truth, and love. Even in cases of true persecution, Christians advance the kingdom because, like Paul, they still get up after being stoned and die only after finishing their work of advancing the kingdom.

Eschatology's all about Jesus flexing supreme power from the Father's right-hand throne, zapping enemies until death's toast in the resurrection—then He hands the keys to His Father. Forget man-centered “suffering saints” sob stories; Jesus is juicing His elect with Spirit-power to steamroll Satan's turf with miracles and truth. The big question? How is King Jesus wielding His cosmic clout? Spoiler: He's arming His crew to expand the kingdom, not telling them cower under life's punches.

Luke's Gospel into Acts

After ending his gospel, showing Jesus' command for power, Luke shows in Acts the end time or eschatological power of Jesus on His throne, in the most direct and positive description. It literally shows Stephen looking up to heaven with Jesus in His position of authority “sitting at the right hand of Power.” Stephen sees Jesus reclining on the throne, with all power and authority. It shows how He uses this power and authority, by giving it to His chosen ones to advance the Kingdom of God on the earth. Luke shows chapter by chapter, example after example what this looks like with God's elect. Luke shows what happens when the saints are Jesus-on-the-throne-centered. He shows them with power, truth, boldness and love that advances the Kingdom.

Passages like Matthew 24 and John's book of Revelation show the same thing. These passages are not the main or overview teaching on the eschatology power and authority of Jesus; however, they do teach an important point or application about it. They highlight a moment in time where Jesus exercises some of His throne power and authority in a specific application. It shows Jesus on the throne. It shows how this Jesus in all His power and authority uses this power to judge and permanently destroy the Jewish system and tradition. The Jews were the one trying to stop the empowered followers of Jesus from advancing His Kingdom; the kingdom that Jesus is in authority and in control of. Jesus uses His power, to destroy the Jews in horrific punishment, so that they will not continue their opposition to His empowered elect. Jesus uses His throne authority, to replace the old wine with the new; the old harlot, with the new faithful bride that is guaranteed not to depart from Him, under His New Covenant promises. He advances His Kingdom in Power. He made the hearts of the Jews stubborn, and moved the Roman's hearts to make the stars fall from the heavens. Jesus used His authority and power, sitting at God's right hand, to advance the Kingdom by removing the ones fighting it the most, in destruction not seen on earth before or after. This is what Jesus looks like and acts like while sitting on His throne of Power.

Did the Christians take up swords to get Peter out of prison? No. The Christians focused on Jesus on the throne and prayed. Jesus used power and opened it. Jesus,

in not only preaching through His elect, but in power advances His kingdom. When the church was oppressed by the government (Acts 4:23-31) did they take of swords or use the government to seek help? No. They put their faith with Jesus on His throne. Jesus in His power poured out miracles, healings and boldness on them to confront the government. Jesus in power advances His kingdom. When the Apostles and other many churches and disciples, healed, healed and healed, did they do the healing themselves, or use science or governments to do it? No. They focused their faith on Jesus on His throne. Jesus healed those people. In the act of healing, many demons of the kingdom of darkness are expelled out (Acts 10:38). Jesus in power advances the Kingdom. When demons were cast out, did the Christians do it with power of the governments or swords? No. They focused their faith on Jesus on His throne. Jesus used His power and cast demons out when faith was used by His elect. Jesus in power advances His kingdom. When Paul laid hands on the gentiles to receive the baptism of the Spirit, did he sell this? Did he do it “by the name of Paul”? Did Paul do this in the name of “the age of the apostles”? Did Paul do this by the power of governments? No. Paul’s faith was with Jesus on the throne. Jesus in power, gives power to His elect and advances the Kingdom.

The importance of the book of Acts, is that it shows how to advance the Kingdom of Christ as a universal application. With the understanding that Jesus and the apostles, spoke so much of the destruction of the temple (and Jewish system) the question can arise, *“were they to act in one way before its destruction, and are we to act in another way after?”* No, there is no essential deference, because this age is defined by Jesus sitting at God’s right hand. Jesus was there before (waiting for death to be under His feet), and He is there after the destruction of the temple (waiting for death to be under His feet). Nothing essential has changed. The only thing that did change, was Jesus triumphing over one of His enemies like a man stepping in a wine press. Thus, metaphysics and commands are the same. The Lion advances.

We will look at a few examples.

“Now when they heard these things, they were infuriated in their hearts and gnashed their teeth at him.

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God,”
(Acts 7:54–56 (LEB)).

Stephen is preaching. Stephen is being persecuted by the Jews. Being filled with the POWER of the Holy Spirit, Stephen literally sees Jesus sitting on His throne at God’s right hand.

What is the main thing here? Stephen, the Jews or Jesus with all His power? Jesus. Peter and the apostles kept making the point that the resurrection of Jesus is not a doctrine in a vacuum. Jesus’ resurrection is to the right hand of God. The Jesus who was born under the law, as a man, is a Jesus we do not know anymore. *“... At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now!”* (2 Corin. 5:16 NLT). We know Jesus very differently now. This Jesus is the one in all authority and power. Stephen looking at heaven with Jesus on His throne,

was pointing out the central theme in this moment. Stephen was drawing attention to the main actor. He brought everyone's attention, to the ruling King of the kingdom of God. He showed that the King was watching. The King with all the power, was watching. The King with all the power to order angels, to empower His elect, to rearrange nature itself, to dispel demons and lies, and the King whose responsibility was to help His citizens, and advance His Kingdom, was watching and making decisions. What decision did Jesus make? Steven was martyred for directly preaching the truth, and performing miracles in power. However, in the larger picture, it was a strategic loss for the kingdom of darkness and a win for God's kingdom. Jesus let the Jews know He saw what they were doing, just as Jesus warned them while on earth. "Do you see all these things?" he asked. *"Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down,"* (Matt. 24:2 NIV). *"And as for these enemies of mine who didn't want me to be their king—bring them in and execute them right here in front of me,"* (Luke 19:27 NLT). King Jesus was looking down from God's right hand, saying, "I see you, and because you do not want me as King, and I am much more powerful than you, I will have you slaughtered in front of me. I will let you persecute some of my citizens, and even kill some of them, but I will both destroy you for this, and through them advance My Kingdom." Jesus, standing in the place of authority, when looking down on His enemies, is a threat. In the next chapter Paul begins to target the church and then table bearers, filled with the Power of Jesus' Kingdom, go forth and advance the kingdom. *"And the crowds with one mind were paying attention to what was being said by Philip, as they heard him and saw the signs that he was performing. For many of those who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them, crying out with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city,"* Acts 8:6–8 (LEB). The Kingdom advances.

A few decades later Jesus did in fact have those Jewish enemies slaughtered in front of Him. The stars fell from heaven, and Jesus treaded the winepress of His wrath against them. Indeed, not one stone was left on top of another. *"And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For there will be greater anguish than at any time since the world began. And it will never be so great again,"* (Matt. 24:20-21 NLT). *"Truly I say to you that this generation will never pass away until all these things take place! Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away,"* (Matt. 24:34-35 LEB). Jesus is the main actor. The Lion advances.

"While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see," (Acts 3:11–16 (NIV).

Right after being filled with baptism of the Spirit and power, we read in this next chapter how Peter healed a cripple. Peter said "what I have, I give, in Jesus Name, Walk." Peter, as do all followers of Jesus have the authority and power of Jesus to

yield as their disposal. Peter did not say, “what Jesus has, or what the Apostles have,” no, it was “what I have, I give.” This would get most people kicked out of their churches today, if they said this. What Peter had, was normal discipleship faith. All believers are a royal priesthood. The Spirit flows out of their bellies as powerful rivers; they are baptized in the same powerful Spirit as Jesus was. Jesus said whosoever believes in Him will do the miracles He did, and even greater miracles. He said to use His name to has for anything so that the Father is glorified and we are filled with joy. The man who was healed, is also said to have had faith in Jesus. Peter says it was faith in Jesus’ name, which Jesus worked in the man, that made the man healthy. Peter retells how the kingdom of Satan working through the Jews, tried to destroy Jesus. But instead, their attack help to orchestrate Jesus being put into all authority at God’s right hand. Yet, these same Jews are still in the kingdom of darkness with their unbelief in God’s Son. However, this poor cripple, believed in the King’s name, and now he is running around. The Kingdom advances, and the kingdom of darkness screeches as it shrinks back. This healing opened the door for Peter to preach the truth and expel the lies. The Lion advances, because the Lion is on His throne.

Acts 4 when Peter was released from prison, he and the disciples prayed for Psalm 2 to be applied in the form of healings, miracles and preaching to strike back at the kingdom of darkness. God feels the place with the power of His Spirit and approves of their eschatological application to destroy both the government oppression and Satan’s kingdom that is fueling them. Jesus makes it so easy for us. He tells us how He likes His power to be applied to advance His kingdom on earth, even against oppressive governments. Think about it. They ask that “healing” be used as a way to fire back at oppressive governments? Why? *“Jesus of Nazareth—how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him,”* (Acts 10:38 LEB). First, Peter points out the in “POWER of the Holy Spirit,” He healed. Next, the healing was at the same time casting out demons. Peter presupposes that most of the healings (if not all) were under demonic oppressions of possession and harassment. Think about that? Satan was victimizing people by oppressing their bodies with sickness and disease by demonic power.

Jesus said the woman bent over for 18 years was being victimized by the devil. By healing her, Jesus at the same time, released her from being under the power of the kingdom of darkness. Jesus advanced the Kingdom of God by healing her. Healing in this context is a positive help (to the one receiving it) and a negative blast against darkness at the same time. And it is immediate. Healing in this context of warfare, is like saying, *“bring out the big guns, send down the artillery.”* Thus, when the disciples were asking for healing to be used as a weapon against their oppressors, they are presupposing the aspect of healing that is casting out demons as it heals. They saw Jesus do this over, and over and over and over. After being filled with the “same Holy Spirit of Power,” are commanded by Jesus to do the same. Think about all the people being healed, even if some of them did not truly become Christians? Multitudes of people who are co-workers, bosses, and government workers, who were under the power of demons, are now suddenly free. It should not take much imagination to understand a boss who is sick and under the influence of a demon, would be a worse boss to have, than a boss who is healed and freed from demonic victimization. And if they truly are born again, then 10,000 times better. In healing, the Kingdom steamrolls over darkness like a locomotive rolling over a rat.

It is disobedience to your commanding officer to not be filled with Power of the Holy Spirit, by baptism of the Spirit, and attacking the kingdom Satan by healing the sick. Christians want more victory and power, but they are their own worse enemies. God has given them huge weapons to advance the kingdom of God, but they are too busy debating what crackers to use in communion to notice. They are too busy looking at suffering people, and to busy looking at governments to notice. Many spiritual perverts, as slaves of Satan, make it their living to get educated and convince God's people not to be baptized in the Spirit and not heal the sick as a weapon to advance the Kingdom. They are Satan's little helpers who spread his doctrine of non-faith. They tell people you can have faith for healing, and God still might not do what He promised by always giving you the healing that Jesus' atonement already provided. May God rain down more healing and miracles of judgement against them. May God pour the harm they have done in their false doctrines 10,000 times upon their heads.

The bible never opposes going to medicine, but never endorses medicine either, not even one time in the entire Bible. Christians have exchanged mighty lightning bolt weapons, given to them from Heaven, for water guns. It is as if Zeus gave you his lightning bolt, and you traded it for a bat, thinking it was better. Satan has deceived and damned many by making such a trade. We were recently in a virus pandemic, and Christians handed healing off to men, rather than God. Where there could be healings that bring people's attention to God, it did not happen. Where there could be countless demons cast out of common people, bosses, and government workers, it did not happen. Where healing could bring about opportunity to preach the gospel, did not happen. And the Christians without shame ask, "why are we failing?"

They prophesied a famine.

27 Now in those days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and indicated by the Spirit that a great famine was about to come over the whole inhabited earth (which took place in the time of Claudius). 29 So from the disciples, according to their ability to give, each one of them determined to send financial aid for support to the brothers who lived in Judea, 30 which they also did, sending the aid to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul. LEB

Some prophets from Jerusalem, through the power of the Spirit, told of a coming famine. The famine came just as it was told. This gave the believers a head start and time to prepare. Eventually, this led to other churches giving money to support the ones struggling the most. This money was handed to Paul and Barnabas, who delivered the aid. We know from Paul's letters to the Corinthians, the Macedonian Christians were one of the churches that gave money to help. Paul used this as motivation to encourage the Corinthians to fulfill their own desire to give to the Jerusalem church.

Monetary wealth is given.

"And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. 5 And they exceeded our

expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 6 So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7 But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich,”
(2 Corin. 8-1-9 NIV)

The kingdom of God is Jesus on the Throne with all power and authority. He rules from a position of luxury, abundance, and extravagance. In fact, Jesus’ first miracle of turning water into wine was a miracle of luxury and pleasure, making time serve man.

His kingdom is applied to a person in intellectual and ethical power when they’re born from above by the Spirit, and, as discussed at length in this section, the kingdom of God is applied in power by the baptism of the Spirit. In money giving, the focus is on intellectual and ethical power. The Spirit surges in the souls of His chosen ones with intelligence to understand what a great giver God is—how immeasurably generous He is to them in the gospel. God is truly a boundless giver. Those who’ve received God’s generous supply understand this by applying (deductively) themselves intellectually to these truths. From this intellectual foundation, the Spirit moves the saints to be givers like their heavenly Father. The saints also understand that giving tithes and offerings is a command. They favor God by obeying His command. Paul says it’s important to give with a grateful heart, not by force (2 Cor. 9:7). This ethical power comes from the Spirit. The church in Jerusalem and surrounding areas suffered not only from famine but also from authentic persecution for the gospel’s sake. Some were in need, so the Spirit surged in the souls of those with material abundance, moving them with ethical power to give and help. The Kingdom advances.

Jesus became our poverty so that we might become His riches, here and now in this life, not just the next. In 2 Corinthians 9:8, Paul says God blesses us with an abundance of monetary wealth so that, in abundance (not poverty), we can give for every good work of God and the gospel. Do those who resist this doctrine that Paul taught also resist what he taught a few verses earlier? Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor. 5:21 NIV). Paul has already taught about the substitutionary death of Jesus’ atonement in this epistle. Then, in the context of the Corinthians being asked to give money to churches in need, he says Jesus became our poverty so we might become His riches. “Riches” is defined by the context of “poverty” and giving money. There’s no way to logically or exegetically twist this to mean spiritual things. To claim it’s about spiritual wealth is changing categories to force the Bible to say what you want. Just because the sun is round and my apple is round doesn’t mean I can eat the sun—the sun is a different category from my apple. It’s about financial wealth. Jesus did indeed become our poverty by coming to earth; however, there was so much money in the money bag that Judas could steal from it without hindering the rest. So, in this sense, Jesus and the disciples weren’t “poor.” Jesus’ total poverty was fulfilled only on the cross. There, He was truly penniless and

so poor that He hung naked. No money and naked. This was Jesus, the wealthiest being in all reality. He became our poverty so we might become His wealth, both in this life and the next.

When Paul says this, it refers not only to Heaven but also to the present. Paul uses the wealth substitution in the atonement to teach that the Corinthians have monetary wealth through the gospel, enabling them to give abundantly to God's Kingdom. The Lion Advances.

Jesus needed money to enter the temple to minister. Obviously, Judas with the money bag wasn't there. Jesus tells Peter to go to the nearby sea and fish. Peter did, and he found a coin in the mouth of the first fish—a first cast and catch. Is that work or entertainment? The big idea is simple: Jesus used a miracle to receive money to advance the kingdom through His ministry. Free money in a fish to pay for taxes. The Kingdom advances.

Jesus rules from a throne dripping with luxury, kicking off His kingdom with a wine-soaked miracle of extravagance. His Spirit-zapped elect don't just think gospel—they live it, giving big like their boundless Father. Paul's crystal clear: Jesus swapped our poverty for His riches, here and now, not just in Heaven. Fish-mouth coins and overflowing money bags? That's kingdom cash flow, powering the Lion's advance while stingy skeptics clutch their psychological crutches.

Consider the Old Testament, but keep in mind that all this has its foundation in a few great truths. First, God is generous by His own nature. Second, God cannot lie because He is truth, and there's no lie in truth. Third, and this is the key focus here, is the promise in the covenant that "God will be our God, and we His people." This foundation lies in the promise to Abraham that He is Abraham's exceedingly great reward. This promise is restated in the New Covenant. We're both grafted into Abraham's blessing and included in the New Covenant promise. God being our God means God causing our fields to produce so much that we need to clear out the old grain in the barns to make room for the new. It includes being blessed with many children and having predatory animals leave our territory. This is what it means for God to be our God and we His people.

This is seen when Abraham defeats five armies and is crowned with wealth and prosperity. He then tithes to Melchizedek to show the lesser gives tithes to the greater, who is Abraham's great reward. It's seen when Isaac planted and received a hundredfold in a time of drought. The king freely gave Abraham a king's ransom as an apology for taking Sarah. The Egyptians willingly transferred their wealth to the Israelites. Why would God bless Jabez's prayer for wealth and peace? God answered with a yes because these things are part of Abraham's blessings, promised by God in an oath. He swore by His own Name to be faithful as Abraham's great reward and to his children. God breaks poverty, not His oaths.

What about the Israelites when they needed great wealth to build the tabernacle to worship Yahweh? God literally filled their pockets and packs with the treasures of Egypt. He transferred the wealth of the pagans to His children, making the pagans do this willingly. Out of this great wealth, they gave to the ministry. By this, the kingdom of God advanced on the earth in their day. God is a lavish gift-giver, swearing by His Name to shower Abraham's kids with overflowing barns, kids galore, and pagan loot. Think about Egyptians bankrolling the Israelites' bling. Jesus' cross cashed out our

poverty for His riches, not just in Heaven but now, so we can fund the gospel like bosses.

Some might complain that a person could abuse Jesus being a money substitute by asking for 500 mansions. So what? This must be one of the dumbest rejections I've ever heard. If they have faith for it, they will get 500 mansions. In my experience, a person with faith for miracles to heal the sick or raise the dead is someone who, if they ask for 500 mansions and 10 planes, will give most of them away to fund the gospel. A person with enough faith to heal the sick is often overflowing with compassion and mercy. They're typically very generous in giving money. So what if they keep 100 mansions and 4 planes for themselves if they give 400 mansions and 6 planes to widows and ministries in the kingdom? Good for them, good for the widows, good for the kingdom, and God is happy. Yet, you're still sulking in your house about them having a plane? If you want to complain, at least have the shame to outgive them first. Jesus died as your money substitute to make you rich. This is as much a part of the gospel as healing and forgiveness of sins. In our riches, we're taught to give richly to fund the gospel. But how can you give millions to fund the gospel unless you have millions to begin with? Whining about 500 mansions? Get faith, grab millions, and outgive the haters. God's kingdom isn't stingy, and neither should you.

If you don't like yourself enough to ask God for a mansion, at least love Jesus Christ enough to ask for millions so you can give millions to fund the gospel while living in your trailer.

Baptism.

Paul and others kept looking for Christians who repented but did not receive the baptism of the Spirit. By this continued seeking for converts to be baptized in the Spirit, even the most average Christian wielded Zeus' thunderbolt. As Solomon made silver a common thing in Jerusalem, the baptism of the Spirit makes power among the Elect a common thing. The kingdom advances.

Tongues.

"One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." (14:4)

"I thank God that I speak in tongues more than you all." (1 Corin. 14:18 LSB)

Is Paul boasting or is he setting an example for us to follow? Paul was constantly dealing with hardship. How did he fight discouragement and depression? Paul says the one who speaks in tongues edifies himself. Paul said he prayed more in tongues than the out-of-control Corinthians! Putting these two together we see one practice Paul did that constantly edified himself and kept back discouragement. Praying in tongues. As saints and warriors for God's kingdom we fight back discouragement by praying in tongues. No wonder when one is baptized speaking in tongues is a regular manifestation. We do not need to guess why Paul wanted us all to speak in tongues. Paul was constantly self-edified by tongues, and he wanted all to experience the same spiritual self-edification for their souls. God wants to encourage us. He wants us to pray in tongues. The kingdom advances when its soldiers are encouraged and made strong.

The Bible distinguishes the Elect from reprobate trash, by praying in tongues.

Jude 1:18-21

“In the end time there will be scoffers...”

These...not having the Spirit.

But you, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, by praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God.”

Jude says mockers (and this is a continuation of his condemnation of false teachers) do not have the Spirit, which is referring to the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 1-2, Paul in 19:2 refers to “The Spirit” as the baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues (v.5)). Jude refers to those born again as “the called,(v.1).”

In conversion the Spirit works on you to receive Jesus. In this sense you have Jesus, or you do not have Jesus.²²¹ In baptism of the Spirit, Jesus works on you to receive the Spirit. In this sense you do have the Spirit, or do not have the Spirit.

In contrast to mockers who lack the baptism of the Spirit, Jude instructs the saints to pray in the Spirit, which refers to the baptism of the Spirit, specifically praying in tongues. By praying in tongues, you keep yourself in God’s love. Think about that. Consider the consequences of not praying in tongues.

Paul says something similar in Ephesians 6:17-18. He urges believers to “receive” the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit by “praying in the Spirit.” Receiving the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit is crucial. Paul says to do this by always praying, specifically by praying in the Spirit. We know what Paul means by praying in the Spirit because in 1 Corinthians 14, he defines “praying in the Spirit” as “praying in tongues.” Thus, we continually receive the helmet of salvation and the offensive power of the Spirit by praying in tongues alongside normal prayer.

Lastly, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14 that praying in the Spirit edifies and encourages our inner man. This was one way Paul encouraged himself amidst his hardships. He even boasts, “I thank God I pray in tongues more than you all,” to the Corinthians. By praying in tongues, we keep ourselves in God’s love, strengthen our inner man, continually receive the helmet of salvation, and are empowered with the sword of the Spirit.

This doesn’t mean a person can’t be saved without the baptism of the Spirit. However, the same unstoppable God who causes an elect person to receive Jesus for salvation will cause them to have faith to receive the Spirit. Peter argues in Acts 2 that forgiveness is a stepping stone to receiving the Spirit. To this, Peter ties in the doctrine of election and predestination, connecting it to the baptism of the Spirit. Some might think Peter’s connection is that those whom God calls to Himself are simply born again, but this isn’t correct. Rather, Peter’s connection is that those whom God calls to Himself, He gives the baptism of the Spirit, with speaking in tongues. This isn’t how religious elites use predestination, but it’s how Scripture uses the doctrine. Thus, God is faithful to call His elect to Himself by causing them to receive the Spirit.

If a Christian hasn’t received the Spirit, it’s due to ignorance and unbelief. Through unbelief and disobedience, the Christian has pragmatically relegated their Christian experience to second-class status. The baptism of the Spirit enables one to fight with power to expand God’s kingdom. Praying in tongues causes one to continually receive

²²¹ This contrast was made aware to me by Vincent Cheung in, *Theology: Borders Edition*. 2023.

the sword of the Spirit. To lack this while others are doing the hard work is spiritual negligence.

This is something mockers can't and refuse to do. First, they're too busy mocking and ridiculing the faith teachers who pray in tongues to keep themselves in God's love. Second, they hate the Spirit and refuse His gifts and powers. False teachers and heresy hunters mock the very thing the Bible uses to distinguish the called from the reprobate.

Praying in tongues is the Spirit's power-up, keeping you locked in God's love, armed with salvation's helmet, and swinging the Spirit's sword. Jude and Paul hype it up—tongues edify your soul and it fueled Paul's grit in the face of suffering. Mockers scoff, too busy hating on faith teachers to grab this divine cheat code. Peter's Acts 2 slam dunk? God's elect get the Spirit's power, tongues included—cessationist gripes are just reprobate noise!

Empowered to preach the word.

A common spiritual empowerment from the baptism of the Spirit is boldness to preach the word. Acts 4:31 (LEB), *"And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness."* How can they believe without hearing the message? How can the message be proclaimed without a preacher? However, how much will they hear when the preacher is made bold by the baptism of the Spirit? They will hear to the degree the Spirit has power to empower. Any perceived limitation is measured by the Spirit's endless ability to baptize and empower, and not man's limitation. Man's limitations is removed by God's endless power working in them. And so, there is no limitation when believers rely on their God. In the baptism of the Spirit the word is boldly preached, and the kingdom advances.

Snakes bite, and are shaken off.

Jesus said to them, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you,"* (Luke 10:18-19 LEB)

"As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand... But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed," (Acts 28:3,5 NLT).

What if Paul died from the deadly bite of the viper? It is obvious, Paul couldn't heal and preach the gospel to these people. The Kingdom of God, would have a defeat, and Paul being accountable/responsible to fulfill his ministry would have taken a defeat. It is important to note that Paul healed "all" the sick people on the Island, not just some, just like Jesus did. He did this not in the power of an apostle, but in normal discipleship faith of a believer and filled with the Spirit. Yet, in the power of faith and the Spirit, snakes are shaken off like a blade of grass, and the Lion advances.

Suffering.

It is important to mention the suffering of the saints. I do this with some hesitation because many so-called Christians in my day seem to embrace suffering like masochists, and shake off healing like a viper. However, the Scripture teach that all who are truly born again, with faith surging in their souls, will face persecution. Some much less, and other much more. “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,” (2 Timothy 3:12 NIV)

I will not harp on this, but only say it and those who are intelligent will understand. There is suffering that comes from doubting God’s word and promises, and another from persecution in “direct relation” to being a Christian, or by advancing the kingdom. There is another type of suffering that comes from the everyday troubles of life that come from living in a fallen world. The first type of suffering that come from self-inflicted stupidity and self-inflicted unbelief, is what most Christian suffer from, but in order to make themselves feel better they re-categorize it as persecution. This is what the Israelites suffered when they said the inhabitation were too big and they were too small. God considered them an abomination.

The persecution the bible refers to, only refers to the gospel advancing type.

“A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria.

...But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims.” (Act 8:1,4-7 NLT)

When persecuted the Christians left their current homes and went to other places. When they did, they preached the gospel, healed the sick and cast out demons, as they screamed. That is, in persecution, rather than snuffing out the church, the church grew and expanded. Some were indeed martyred; however, the Scripture indicates that most stayed in the land of the living and by boldness of word, healing and casting out demons, they were the ones snuffing out the kingdom of darkness. They did not let suffering roll over them; rather, they rolled over the suffering for the advancement of their king.

Others were sent to prison had more than one type of kingdom advancement. As reported in Hebrews 10, some of them visited brothers in chains. In this the ethical power was expanding. “For you both sympathized with the prisoners and put up with the seizure of your belongings with joy because you knew that you yourselves had a better and permanent possession,” (Hebrews 10:34 LEB). The preacher then transitions into Hebrews 11-12, where he encourages faith in his audience. There is some suffering mentioned in the end of Hebrews 11, however, the majority is about faith to acquire blessings, healing, miracles, military power, help and victories. The preacher’s overall theme is to endure with faith (for victory) and remember this world is not your true reward. Entering God’s rest with Him is our true great reward. We

begin to enter this rest by faith in Jesus' finished work. This resting in the gospel brings in power, healing and miracles now, and in the next life, endless glory.

Peter and Paul were both in prisons, and both had supernatural miracles by God to get them out. Remember the apostles prayer in Acts 4? They prayed for miracles as a judgment against the oppressive Jewish government. God did just that. When God makes earthquakes open the prison doors, it damages the prison. Think about that. The prisons are government property. For sake of his elect praying in faith, God damages government property in supernatural power to help them. God hurts His enemies, and blesses His chosen. Rather than looking to man made ways to save one's country, the church needs to pray Psalm 2 over themselves in faith, and see God supernaturally attack their enemies. In suffering, the church does not roll over; rather, by an indomitable faith they cause Psalm 2 to rain down judgment on their opponents. The church uses the opportunity of suffering to rain down judgment miracles upon their enemies. The kingdom advances.

In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians he speaks this way in 2 Thessalonians 1. They are suffering under the Jews, and Paul reminds them God will destroy them.

Vincent Cheung commenting on this passage in his commentary says,

Some have offered reasons to believe that Paul is referring to the first event (AD 70) in our passage. First, the text focuses on the punishment that would come upon those who are persecuting the Thessalonians at the time of the writing of this letter. These persecutors mainly consist of Jews, and the punishment in view here seems to correspond to what Paul means in the first letter when he writes concerning them, "The wrath of God has come upon them at last" (1 Thessalonians 2:16). Second, the language in our passage parallels that of Daniel 7:9-12 and Joel 2-3, which include prophecies that are now understood to have occurred in the first century. Third, the language in our passage parallels that of Matthew 16:27-28, where Jesus says that "some who are standing here will not taste death" before they witness the event. Thus it is more than possible that the punishment in our passage refers to God's coming in judgment to slaughter the Jews and destroy their temple in AD 70.

The apostle stresses punishment in our passage, saying, "He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power" (v. 8-9). The words denote retribution and recompense. Our God is a God who punishes. We must become accustomed to this, but more than that, we must come to like it. To dislike the idea that God punishes is to dislike God himself, since he acts out of his nature of justice. That God would punish them with "everlasting destruction" does not mean that they would cease to exist, since then they could not also be "shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power." Paul means that God would kill them and then send them to hell. They will have no share in the joy and glory that the faithful Thessalonian Christians are destined to receive.

Although it is likely that the passage refers to God's coming in judgment in AD 70, the principles that determine the persecutors' punishment and the

believers' inheritance remain applicable, since they are stated as universal principles.²²²

Paul does not say, "God will punish these very Jews who persecute you and no one else." But he writes, "He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (v. 8). Those who "do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" make up a very large but well-defined group, namely, all non-Christians. God is coming to punish all non-Christians, if not in AD 70, then at some other time, and if not by a temporal punishment followed by hellfire, then immediately by hellfire at their death or at the second coming of Christ. There will be no escape.

As for the Thessalonians, Paul says that they are numbered among Christ's own people, not because they are Thessalonian Christians, but "because you believed our testimony to you" (v. 10). We have believed on the same apostolic testimony, and therefore we are also numbered among Christ's own people, and will share in the same glorious inheritance.

The big idea is that Paul's encouragement is not to let the persecution roll over them, and "just except it." Rather Paul's edification is that God will soon, punish those persecuting you. That is, fight back with faith in God to apply Psalm 2 with healings, judgment miracles, bold preaching, and loving your brothers, and if some of you are martyred, then face it with boldness in God, knowing you have a great reward.

Peter has the same encouragement. In Peter's letter, he has remarks that indicate his audience, at least some, are under persecution. Yet, in this context, Peter does not edify with "God is in control so just except whatever happens." Peter quotes Psalm 34 (1 Peter 3:9-12). Peter's instruction is to put your faith in what is said in Psalm 34 so that you can receive a "blessing" from God!" This is said to the Jerusalem church, the most persecuted church. And Peter says this to them. What does Psalm 34 say? (4-5,10, 12-18 NIV)

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears.
5 Those who look to him are radiant;
their faces are never covered with shame.

The lions may grow weak and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

10. Whoever of you loves life
and desires to see many good days,
13 keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from telling lies.
14 Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are attentive to their cry;

²²² If our passage in fact refers to the second coming of Christ and the final judgment on the wicked, then the application is even more straightforward, although Paul would then be saying that God will avenge the Thessalonians at a much later time.

16 but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil,
to blot out their name from the earth.

17 The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
he delivers them from all their troubles.

18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

This is filled with God hearing His people, who are in troubles. This Psalm teaches and commands us to seek God in our troubles and God will deliver us from ALL of them. This was not some guy on TBN. This was Peter quoting King David, saying this is applicable to the most persecuted saints in the world. The Psalm is not promising relief in the next life, but a present miracle in the land of the living.

Thus, even in suffering the scripture takes Psalm 2 and Psalm 34 and moralizes it for the most persecuted saints so that God will deliver them from all their troubles and receive blessings raining down from the Father of lights. By this the Kingdom advances.

Having a Direct Ear to the Governor.

“So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit. They went down to the seaport of Seleucia and then sailed for the island of Cyprus. 5 There, in the town of Salamis, they went to the Jewish synagogues and preached the word of God. John Mark went with them as their assistant.

Afterward they traveled from town to town across the entire island until finally they reached Paphos, where they met a Jewish sorcerer, a false prophet named Bar-Jesus. He had attached himself to the governor, Sergius Paulus, who was an intelligent man. The governor invited Barnabas and Saul to visit him, for he wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas, the sorcerer (as his name means in Greek), interfered and urged the governor to pay no attention to what Barnabas and Saul said. He was trying to keep the governor from believing.

Saul, also known as Paul, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he looked the sorcerer in the eye. Then he said, “You son of the devil, full of every sort of deceit and fraud, and enemy of all that is good! Will you never stop perverting the true ways of the Lord? Watch now, for the Lord has laid his hand of punishment upon you, and you will be struck blind. You will not see the sunlight for some time.” Instantly mist and darkness came over the man’s eyes, and he began groping around begging for someone to take his hand and lead him.

12 When the governor saw what had happened, he became a believer, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord,”
(Acts 13:4-12 NLT)

What is interesting here is that the kingdom of God advancing was being stop at the political level by a pagan sorcerer. What does the Scripture reveal for us to learn in this situation? For saints who are both baptized in faith and power, what options do these kingdom fighters have? The sorcerer has the right ear of the governor. Paul

called him a child of Satan. It says Paul was “filled with the Spirit.” Seeing that Acts keeps saying things that Paul felt the Spirit and was moved and heard the Spirit, we can assume being “filled with the Spirit,” in this moment has something tangible and something felt or moved in Paul by the Spirit. Jesus said He felt power leave Him, when the woman touched His garment with faith. There is spiritual physics. Paul gives a “judgment miracle.” He strikes the sorcerer with blindness. Luke reports this led to the governor giving Paul his full attention, so much so, the governor became a Christian.

Many fools look to men, or men doing protest, or men appealing to the courts run by man, in order to change their culture, governments, and governors; however, applied eschatology that Luke records, shows that we are to look to the power of the baptism of the Spirit to use judgment miracles that opens doors for the gospel to be heard and believed. What would happen if Christians filled with the Spirit, in powerful demonstrations removed demonic men, who were opposing us in our governments. What if our top leaders by this demonstration became Christians?

Even boldness to preach the gospel was not meant to be isolated. If this is all you do, you will only have partial success in changing your culture and governments. However, the preached word with the power of the baptism of Spirit, is able to break prisons, remove stubborn hearts, cast out demons, heal the sick and remove obstacles allowing governors to become believers. Let the Kingdom advance in power once again.

Demons are tossed out of the way screaming.

Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims.
And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed.
There was great joy in that city.

(Acts 8:7-8 NLT)

When the Kingdom Advances: Demons scream, & Saints shout for joy.

Peter records in Acts 10:38 that as Jesus was healing, He was casting out demons. Jesus also cast out demons directly. He said He was the stronger man who entered Satan’s house, bound him, and plundered his house. By commanding us to be filled with faith and the baptism of the Spirit, Jesus is commanding us to carry on this noble cause. We’re to expel the kingdom of darkness with intellectual power through preaching the Word. We expel it with the ethical power of the Word and Spirit surging in our souls. But we’re also to expel the kingdom of darkness by literally casting out demonic forces. Jesus did it and wants us to do it. Like the children of Israel taking the Promised Land, Jesus has put this demon-slaying sword in our hands and commands us to finish the work.

When Jesus storms Satan’s turf, demons shriek and scatter, and the saints party with joy. Acts shows the Kingdom’s advance—Jesus, the ultimate strongman, binds the devil and loots his lair. Armed with faith and Spirit firepower, we’re ordered to keep slashing, preaching, and casting out demons. Grab that sword, expel darkness, and make hell tremble. We’re not here to play nice.

The Kingdom has been pushed on an inevitable roll forward, with a destination in view. For those who believe, they will hop on board and enjoy the ride, all the while swinging heaven's sword. But those who oppose it, will be ground to a powder.

Faith in Jesus name.

This is dealt with in more detail in the section on Ethics; however, it deserves a few passing comments here. There are separate modes of power. The first and most foundational is simply normal discipleship faith. This faith saves you, as Jesus often said. You're justified from your sin by faith in Jesus' finished work. This same faith heals you. James, in chapter 5, says your faith will cause you to be healed and forgiven. He also says God will grant miracles on the demand of your faith. This same faith casts out demons. This faith allows you to march into God's throne room and directly ask for help as angels and other heavenly beings watch God relate to you as a son. This faith moves mountains. And as Jesus repeatedly emphasized in John 14-16, faith allows you to ask for anything from God and receive it.

This faith even enables you to bypass constraints like being in the wrong time or administration, as seen with the Gentile woman seeking Jesus to heal her daughter. Jesus was theologically correct: it was wrong for Him to give what belonged to someone else to her. It wasn't her time. Yet, her faith bypassed Jesus' theology, and she got what she wanted anyway. As Vincent Cheung says (paraphrased), "Because faith is the first doctrine, no other doctrine or theology that comes later will contradict faith."²²³ Jesus, in fact, replies to her, "Woman, your will be done." The big idea is this: the baptism of the Spirit, the gifts, and the anointing presence didn't do this—normal discipleship faith did. The gifts and anointing are by God's sovereign work, moving when and how He wills. Faith is different. With or without the gifts and the anointing presence (though we seek them zealously), faith can bypass God's pre-appointed administrations to get what you want from God. This is a unique attribute almost exclusive to faith.

This is why some Pentecostals and Charismatics have harmed themselves, stunting their growth and ability to advance the kingdom. I've recently been listening to Benny Hinn. His instruction on cultivating the anointing presence of the Spirit is mostly correct (not entirely). We should all be praying in tongues and engaging in spiritual practices to spark the gifts and God's presence upon us. The issue is that many "depend" on this in a way not taught in Scripture. What if the Spirit chooses not to move on a day you're in great need? Will the lack of feeling God's presence disable you? What if you don't feel the anointing presence of the Spirit when you need a mountain moved? FAITH is the answer. If you've matured your faith (as Jesus taught in John 14-16), you're always ready, in and out of season, to move mountains and get help for yourself and those around you.

Faith is separate from the baptism of the Spirit. It's separate from the gifts of the Spirit. It's separate from the mode of the Spirit that many refer to as the "anointing or manifestation of the presence of the Spirit."

²²³ Vincent Cheung. Faith Override. From Sermonettes Vol 9.

Because our faith is imperfect, all the above modes can help, strengthen, and even work alongside our normal discipleship faith, but they're separate things.

Normal discipleship faith is the ultimate Swiss Army knife—saving, healing, demon-zapping, and mountain-moving, all by trusting Jesus' finished work. It even outsmarts divine red tape, like the Gentile woman snagging her miracle, when Jesus told her no. Pentecostals are banking too hard on Spirit gifts, at the risk of diminishing faith. Risky move—faith is the first doctrine, ready 24/7 to storm God's throne and nab anything you ask, no anointing required.

“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which is through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all,” (Acts 3:16 LSB)

Think about the context? This is right after Peter's Pentecostal sermon when he says to repent, and then you will be baptized in the Spirit for power. Yet, this healing is not attributed to some gift or baptism of the Spirit, but just normal faith in Jesus. There other examples like this in the book of Acts.

All need to be zealously sought and acquired.

Therefore, *applied Eschatology* is **POWER** that comes from
 (1) faith,
 (2) baptism of the Spirit,
 (3) gifts of the Spirit &
 (4) the anointing presence of the Spirit.

Books were Burned, Culture was Changed.

Acts 19:11–20 (NLT)

God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled. A group of Jews was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits. They tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!” Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, were doing this. But one time when they tried it, the evil spirit replied, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?” Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they fled from the house, naked and battered.

...A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honored.

Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices.

A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire. The value of the books was several million dollars.

So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect.

Another example of the intellectual and ethical power of the kingdom, is seen in our above example. Those who are born from above have the power of God surging in the minds. God directs their thoughts to Him. God promised in a blood oath Contract to write His laws on their minds. They want to favor God. The Spirit testifies within them that they are God's children. The Spirit inclines their souls to love God and causes them to not depart from God's commands. The Spirit intelligently communicates and reveals the knowledge of God's laws and precepts to their minds. They have the intellectual and ethical power to understand, and believe, and apply themselves to God's truth.

Thus, without force, those in the above example, literally burned their former lives away. Those witchcraft books were very expensive. They did not even sell them, to restore their own money. Rather in ethical power, they burned them, and insured no one else would be deceived by them anymore. It had a "powerful effect," in that region. And what was happening that help these demon worshipers to do a 180? We read of demons being cast out. We read how others, who did not believe Jesus tried to yield Jesus' name and failed to cast out a demon. And we read about a context of various miracles happening. In this context the witches repented and gave their lives to Jesus.

In healing, a person loves God, and those who see it, will have a sense of awe toward God. I say this referring to the common people, because the religious elites will hate that the common people are being helped without them doing it. In healing, demons are often cast out. With the foundation of being born from above, a person's soul is radically redesigned. With demons cast out, people see God's kingdom is stronger in a militant demonstration.

The city was changed down to the culture. The combination of demons cast out with various miracles (missional power) and the people willingly giving up their former pagan ways (intellectual and ethical power), changed the culture around them. When many, sadly even in the church, look to governments or political change, they focus on man. They are mortals who look to other mortals for their approval and for their salvation. However, those who are born from above, look to God for His approval and salvation.

This idea of changing the culture has a similar application to Jesus' instruction about gaining pagan-level-seeking-wealth. Jesus says the pagans seek after all these material things, but for us, we are to seek our righteousness in God first and then God will give to us the things the pagans seek after. The pagans seek after more than the bear minimum. This pagan-level-seeking-wealth will be given to us, when we are not material-focused, but Jesus and God's kingdom focused.

The same is for a transformed culture. We focus not on man, or any organization that is made up of man. Rather, we look for intellectual and miracle power that comes from baptism of faith and baptism of power. When we do this, God will give us the culture change we are looking for, and it will be a "powerful effect."

Baptism Of Power: Applied Eschatology

The power of the Spirit is so contested by many that we'll spend more time on it. When Jesus on His throne becomes central to eschatology, rather than man-centeredness, the application is power—this power comes from the baptism in the Spirit. It also comes from an indomitable faith that moves mountains and approaches the throne of grace to receive exactly what one asks for. One becomes focused on expanding the Kingdom of God with power, truth, and compassion.

The New Testament teaches that by believing God's love and forgiveness for you, you're empowered to love and forgive others (e.g., Colossians 3:9-13). So, who would argue against saying, "If you want to mature in loving others, you need to focus on God's love for you"? You need a radically Jesus-centered focus to mature in the love and mercy you extend to your brethren. The same applies to eschatology. If you want power to advance the Kingdom, if you want power to help those who are suffering, you must be radically focused on where power comes from: Jesus on His throne. If you want Heaven's power, focusing on men and governments is a contradiction. The reason so many focus on man and governments in eschatology is that they love being man-centered. Man-centeredness is their idol and god. They have their reward. Human power is all they'll get.

As for us, we keep our minds where our life and power reside, which is at the right hand of the Power.

Spirit power's the real deal, but mockers trip over it while we bask in Jesus' throne-room brilliance. Eschatology's not about man's puny politics—it's about Christ's cosmic government, fueling mountain-moving faith and kingdom compassion. Obsess over governments? That's idol worship with a side of weak sauce. Us? We are locked on the Power's right hand, ready to roll with divine dynamite.

Jesus began to do and to teach, 2 until the day he was taken up, after he had given orders through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen...

4 He commanded them, "*Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for what was promised by the Father, which you heard about from me.* 5 For John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now"...

they began asking him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" 7 But he said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you **will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth."

(Acts 1:1-8 LEB)

“And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all,”
(Acts 4:33 LEB)

2:1 And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in the same place. 2 And suddenly a sound like a violent rushing wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues like fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability to speak out.

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them, “Judean men, and all those who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and pay attention to my words! 15 For these men are not drunk, as you assume, because it is the third hour of the day. 16 But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel..

30 Therefore, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, 31 by having foreseen this, he spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he abandoned in Hades nor did his flesh experience decay. 32 This Jesus God raised up, of which we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the **promise of the Holy Spirit** from the Father, he has poured out this that you see and hear.

And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and [then] you will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.”

9:17 So Ananias departed and entered into the house, and placing his hands on him, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you came, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be **filled with the Holy Spirit**.” 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight and got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking food, he regained his strength. And he was with the disciples in Damascus several days.

10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the **Holy Spirit fell** on all those who were listening to the message. 45 And those believers from the circumcision who had accompanied Peter were astonished that the **gift** of the Holy Spirit had been **poured out** even on the Gentiles, 46 for they heard them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can withhold the water for these people to be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as we also did!” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for several days...

11:16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit.**’ 17 Therefore if God gave them the same **gift** as also to us **when we believed** in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to be able to hinder God?” 18 And when they heard these things, they became silent and praised God, saying, “Then God has granted the repentance leading to life to the Gentiles also!”

19:1 And it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the inland regions and came to Ephesus and found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, “**Did you receive** the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him, “But we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit!” 3 And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said, “Into the baptism of John.” 4 And Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the one who was to come after him—that is, in Jesus.” 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit **came upon them** and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy.

If the foundation of eschatology is not defined by the apostles, but Jesus sitting on the throne at the Power’s right hand, and His commands for power still stand, then applied eschatology for Christians is baptism in the Spirit, faith and miracles.

In a previous section on salvation and the gospel, baptism of the Spirit is a necessary consequence of the gospel. We will briefly go over this.

“Always remember that Jesus Christ,
a descendant of King David, was raised from the dead.
This is the Good News [i.e. gospel] I preach,”
2 Timothy 2:8 (NLT).

Tradition and men have a tendency to limit God, man and the gospel. In this case they limit Jesus’ nature, His position of authority and glorification of man in the gospel. Imputed righteousness and being declared righteous is an awesome doctrine, but there is more that the bible defines that belongs to “good news,” than a few narrowly selected pet doctrines. Men are habitually and systematically man-centered, and this leads to limiting God, His gospel and the elect. This happens because their worldview, despite having many scriptural terms, starts with themselves. They see the world from their limited human experience and then force God, the gospel and the elect into this limitation. We know who they serve.

Paul teaches in this passage that the gospel includes that Jesus was raised from the dead “as a descendant of King David.” This refers to the promise God made to “King” David about a descendant that will come from him. There are two aspects of this promised person. One, he will be the saving Messiah. The second, is that He will be a “King” on a throne, ruling in power and authority.

This descendant of King David, according to Paul, is connected to the fact that Jesus was raised. When you and I are resurrected, it is not necessarily connected to us sitting at God’s right hand as King and Judge over all things; however, this is precisely

what it means for Jesus. Because we are connected to Jesus as part of His body, by God's decision, then we share in His power and authority. Not as the head, but we do indeed share in what Jesus' experienced. We are not just sub-heirs, but co-heirs. Jesus judges in authority, and likewise we will also one day judge angels, etc. The point is that what happens to Jesus in resurrection, also happens to us. For example, Paul argues in 1 Corinthians 15 because Jesus had bodily resurrection, then we also will have a bodily resurrection.

Jesus is raised as the promised King, from King David, who sits on a throne of power. That is, Jesus' resurrection by the Father from the grave, cannot be disconnected from the fact that His rising is a rising to sit on a throne. The doctrine of Jesus rising from the grave is the same thing as His rising to sit at the right hand of the Power, because the two cannot logically be separated. One cannot separate Jesus' resurrection from His sitting on the throne as a King. Jesus raised from the grave is not to some nebulous place in the clouds. We are told and know where He was raised to. He was raised to the right hand of the Power. This doctrine for Paul, is "the gospel he preached."

Also note, this is Paul to Timothy. Furthermore, this is the gospel Paul preached to the gentiles; thus, it is not a specific doctrine for Jews or something like that.

Peter, in the first recorded apostolic gospel sermon, harps on this aspect of Jesus being King David's descendant, who was raised to the position of throne power and authority. Peter devoted a good amount of space to make this point about Jesus.

Peter sums up Jesus' rising as the seated King from David as,

"both messiah and King."

Thus, this promised descendant from David, according to Peter includes both the "saving Messiah" and "King" aspect to it. The resurrection is part of the gospel, most would admit, but His resurrection cannot be separated from a resurrection as a King to a throne. This last part of the gospel is the focus of eschatology, as it pertains to this side of eternity and Jesus ruling. This power the Father *"worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavenly places, above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one, and he subjected all things under his feet,"* Ephesians 1:20-22 LEB. Again, Peter does not separate the saving and Throne aspect of Jesus Christ as the risen descendant of David. It was the gospel Paul preached and it was also the gospel Peter preached. The promise included both, and thus cannot be separated by theologians without blaspheme.

Peter then makes connection to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His argument is this. Jesus as the descendant from King David, was raised to the right hand of God. What does Jesus do, sitting at the right hand of the Power? Peter argues that in His position of power, has poured out power on His chosen ones, through the baptism of the Spirit. What does this newly seated King do with His position of Power? Well, He starts to empower His people. What will this seated descendant King of David do with all this authority and power? Peter's answer is this: He gives us His power and authority so that we can overcome the world and spread His kingdom to every corner. Jesus gives us power to cast out demons, to heal the sick, and make mountains obey us. This is what Jesus does with power.

Thus, to say, “the gospel is the baptism of the Spirit, for speaking in tongues, casting out demons and healing the sick,” is true and should have no resistance. Jesus had to be cut up into a bloody pulp, under the Father’s wrath, and then resurrected to the right hand of Power, in order to have a contractual right to pour out the Spirit for power. Thus the gospel is the baptism of the Spirit for miracle power; the gospel includes more, but not less than this. It is no less the gospel than the forgiveness of sins, because both are produced by the same thing, which is the blood, death and resurrection of Jesus to the right hand of the Power. To be against the statement, “The gospel is the baptism of Spirit for miracles,” is to trample the blood, death and resurrection of Jesus to God’s right hand. To be against the baptism of the Spirit for speaking in tongues and power, is to be against the blood, death and resurrection authority of Jesus Christ. To be against the baptism of the Spirit for miracles, is to mock how the reigning Jesus Christ uses His authority from the right hand of the Power.

Paul said if you deny the resurrection then your faith is destroyed, and your hope is vain. However, there are more ways to deny the resurrection rather than directly denying it. In the logic of Modus Ponens, resurrection is the antecedent, while the effects and application of resurrection would be the consequent. Denying the antecedent is how you deny it directly, but let us not forget the other deductive application. The logic of Modus Tollens is also valid. If you deny the consequent, then you deny the antecedent. If you deny the baptism of the Spirit for miracles and speaking in tongues, then you deny the resurrection of Jesus to God’s right hand. If you deny the baptism of the Spirit, then your faith is in vain, because you deny the resurrection.

Men and tradition, who use many scriptural terms, mock the gospel continually. You need to remove such a faithless mocker from your life. They spit on the blood of Jesus, trample on His death and make a mockery of His decisions made from His position of authority. Do not even eat or wash your hands with such people. Instead, honor the decisions that Jesus made, as He sits in all authority, at the Father’s right hand. We must seek to be baptized by the Spirit and to be constantly growing in Spiritual power for miracles and spiritual physics. The Spirit will become your personal instructor, as if Jesus Himself were right there with you, giving you instruction. The baseline spiritual power, as recorded in Acts that all get for being baptized, is speaking in tongues for inward edification (1 Corin 14:4,18). If you must start, then start there, and then seek more and more power. I have heard many ministries say they started after they first had a season of increased speaking in tongues. This gift is a spiritual gateway to other spiritual gifts. In my experience this gift is not utilized as it ought, and many have paid a harsh price for its neglecting. God is the foundation for reaping and sowing. If you sow into spiritual power by praying in tongues, then you will reap a harvest of spiritual power. And if you don’t care about yourself, then have some compassion and care for others and God’s kingdom expanding. Praying in tongues will empower you to expand God’s kingdom and will help you have power to help those in need.

“So again I ask, does God give you his ***Spirit and work miracles*** among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the **gospel** in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be **blessed** through you.” So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith,”
Galatians 3:5-8 NIV

God’s promise of the gospel and blessings to Abraham includes the Spirit and miracles. “The Spirit,” spoken by Paul to the Galatians is referring to the baptism of the Spirit, because it is connected to the “spirit and miracles.” This same Paul, talking about “the Spirit,” (Acts 19:1-5) means the baptism of the Spirit. Paul further says, this blessing promised is “the gospel.” Thus, the gospel according to what the Scripture preaches, included the Spirit and miraculous power. Why is this “gospel” not taught in pulpits today? Because many preach for Satan rather than for God.

But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: “These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is **another king, one called Jesus,**” Acts 17:6-7 NIV

Paul preached on the throne aspect of Jesus enough, that the opponents had no issue summarizing, even if they had some wrong understanding about it, that Paul’s gospel is about King Jesus sitting on a throne who rules over people.

Jesus in His last words in the Scripture says, “*I, Jesus. ...I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.*” This whole apocalyptic revelation to John is predicated by Jesus that He is the King promised from the line of David, who is even now on His throne.

The gospel teaches a reality of Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Power. This teaching on metaphysics—from Jesus’ point of view or from the view of God as the only real cause in reality—includes how Jesus is using this power to not only give an inner ethical power, but also a missional advancing power, by the baptism of the Spirit. If the resurrection cannot be separated from Jesus sitting on the throne (Eph. 1:19-23, 1 Tim. 2:8), and the throne doctrine cannot be separated from Jesus having all power and authority (Eph. 1:19-23, Acts 2:33, (Matt. 26:64, Acts 7:56), 1 Corinth. 15:25, (Matt. 28:18, Luke 24:49)), and this power of Jesus cannot be separated from Jesus pouring out the baptism of the Spirit according to the promise of the Father (Acts 2), and the doctrine of resurrection is part of the definition of the gospel (1 Corinth. 15, 1 Tim 2:8), then the gospel includes Jesus on His throne ruling in power and pouring out the baptism of the Spirit.

Ethics, which is an application of this gospel reality, is Jesus’ command for His followers to get answers to their prayers and be filled with His power. Our accountability is to obey our Master. Thus, our seeking to have answered prayers and filled with power is an application of the gospel, when considered in the category of ethics. Thus, to make this clear, from a doctrine of metaphysics Jesus’ resurrection to the throne and pouring out His power in the Spirit and causing His elect to have the faith to receive it, is the gospel, and not merely an effect. However, viewed from

‘ethics,’ which is God’s command and our response to this in obedience, it can be viewed as an effect of the gospel.

The doctrine of eschatology focuses on this later aspect of the gospel. The gospel includes all the foundational doctrines such as the promises of God to Abraham (Gal.3.), about the sovereign deity of Jesus (John 1:1-4), His humbling, His obedience under the law, His substitutionary atonement for us, and His resurrection to the right hand of God, pouring out faith and baptism of the Spirit. Eschatology is merely a focus on the last metaphysics of the gospel. Remember, the doctrine of salvation is merely a subcategory of God’s absolute control over reality. God has controlled reality in all aspects of creation, the fall, the promises, the sending of His Son, His atonement, and now the Son’s enthronement with all authority and power given to Him. Eschatology is a focus on God’s control over reality in the present reality of His Son at His right hand.

As per our basic gospel definition: the gospel is “all things” Jesus accomplished, at the definite time and place of His life, death and resurrection for His elect, by substitutionary atonement. The resurrection of Jesus includes His enthronement, and by this included the baptism of the Spirit for missional power. Thus, this missional power to advance the kingdom, is by definition, part of the gospel. Eschatology is a focus on this latter part of the gospel.

When dealing with what man ought to do, we are asking about ethics. Christian ethics is about God’s commandments.

Luke records *Jesus last command* to the disciples as waiting in Jerusalem until they are baptized in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are already clean because Jesus says so. They are clean because they believe in Him.

In the very beginning of John chapter 1 with the doctrine of the “LOGOS” John records, “*In him was life, and the life was the light of humanity. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it,*” (John 1:4-5 LEB). We are talking about an intellectual light, for the world did not “know” or that is intellectually perceive who He was. Their minds were dark in spiritual stupidity. The subjects and predicates were so f@#ked up in their system of premises they could not perceive the most obvious truth of reality. Paul records it this way,

“This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles walk: in the futility of their mind, 18 being **darkened in understanding**, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart, 19 who, becoming callous, gave themselves over to licentiousness, for the pursuit of all uncleanness in greediness,”
(Ephesians 4:17-19 LEB).

Although light can refer to ethical good, here John and Paul is using it for an intellectual understanding and belief. In fact, Paul says in 1 Corinthians, that the Spirit alone knows God, and by us having the Spirit, we know God, and know Him in the same way God does. God’s Spirit knows Himself, and now we know God by the same way. Then He says, “We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, in order that we may know the things freely given to us by God, things which we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but

in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual things to spiritual people. But the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to understand them, because they are spiritually discerned,” (1 Corin. 2:12-14 LEB).

The “things of the Spirit” is intellectual and receiving knowledge about our standing in God and all the goodies given to us. The “things of the Spirit,” which the natural man cannot understand having enough intelligence to assent to the truth revealed in the gospel. It is about having enough of the broken subject and predicates fixed and premises arranged in a correct system so that the mind is able to see and receive all the good things freely given to us.

In the famous dialog with Nicodemus, Jesus says only by being born-from-above can you see/perceive the kingdom of God, which is from above. “Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly I say to you, unless someone is born from above, he is not able to see the kingdom of God.”... Jesus answered, “Truly, truly I say to you, unless someone is born of water and spirit, he is not able to enter the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘It is **necessary** for you to be born from above,’” (John 3:3-6 LEB). The word for “see” here can mean to perceive and understand, and in context of chapter 1, where John makes the context of Jesus being the intellectual light, then John means for us to take it this way. Jesus says it is “necessary.” In context of light, being defined as intellectual perception, then it is obvious why it is “necessary” to be born from above, because how can one believe in the gospel if they do not understand it? Spiritual life is intellectual life.

Being born again, must therefore, happen before repentance, because you cannot repent without understanding and accepting the truth. This is only done after being born from above. In fact, Jesus makes this connection to intellectual assent as part of the Spirit’s work. “The Spirit is the one who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. But there are some of you who do **not believe**.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, “Because of this I said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by the Father,” (John 6:63-65 LEB). Jesus appeals to the overall sovereignty of God to cause a person to be born again and to have the intellectual light to understand and believe what Jesus is preaching; however, the immediate focus is on the Spirit that causes a person to see and believe what is being said.

Near the end Jesus says to the disciples, “the Spirit of truth, whom the world is not able to receive, because it does not see him or know him. You know him, **because he resides with you and will be in you**, (John 14:17 LEB). Jesus affirms the Spirit is already in them. The Spirit that gives intellectual light to understand and believe the truth. They are born from above. John in 1 John restates this saying, “You are from God ... They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world and the world listens to them. We are from God. The one who knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit, (1 John 4:4-6 LEB). John says we are of God (i.e. born from above) and the proof is the ability to listen what God says, understand it, and believe it. Reprobates do the opposite.

Jesus also says in John 6:27-29 that the work and command of God is to believe in the One who He sent, which is of course is Jesus. Thus, there is some overlap of an ethical light, but remember that ethics is technically a subcategory of intellect or faith. The Spirit births in a man, the light to understand reality, by causing him to believe in the truth of God. The Spirit gives man the courage to accept the wonderful reality of all the good things God has freely given him in Christ. However, the act of believing in Jesus' salvation is the "work" and "commandment" of God (Acts 17:30). Thus, believing is both an intellectual light and ethical light. Thus, being born from above is both a birth of intelligence and ethics in man. Before they were intellectual and ethical blindness. But now, they are a new reality of intellectual and moral power.

Despite Jesus in chapter 14 saying the Spirit already resides in them, He also says the Father will send the Spirit, in Jesus' Name. "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the *Father will send in my name*—that one will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything that I said to you," (John 14:26 LEB). John, also gives commentary about this other giving of the Spirit. "Now he said this concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were about to receive. For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus had not yet been glorified," (John 7:39 LEB).

What is this? The Holy Spirit already birthed the disciples in intellectual and ethical power? Jesus says in John 17, in His high priest prayer, that the disciples already believe He was sent by the Father, except Judas. Thus, they already possess the power to believe Jesus. What else is needed? Missional power is needed.

And he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything that is written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." **Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures**, and said to them, "Thus it is written that the Christ would suffer and would rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, **I am sending out what was promised by my Father upon you**, but you stay in the city until you are **clothed with power** from on high," (Luke 24:44-49 LEB).

Jesus already opened their mind to understand the Scriptures, they are already born from above with intellectual and believing light. They were baptized for repentance of sins. What more is there? Jesus says to wait until you are clothed with power. Many people are lazy and do not see the big picture or do not care about what God loves and cares about. Jesus is zealous to advance His Kingdom and then hand it to His Father. His command about missional power is a command to accomplish this zeal and love. Christians expose their true or false professions, by jumping on board with Jesus' command and zeal or disobeying it.

Luke, who is the same author of the book of Acts, writes a few verses later in Acts chapter 1, further defining term "**clothed with power**."

He commanded them, "*Do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for what was promised by the Father, which you heard about from me. 5 For John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now*"...

they began asking him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” 7 But he said to them, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you **will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth,”

(Acts 1:1-8 LEB)

Luke teaches that clothed with power and “**receiving the power of the Spirit**,” is being baptized in the Spirit. Jesus in John 14 says, “*the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name.*” Jesus further defines this at the end of Luke, “I am sending out what was promised by my Father upon you.” Peter teaches us in the Pentecost sermon, that this refers to the baptism of the Spirit. Peter says, when the Father seated Him at His right hand and faithfully gave Jesus the promise of the Spirit, then Jesus from the position of the Throne authority, gives this to His disciples. “*Therefore, having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, he has poured out this that you see and hear.*”

The important part here is how Jesus defines the baptism of the Spirit. Jesus refers to the baptism of the Spirit as missional power to advance the Kingdom. “You **will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest part of the earth.” It is important to note the super majority of people who received this was not apostles, but regular disciples. Baptism of repentance and baptism for missional power are different categories. There are two baptisms. It is possible to receive both at the same time, but there is no direct teaching from Scripture that says it only or even mostly happens this way; nor do individual examples logically deduce such a doctrine.

Peter, under the Holy Spirit says this refers to baptism of the Spirit as a fulfillment of the Promise of Joel, which puts salvation for sin and then empowerment as part of the same promise. Peter says, “Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (baptize in the Spirit for missional power). For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.”²²⁴

The big takeaways here is that the Scripture interpreting itself, says Joe’s prophecy is for salvation and baptism of the Spirit for empowerment, and that they belong together for this age. How long is this age? Peter defines it by Jesus on the throne, and this is the other big takeaway, to “as many as God calls to Himself.” Thus, the age for Joel’s prophecy is in play as long as Jesus sits on the throne at God’s right hand, and God is still “calling people to Himself.” As long as Jesus is still at God’s right hand, and God is calling people to Himself, then Peter’s command to repent, and then be baptized with power, still stands. It was not some crazy on TBN, this was the Holy Spirit speaking through Peter. Peter puts baptism of repentance and baptism of the Spirit together with “*as many as God calls to Himself.*” There is no logical law of logic or principle that can divide this. A person can do this, but since there is no logical way to do it, they can only do it by delusion and stupidity.

²²⁴ () added by author.

Peter says to repent and be baptized for forgiveness. Thus, they must be born from above to do this, since only in spiritual intelligence can one see and believe in the Kingdom. Next Peter says, and then you will be given the gift of the Spirit, which Jesus terms as “baptized in the Spirit,” for missional power. There is the baptism for intellectual and ethical power, and then Peter says, Jesus will give the baptism of the Spirit for missional power. These are two distinct and separate categories. To mix them up is both stupid and wicked.

Vincent Cheung brings out a further category insight saying (as I paraphrase, from Theology, Borders Edition 2023), “when one receives Jesus in forgiveness, the Spirit works on you to receive Jesus. But when one receives the baptism of the Spirit, it is Jesus who works on you to receive the Spirit.” The point is that there is a clear category difference. They are not the same.

Peter argues that power is promised in Joel, and this is for all who call on God for salvation. Thus, it is not about apostles, or the age of the apostles, since both Joel and Peter put this baptism of power with the call for salvation together. Thus, after quoting Joel putting them together, and making Jesus on the throne as the foundation, Peter says, “*promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.*” Remember Jesus commanding the disciples to be baptized in the Spirit to have missional power to be witnesses to Jerusalem and the surrounding areas and to the ends of the earth? Peter, under the power of the Spirit, says this promise (of missional power) is for all those far way, as many as the Lord God calls to Himself.” “Calling to Himself,” is salvation. Thus, this is not intended for the apostles, but for all who God will call to Himself. All who God will call to Himself, God gives them the promise of Joel, through Jesus Christ in authority dispensing it from His throne. Thus, this is an order and command to not only believe in Jesus for salvation, but to believe in Jesus to give missional power (and out of love to Him) advance our Savior’s kingdom.

Jesus is the main actor here, not Peter, nor “any age of man.” Jesus is still on the throne. The Father has not taken back His gift of the Spirit to the Son. Jesus is still faithful to give repentance and the Spirit for all those who call out in faith, which was promised in Joel. The promise of Joel for salvation and missional power, is in play as long as the absolute sovereign God “*calls people to Himself.*” This is radically God focused, not apostle focused. The reigning Jesus defines this age, not man.

Jesus gives intellectual and ethical power for faith and salvation, and then gives the baptism of the Spirit for missional power to advance the kingdom.

10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the **Holy Spirit fell** on all those who were listening to the message. 45 And those believers from the circumcision who had accompanied Peter were astonished that the **gift** of the Holy Spirit had been **poured out** even on the Gentiles, 46 for they heard them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can withhold the water for these people to be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as we also did!” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for several days...

11:16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be **baptized with the Holy Spirit.**’ 17 Therefore if God gave them the same **gift** as also to us **when we believed** in the Lord Jesus Christ,

who was I to be able to hinder God?” 18 And when they heard these things, they became silent and praised God, saying, “Then God has granted the repentance leading to life to the Gentiles also!”

Verse 10:48 says that Peter ordered them to be *baptized in the name of Jesus*. That is, they did water baptism, confessing they believed in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and of a new life. However, 11:17 refers to the “gift” of receiving the Spirit as “*baptized with the Holy Spirit*.” Thus, before we get into specifics, the plain reading shows two distinct baptisms: one of repentance with the sign of water baptism, and then baptism of the Spirit for missional power. I say mission power, because Luke in chapter 1, through Jesus Christ defines this second baptism in this way, and thus, we will do the same.

This bears repeating. You cannot have biblical interpretation principles and only apply them to your opponent, and not apply them to yourself. Jesus and Luke’s first mention of the gift of the Spirit is defined as a second “*baptism of the Spirit*” specifically focused on “*missional power*,” not forgiveness, or ethical power, or something else.

Peter says God gave them the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” However, Peter affirms God already “baptized” them. They have already been baptized. But Peter still orders them to be baptized with water later. Thus, Peter affirms two baptisms. Why? Because the first baptism is the category of intellectual and ethical life. The second baptism is for missional power. Because the first baptism of new life is an intellectual and ethical power, it thus gives the ethical power to obey Jesus’ command to receive power for missions. The reason many do not receive the baptism of the Spirit is because they are born from below. They do not have the intelligence to accept and receive the gift of power. God did not sovereignly “call them to Himself.”

However, as seen in Acts 19, Paul found “some who believed” that had not yet received the baptism of missional power. Therefore, it is possible to have the first baptism without the other. However, Luke records that Paul is quick to not only give a better explained baptism of repentance but also baptism of the Spirit. They proved they were born from above, with their quick acceptance of the further teaching Paul gave them. They had the intellectual and ethical power to perceive and accept. They still did not have missional power, thus, Paul fixed this when he laid hands on them. And this deserves a quick note. Can a person receive forgiveness and conversion by the laying on of hands? And yet, we just read Paul doing this for the baptism of the Spirit. Because they were truly born again, they not only obeyed by receiving the further teaching on repentance from Jesus, but also had the power to obey Jesus and receive His gift of the baptism of Spirit.

Some morons complain, “*well if you make baptism of the Spirit a separate baptism, the way Peter and Jesus and Paul did, then you will make those who have not experienced the baptism of the Spirit to be second class citizens.*” Well, of course the Scripture would make them second class, but not for the specific reason you might think. They would be second class in the same way that the man in Corinthians made himself a second-class Christian by sleeping with his step-mother. The man was willfully disobedient, and unrepentant. Paul, handed him over to Satan, so that in the destruction of the flesh, he will be saved. In his excommunication, he really was a second-class Christian, in the pragmatic sense. However, we know the story. The man repented. He was then brought back as a true brother in Christ.

This is the same issue with baptism of the Spirit. When Paul found the believers who were not baptized in the Spirit, he did not excommunicate them or say anything harsh. He loved them by preaching the gospel of the baptism of the Spirit. They did not hesitate to obey and receive what Jesus commanded. What would have happened if they said, “*we do not believe Jesus has ordered us to receive the baptism of the Spirit for missional power; the command is only for you apostles*”? What if they kept refusing and then started to teach there is no baptism of the Spirit for missional power after one has confessed repentance in baptism of water? Would Paul still have called them believers after that, or called them false teachers? I will not answer that for you. No, being ignorant of the baptism of the Spirit, or being hindered to receive it because of false teachers, does not make one a second-class Christian (it would leave you less powerful to advance Jesus’ Kingdom); however, unbelief and refusal to even try to obey Jesus would make you one, if not much worse. Excommunication should be given to all who disobey this order and hinder others in their false doctrine; all believing Christians ought to hand these over to Satan, and perhaps God might sovereignly grant them repentance while their flesh is destroyed.

19:1 And it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the inland regions and came to Ephesus and found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, “**Did you receive** the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him, “But we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit!” 3 And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said, “Into the baptism of John.” 4 And Paul said, “John baptized with a **baptism of repentance**, telling the people that they should believe in the one who was to come after him—that is, in Jesus.” 5 And when they heard this, **they were baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul laid hands on them, **the Holy Spirit came upon them** and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy.

Luke records that these people, although limited in their understanding of the gospel, are “disciples.” Paul in fact presupposed they are believers saying, “*when you believed?*” Thus, they are referred to as disciples and believers by Paul and Luke, despite only having known John’s teaching and baptism of repentance. After teaching, Paul led them to be water baptized again in the name of “Jesus.” After this Luke records, “the Holy Spirit came upon them,” which Luke first mentions in chapter 1 as “baptized with the Spirit.” They are already saved. They are already born from above with the intellectual and ethical power to be “believers” and followers. With faith in Jesus’ gospel and being baptized in water to show their faith in Him, they then received the baptism of the Spirit, for missional power. The Kingdom advances. This is exactly what Peter preached in Acts 2. Repent and be baptized in water, and then you will receive the baptism of the Spirit for power. Thus, Paul shows there are two baptisms along with Peter.

Also, it is worth noting that “speaking in tongues” is mentioned regularly, when people are “baptized in the Spirit.” At the very least, the doctrine from this alone, without bringing in others, is that speaking in tongues is a regular power that the Spirit works when He is baptizes.²²⁵

²²⁵ I believe the argument can be made that it is almost always manifested, it not always, when there is baptism of the Spirit, but this is only a basic systematic theology book. Consider the principle of

Jesus advances the Kingdom not only by intellectual and ethical power, but also miraculous power. Speaking in other tongues is a regular sign when receiving Zeus' thunder bolt. When there is speaking in tongues, the Kingdom advances. In fact, the speaking in tongues is what brought all the questions, that led Peter to preach the sermon in which three thousand souls were conveyed from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. The Lion advances.

Baptism of Water, Those who Accepted the Gospel.

“And Peter said to them, “**Repent and be baptized**, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,

and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.” ...

So those who accepted his message were baptized,”

(Acts 2:38-39 LEB)

Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had **accepted the word of God**, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who went down and prayed for them so that they would receive the Holy Spirit. 16 (For he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only **been baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then they placed their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit,”

(Acts 8:14-17 LEB)

“And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthian’s **hearing believed, and were baptized,**” (Acts 18:8 LEB).

And as they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, “Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?” 38 And he ordered the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water—Philip and the eunuch—and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him any longer, for he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he^[an] passed through, he proclaimed the good news,”

(Acts 8:37-40 LEB)

And it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the inland regions and came to Ephesus and found some disciples. 2 And he said to them,

“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

And they said to him, “But we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit!” And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said, “Into the baptism of John.”

first mentions. Speaking tongues is mentioned in the first teaching on the subject, and then regularly mentioned after to continue to reinforce this. Thus, if a church says they experience regular baptisms in the Spirit, but infrequently or never see speaking in tongues manifest, then we know they are deceived.

And Paul said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the one who was to come after him—that is, in Jesus.”

And ***when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus***. And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy. (Now the total number of men was about twelve.),”
(Acts 19:1-7 LEB)

Using the principle of first mentions we learn in Acts 2, at the ending of Pentecost sermon, that “***those who accepted*** (i.e. believed) the message *were baptized*.”

The first part of good logic is a good and clear definition of terms. It is best to know what it is and what it is not. Luke shows in the book of Acts that those who participated in John’s baptism were shown to do a similar thing in the context of Christ’s atonement. Rather than using circumcision to easily translate into Jesus’s water baptism, the 4 Gospels show John’s baptism translates easily into Jesus’ baptism. The Gospels only show John’s baptism by individuals who profess repentance. Repentance is faith and application on the specific point of our sinfulness before God and forgiveness in Jesus.

This is the first instance of the baptism after Jesus’ resurrection. It is the first apostolic recording about it. It sets the foundation. Luke records that those who accepted (or that is believed) their sins are forgiven in Christ, where then baptized in water. Individuals had accepted the gospel.

After commanding repentance in Christ and baptism of water as a public confession of this faith, Peter says, then you will receive the baptism of the Spirit for power. This shows two baptisms. In the baptism of the Spirit, there is power. If you don’t have power, then you have not been baptized in the Spirit. This is why you see the Apostles looking for speaking in tongues as proof in some individuals that they have been baptized in the Spirit.

In Acts 8 Peter is sent to some in Samaria who had “accepted the word,” or that is believed it. It is said these who had believed were baptized in water. Where is the counter example or exception to the first definition in Acts 2?

Someone might say, “well they had families, and so their babies were baptized with them.” Where does it say that? Did you get that from the bible? Where? For this to be a counter example you must show an actual case, not merely a possible one. It only says those “*who accepted the message*.” To go beyond this is to add extra biblical premises into the bible. Why is it that those who yell the loudest about only standing on the Word of God for truth, practice it the least? And if they mean by “solo scriptura” that empiricism is an additional epistemology with Scripture, then they are no better than the Catholics.

Some commit heresy and say, “well doesn’t it say in Acts 16:33 that the man and his family were baptized.” So what? To rebut my argument that Acts teaches only those who had accepted the message were baptized, then you need to show an actual, and not merely a theoretical, possible example. This example, therefore would not qualify for a counter example. At best it could be used as a theoretical possible exception. It

does not say a person who had not accepted the message through public confession was baptized. Why do I have to explain child level critical thinking skills to adults?

And so some will say it is “theoretically possible” a baby could have been baptized. So what? Seriously, why should I care about a possible something, when there are actual commands and examples about the opposite? I can easily say, it is “possible” from the bible that there could be aliens, if not highly unlikely. Yet, what if I took this unlikely possibility of aliens and made it an official doctrine and creed for my church, and had monthly alien confessions and creeds out of it? What if I made it so that you cannot be an official pastor of my church without confessing it? But I digress.

With the hermeneutic of first mentions we see baptism is first used by Paul, using the Israelites.

10 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all went through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 and all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. 5 But God was not pleased with the majority of them, for they were struck down in the desert.
(1 Corinthians 10:1-5 LEB)

First, they did not baptize themselves, God did it. Both from the story itself and from a recap in Hebrews, the significant issue that divided who God was pleased with and those who were not, was faith. Faith was the focus. Secondly, they were baptized even though they already had the sign of circumcision. In this context of baptism with circumcision, there is no mention of one replacing the other. Since there is not a direct dissertation in the O.T. passages what baptism in Jesus means—*except the broad ideas such as, Jesus baptizes our old enslaved self with His death—so that when we come up we are no longer slaves (Red Sea)—and baptizes us with Himself with power to advance His kingdom (Jordan)*—we need to look to the New Testament to get a more precise definition.

The important part of this baptism, of the cloud and the sea is that only those with “faith,” (Moses, Joshua and Caleb) ended up pleasing to God, and ended up walking with their heads held high as freed men. Only these walked as free men and marched into the Promise Land to expand the Kingdom of God.

The first mention of baptism in the N.T. is the baptism of John.

“And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. ... I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”
(Mark 1:4-5,8 NIV)

John’s baptism was to believe that one failed to obey God’s command, and confessed their sin, knowing God would forgive them. The baptism was a sign between them and God, that they understood these truths, and believed in God’s faithfulness to forgive. This makes sense in light of Red Sea baptism, which illustrated going into the water as dirty slaves and emerging as free men.

John's baptism was one of intellectual understanding and a public confession that one understood and believed these truths. There is an order here to notice with John. First was the confession of sins, and then they were baptized. Since the rising out of the water, correlates to the rising out of the Red Sea, it means the confession is before, otherwise you would rise and still be a slave and dirty.

John was so impressive and so well known that even Herod took notice of him. The whole area of the Jordan river was significantly influenced by him and his faith baptism. John was very popular. In fact, John was so popular the religious leaders did everything they could to not insult John, for fear of the people stoning them to death. I do not think most realize how popular John was, and how much of his faith baptism was ingrained into the minds and Jewish culture.

This is important for context, when we read how Peter speaks of water baptism in His first apostolic sermon.

“And Peter said to them, “**Repent and be baptized**, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,

and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God calls to himself.” ...

So **those who accepted his message were baptized**,”
(Acts 2:38-39 LEB)

John is super popular in the minds of the Jews (at this time). The “*repent and be baptized*” phrase is ingrained in their minds. They knew “repentance” was first, and “be baptized, was the part that happened next. I say this because some who want to affirm baby baptism, will say, Peter only said, “repent and be baptized, and not “and THEN be baptized.” A person can only say this if they ignore the context of the four gospels making it clear that “repent and be baptized,” means confess and “then” be baptized, and that the audience hearing this phrase from Peter, would understand this context, due to John's popularity.

I also sometimes here them say, “For the promise is for you and for your children,” means babies, but this is a weak and farfetched interpretation. This phrase is used throughout the Scripture, and it almost never means “babies,” but continual future generations, as God meant when He made His covenant with Abraham. There is no way to say, “children,” can be “only defined” as babies, and thus, there is no starting terms of babies in the major premise for someone to conclude with babies as a biblical inference.

In addition to the Scripture showing the historical popularity of John in the consciousness of Peter's audience, Luke records in his own word saying, “So **those who accepted his message were baptized**.” The context is a verbal confession of sin for repentance and so when Luke says, “accepted this message,” it means they accepted by a confession of repentance. To this Luke says, “these were baptized.”

Some Reformed fanboys might say, “well since the scripture shows people like Jeremiah or John the Baptist were filled with the Spirit as babies in the womb, then babies can by the power of God be elected and receive Jesus.” For sake of argument,

we will say it is possible that a baby in the womb, who is filled with the Spirit, means a baby can intellectually understand and assent to Jesus,” yet, according to the passage, only “those” who did the public confession of repentance and faith, were “those,” who were baptized. Will the same Reformed fanboys who deny the obvious logical argument here meant for “those,” also deny the logical argument for what “those” mean, in Paul’s chain argument in Romans 8? The irrational and non-relevant points for baby baptism have no end. In this the reformed are hypocrites. They only use strict logic and terms for the doctrines they like and refuse to apply logic to the rest of scripture.

Circumcision, by definition, did not apply to women, as it consisted of the removal of the foreskin, which is the “skin fold that covers the penis gland.” If a biblical text says “Phillp and his whole house was circumcised”, even if the presence of women in that family is confirmed, we wouldn't think they were circumcised too. Similarly, Christian baptism is, by definition, the baptism of believers. Can someone compile all the texts that talk about whole houses baptized, the biblical definition of baptism would require these passages to be understood as meaning that all the believers in the family were baptized, with children excluded from the ritual. The pedobaptist has this in common with Arminian, he thinks that “all” should mean “all without exception” in the texts he prefers, regardless of the context.²²⁶

This is a first doctrinal mention of Jesus’ water baptism, with clear context for a precise doctrine. No other mention of the doctrine afterwards can contradict this. Thus, even if someone might show, “well this passage might give some lead-way for baby baptism,” it does not negate this first clear mention of it. Thus, at the very, very least, there is no doctrine or church authority, which can attack those who practice faith baptism. No pastor or denomination has the authority to teach baby baptism as a command of scripture.

The other important mention is one that has no direct or necessary connection, but one that at least has an indirect connection, and that it is circumcision. There is no direct teaching of Scripture, nor deduction that says water baptism directly replaces circumcision.

Of course the continuity of the OT and NT should not be in dispute. However, if water baptism is a sign of the covenant, and if the sign of the covenant must be applied to all members of the family, and if it is a moral obligation (so that it would be sin to neglect or refuse it), then the burden on the Reformed would be to establish beyond doubt (1) that there should still be a physical sign to the covenant, (2) that Paul’s reasoning behind Galatians and other places does not nullify a physical sign, (3) but only cancels circumcision as a physical sign, (4) while the same reasoning somehow allows, even imposes, another physical sign, (5) but at the same time removes the significance that the Jews have placed upon a sign, (6) and establishes beyond doubt that this physical sign has become water baptism. It would be an amazing feat.

Are we convinced that the Reformed arguments have done this? Even if the Reformed arguments on baptism are strong enough to permit their doctrine, are

²²⁶ Gabriel Arauto

they strong enough to be enforced? To impose an obligation upon the conscience of all believers? To declare that it is a sin to refuse? The Reformed wish to place their doctrine on this level, but if the arguments are circumstantial and inconclusive, and if the essential principles and assumptions are rendered irrelevant, then they are insufficient to produce this effect. This is the difficulty that they must overcome in order for their doctrine to define sin and command the conscience, as they want it to do.

The premise is that God covenants with families, and baptism is a sign of the covenant that applies to members of the families. Let us consider the sign first. (1) Has it been established that there is a physical sign of the covenant under Christ? (2) Has it been established that water baptism is a physical sign of the covenant? Now, if baptism is a sign of the covenant, and if it replaces circumcision so that baptism stays and circumcision goes, then why was Israel “baptized” in water under Moses when they had the sign of circumcision (1 Corinthians 10:2)?

As for the covenant itself, God never covenanted with families in the way some people assumed. Paul’s argument in Romans 9 is that God never promised to save families as such, but he only promised to save “faith” — the faith of individuals. And these individuals could be way outside of those who had the sign of circumcision. So more Gentiles than Jews were receiving salvation through Jesus Christ. He actually said that those in the “family” were “not all” Abraham’s children. Suppose I receive Jesus, and God says that his covenant now belongs to me and my children. According to Paul’s reasoning, although God promises to save my children, he might consider only two out of ten of them truly my children, because only two would have faith. This makes the concept of covenanting with families, in the context of this topic, totally meaningless.²²⁷

Interestingly Paul uses the hermeneutic of doctrinal first mention on this doctrine of circumcision.

“Therefore, is this blessing for those who are circumcised, or also for those who are uncircumcised? For we say, “Faith was credited to Abraham for righteousness.” 10 How then was it credited? While he was circumcised or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised but while uncircumcised! 11 And he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness by faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he could be the father of all who believe although they are uncircumcised, so that righteousness could be credited to them, and the father of those who are circumcised to those who are not only from the circumcision, but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.”
(Romans 4:9-12 LEB)

“But it is not as if the word of God had failed.

For not all those who are descended from Israel are truly Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are descendants of Abraham, but “In Isaac will your descendants be named.” 8 That is, it is not the children by human descent who are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants. 9 For the statement of the promise is this: “At this time I will

²²⁷ Vincent Cheung. Baptism, Circumcision and Covenant. From the ebook, 2016, chapter 31, pages 50-51.

return and Sarah will have a son.” 10 And not only this, but also when Rebecca conceived children by one man Isaac our father— 11 for although they had not yet been born, or done anything good or evil, in order that the purpose of God according to election might remain, 12 not by works but by the one who calls—it was said to her, “The older will serve the younger,” 13 just as it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”
(Romans 9:6-13 LEB)

The book of Hebrews/Romans 9 shows us how God LOVE Jacob and HATED Esau. It was the gift of faith and curse of unbelief. Jacob had faith, and Esau did not have faith. This is what Paul referred to as the circumcision of the heart in Romans 2 and Colossians 2. When God circumcises the heart the consequence is faith in God. This is God’s “*sign*” *TO THE MAN*, not man’s sign to God. God’s sign that He LOVES you and has elected you is that you have faith in His promises. When an individual sees that they have faith in God, they give a *sign back TO God* for His fulfilled promise. This sign is confession and water baptism.

This is why the first mention of circumcision is faith first, and then secondly circumcision. Paul using this as a doctrine of first mentions establishes this as a doctrine that cannot be contradicted. It is possible to add temporary additions, like the Mosaic covenant was to the promise of Abraham, but it does not nullify it. God first circumcised Abraham’s heart (Romans 2, Colossians 2) and the result was “faith.” According to Paul, Abraham was ordered to be circumcised as a sign of his faith in God’s promise. As an addition to this first doctrine of faith and then circumcision, God ordered the children to have this done for them, that they are set apart for God’s promise. However, since most of the children were rebellious and wicked, the only promise they received for their circumcision was the curses of the law. As Paul says, their history made God outwardly look like a loser and failure—this was the legacy of circumcision.

When the Israelites did a sign **TO God**, “circumcision,” it showed a systematic and habitual sign of murderers, perverts, liars, backstabbers, robbers and blasphemers. The Scripture gives an infallible testimony of this throughout the Israelites’ story.²²⁸

This was the legacy of the sign of circumcision when performed as a sign to God, and not as it was with Abraham when God first gave His sign of faith.

Recap: the first mention of circumcision was of God *first* giving TO Abraham the sign of His election, by the gift of faith, in a spiritual circumcision of the heart. Next, Abraham gives to God the sign of outward circumcision to show his commitment to God’s promise. Therefore, even if baptism was to replace circumcision, which it has not been shown, since through Jesus we are first promised and given the sign of circumcision by faith to us (which reflects the first mention of how it was with Abraham), then how can baptism of faith to God, be denied? Thus, even if baptism took over circumcision, then in Jesus Christ our sign would reflect how it was originally done with Abraham, a sign of agreement with God’s promise.

²²⁸ It is true, as is shown in 1 John that some who profess faith, still leave, but the overall story was victory and endurance, and not mostly unbelief and rebellion.

However, since the Reformed's doctrine on Covenant Theology is an anti-biblical doctrine, none of its demands on application are justified. This can be quickly dealt with here in one maneuver. Their covenant theology produces cessationism. If cessationism is the conclusion for their covenant theology, then their major premises on the doctrine are false, and or they cannot reason validly from correct premises to conclusion. With hundreds of years of established blasphemes, and so hundreds of years to correct them, and yet it only has gotten worse, then we can only conclude that it cannot be salvaged.²²⁹

More examples that show the baptism in water in Jesus is precisely what it says, **"hearing believed, and were baptized,"** 18:8.

The same again, *"And he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' And they said, 'Into the baptism of John.' And Paul said, 'John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people that they should believe in the one who was to come after him—that is, in Jesus.' And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."* After hearing they were already baptized in water with John's baptism, Paul still took time to baptize them again in water after explaining to them the gospel of Jesus. Thus, after an intellectual communication and acceptance, baptism is done.

The doctrine of first mention is defined as a believer's baptism, and every specific example in the book of Acts confirms this. There is no counter example in the entire New Testament to refute this. As a matter of true premises and deductions from them, there is no way to insert a "non-believer's baptism" into premises of Scripture, without having to appeal to a non-biblical epistemology and thus make oneself a non-Christian in the process. The other option is to appeal to mere fantastical possibilities and then focus on them like some weird Christian alien conspiracy cult.

Conclusion on Water Baptism.

After making this brief exposition on water baptism it is important to say that in the Bible, water baptism is relatively unimportant compared to baptism of the Spirit, healing and preaching. The debates on this issue have overblown its biblical importance and emphasis.

I would never dare to belittle anything that God has established, but God himself has established the relative priority of the various items in his commandments, thus to disregard this order is to belittle what he has established, and I would never dare to do that. Thus I must uphold the relative unimportance of water baptism. I could, of course, instead say that I uphold the relative importance of things like preaching and healing, and I do, but I ought to say it both ways, so as to target those who regard their ritualized version of the commandments of God as more weighty than faith, justice, and mercy (Matthew 23:23).

Shouldn't the otaku of water baptism acknowledge these things about Jesus and Paul? You might wrangle out some explanations, but the fact that you need

²²⁹ For more see Vincent Cheung, "Our Contract with God." From the ebook, Contract. 2020.

to make up reasons for this is admission that they gave other things more prominence. There is no struggle when one tries to demonstrate the importance of preaching and healing in the lives of Jesus and the apostles. None of your reasons prevented them from doing these other things.

Pastors would preach multiple series on water baptism in their lifetimes, covering the means and the modes, the histories and the controversies, the creeds and the bylaws, and almost the pH levels of the water, but not mention healing the sick even once. The only time they would mention healing the sick by faith in the name of Jesus is to mock it and condemn it. When they teach about water baptism, they offer it from the perspective of studying something that God requires. They wish you would see their reverence in their excruciating precision. But if they care so much about what God requires, they would teach on healing the sick more than water baptism, or communion, or the sabbath.²³⁰

It is a command to be baptized in water and repentance, and therefore we do it with great joy. However, the focus is on THEN receiving the baptism of the Spirit, and healing (etc) if it had not already happened.

In fact as John the Baptist was baptizing with water, he was telling everyone “WHAT YOU REALLY WANT IS TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE SPIRIT, look for this!” John the BAPTIST himself was stating the relative unimportance of water baptism compared to Spirit Baptism. Jesus was the one to baptize people with the Spirit, emphasized the importance of healing, miracles and preaching as expanding the Kingdom.

Therefore, for any theologian or preacher who does not have an obvious emphasis on baptism of the Spirit, healing, miracles and preaching over water baptism is someone who has the whole thing flipped upside down. Do not let such people be your teachers.

The Spirit Speaks and the saints Listen.

Acts 10:19-20 KJV, While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

We keep hearing in the book of Acts, they felt the Spirit, they heard the Spirit speak, they felt the Spirit move them to not go here, but over there. Although there is a gift of prophecy, what is being spoken here is being baptized in the Spirit and this mode of power, not the gift of “x,”²³¹ is causing these saints to know what the Spirit is saying. Thus, every Christian who obeys the call to be baptized in the Spirit, has the

²³⁰ Vincent Cheung. *The Relative Unimportance of Baptism*.

From the ebook, "Hero." 2022. 75-77

²³¹ Although the “gifts” can regularly manifest in moments, the power of Spirit suddenly coming down, or when the anointing presence of God comes down, they are not the same thing as a gift. A gifting will mean a particular aspect of the Spirit’s power will be more common or easier to manifest, but all baptized believers have free and constant accesses to all the powers of the Spirit.

There is no limit to all the categories of power the Spirit offers. The ‘lists’ of gifts mentioned in the bible, are only a small sample size of the Spirit’s powers. There is no such thing as the 5 or 9 fold ministry of the Spirit. Those who say such things, don’t know what they are talking about. There is an endless fold ministry of gifts of the Spirit.

empowered access to be used and moved by the Spirit; they can suddenly be refilled with the power of the Spirit at any moment to effectively move and advance the Kingdom of God.

Intellectual Power to out Argue Satan's Little Helpers.

“And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking,”
(Acts 6:10 LEB)

Whether Paul or Peter, whether talebearers like Steven and Phillip, those baptized in power, out argued, out debated, out maneuvered, out preached and shamed the intellectual children of the world. By this the Kingdom Advances.

Power Gives Witness to Power.

“And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all,”
(Acts 4:33 LEB).

We have dealt with category errors and logic throughout this book, and here it is again, in a positive affirmation. The resurrection of Jesus is about Spiritual power manifested in and triumphing over the material world; in fact, this power extents to all three realms. In the baptism of the Spirit, the saints have this same spiritual power that manifests and triumphs over the material world and beyond. Thus, it should not be a surprise that our spiritual power that manifests and triumphs over all three realms, gives a positive testimony and witness of Jesus' power that manifests and triumphs over all three realms. Referring to a witness to the unbeliever, sense they stay focused on the material world, then it is power over the material world that needs to be displayed, and we have this resurrection power.

In Summary,

the Kingdom not only advances by intellectual and ethical power, but also miraculous power, that starts with obeying Jesus' command to be baptized in the Spirit, after we have faith in Him. It is a packaged deal in our obedience. You cannot have two commands from God and claim you “obeyed God's will,” while you willfully chose to disobey one of the two commands.

Hebrews

We will now see how the writer of Hebrews preaches on the eschatological rule of Jesus Christ on His throne.

“Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his

Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command.

When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.

This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names,"
(Hebrews 1:1-4 (NLT)).

The Preacher begins with a doctrine of epistemology and theology proper. Man didn't discover truth through empiricism or observation; rather, God spoke and revealed. God is truly God. He's the foundation for all reality, having created all things and directly controlling them, holding them in existence. However, the emphasis is that God has a Son, Jesus Christ. The teaching is that the Son shares in this same doctrine of absolute and direct sovereign power, creating reality and causing it to move as He arbitrarily wills. Then, we're given a concise doctrinal statement of soteriology: "after cleansing us from our sins." Jesus cleansed the elect from their sins—a past-tense, finished work. Next, we're given a statement of eschatology: "then He sat down at the right hand of God." After addressing the foundational issue of defeating sin, death, and Satan, Jesus now rules with all authority beside His Father in Heaven. Throughout the sermon, the Preacher provides an application, repeated twice, for how Christians ought to act in light of Jesus being on His throne, already ruling with all authority. The application is to use the freely given access to His throne by approaching it to ask and receive what we ask for.

For example, God uses His power to make a tree grow. By His own choices, He may cause it to produce much fruit one year and little the next. The tree doesn't pray and ask God for more rain in a drought. However, for His blood-purchased elect, made spiritual and intelligent in Christ, God has commanded them to identify areas of lack and need and then ask Him to richly supply and provide. Not only that, but they're to approach the throne of power as sons, like princes of Heaven.

The Preacher, therefore, is preaching to the Hebrews from the present-tense doctrine that Jesus is on the throne. The application for faith and entering God's rest is established on this present-tense foundation of Jesus on His throne.

Hebrews drops the mic: Jesus, the Son, rules from the ultimate throne, radiating God's glory and zapping reality into place with a word. Sin? Smashed. Throne? Claimed. The Preacher's vibe? Since Jesus is already large and in charge, strut into His throne room like royal kids, ask big, and grab your blessings. Trees don't pray, but the elect do, so demand that divine supply that belongs to you as a child, and watch the Kingdom march on.

"“You subjected all things under his feet.”"

For in subjecting all things, he left nothing that was not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him, but we see Jesus, for a short time made lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that apart from God he might taste death on behalf of everyone," (Hebrews 2:8-9 LEB).

As said before, Jesus already had all authority, but does not use all of it for the sake of the elect. The Preacher also says, Jesus is already crowned with glory and honor. Jesus in His salvation suffered for the sake of Abraham and his children of faith. The same is with Jesus on the throne, at God's right hand. Jesus rules for their sake, He uses His power and authority to help them, not something or someone else.

“Therefore, since the children share in blood and flesh, he also in like manner shared in these same things, in order that through death he could destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and could set free these who through fear of death were subject to slavery throughout all their lives. For surely he is not concerned with angels, but he is concerned with the descendants of Abraham,” (Hebrews 2:14–16 (LEB)).

Jesus' judgment of Satan, was on the cross through weakness. Now that Jesus is on the throne, He uses His strength to advance the Kingdom by expelling the kingdom of Satan in both spiritual and material aspects. He sets the minds of His chosen ones free. He cleanses their conscience in truth so that they do not experience the fear of death. Jesus also sets the body free from the oppression of Satan victimizing the body. “Jesus of Nazareth—how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with him,” Acts 10:38 LEB. The bodies were oppressed by Satan with sickness. The way Peter says this implies most of the healings involved removing demonic oppression. Satan ensnares the mind with lies and fear, and he ensnares the body with sickness. Jesus in His power, frees the mind with truth and hope, and frees the body from sickness. Jesus kicked out the kingdom of darkness and advances the Kingdom of God in both spiritual and material freedom. Then the King on His throne commands that His followers follow in His steps. He commands them to be baptized in the Spirit, and move mountains with faith. He commands them to preach all of His commandments.

“For if Joshua had caused them to rest, he would not have spoken about another day after these things. Consequently a sabbath rest remains for the people of God. For the one who has entered into his rest has also himself rested from his works, just as God did from his own works,” (Hebrews 4:8–10 (LEB))

The logical argument is thus. God rested from His works, and those who enter into God's rest (by faith), also rests from their work, here and now. The same is about the throne power of Jesus Christ. Jesus as entered into His authority and power, and those who have entered into Jesus' power and authority also have His power and authority here and now.

“For Christ did not enter into a sanctuary made by hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to **appear in the presence of God on our behalf**, and not in order that he can offer himself many times, as the high priest enters into the sanctuary year by year with blood not his own, since it would have been necessary for him to suffer many times from the foundation of the world, but now he has appeared once at the end of the ages for the removal of sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And just as it is destined for people to die once, and after this, **judgment**, thus also Christ, having been offered once in order to bear the sins of many, will

appear for the second time without reference to sin to those who eagerly await him for **salvation**,” (Hebrews 9:24–28 LEB)

“And every priest stands every day serving and offering the same sacrifices many times, which are never able to take away sins. But this one, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, **sat down at the right hand of God**, from now on waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy,” (Hebrews 10:11–14 LEB).

The Preacher expands on the soteriology briefly mentioned in the sermon’s opening. After explaining the doctrine of Jesus’ priesthood as rooted in the “endless power of life” through Yahweh’s oath, the Preacher concludes that Jesus is now at the right hand of Yahweh. There’s no more guilty conscience. The New Covenant is active, so God doesn’t remember their sins, writes His laws in their hearts, is their God, and will never cease doing good to them. The Preacher emphasizes that Jesus appears before Yahweh on behalf of His blood-bought elect. This is the same place “behind the veil”—the position at the right hand of God. If Jesus were to step down and rule on earth for a thousand years, He’d have to leave Yahweh’s presence. This would mean Jesus wouldn’t be in God’s presence for our benefit, as He is now. That’s a problem because He’s always at the greatest, highest position. Any other position, any other throne, would be a lowering for Jesus and a lesser position for Him to be before God’s presence on our behalf.

Additionally, the Preacher places judgment and salvation (i.e., resurrection) together in Jesus’ “second coming.” John highlights this in his Gospel, showing Jesus linking judgment and resurrection on the “last day.”

Jesus on the throne is the metaphysics and soteriology the Preacher emphasizes. Therefore, the application the Preacher commands for Christians is to focus on Jesus seated on the throne in all power. They’re to focus on His power, used in kindness and unmerited favor for them. Jesus’ great power is for their help and benefit. He uses His authority to bless and aid them. He sits in the endless power of life at God’s right hand, and the Preacher wants them to focus on this endless power of life and partake of it. Indeed, we have direct access to the throne, like princes in their father’s kingdom.

The Preacher nails it: Jesus, post-atonement, chills at God’s right hand, radiating endless life and power, no sin stains left. He’s our VIP priest, parked in Heaven’s penthouse, not slumming it on an earthly throne—that would be a demotion. Judgment and resurrection? One epic “last day” finale. So, lock eyes on King Jesus, and storm into His throne like royal heirs. Grab that divine favor.

“Therefore, because we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. ...Therefore let us **approach with confidence to the throne of grace**, in **order that we may receive** mercy and find grace to help in time of need,” (Hebrews 4:14,16 LEB)

“Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence for the entrance** into the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the curtain, that is, his flesh, and since we have a

great priest over the house of God, **let us approach** with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for the one who promised is faithful,” (Hebrews 10:19–23 LEB)

The Preacher makes this application twice in his sermon. The repeated emphasis is that we have access to where Jesus sits. We have direct and immediate access to Jesus on His throne. His throne of power is a throne of grace—a throne of powerful, unmerited favor for God’s children. The other aspect is the “receiving” part. The Preacher wants us to know you’ll “receive” the mercy and grace you ask for. This is the Preacher’s applied eschatology. Jesus’ applied eschatology included not only the baptism of the Spirit but also faith to ask and receive by calling on His Name in faith.

This is what Jesus taught in John 14-16. Over and over, Jesus kept saying (even more than the command to love one another) to ask, and you’ll receive what you ask for. Jesus said, “You haven’t used My name to ask yet, but now I want you to.” Jesus was about to die and complete the atonement. His final teaching before His death focused on the disciples having the power to continue His miraculous works and do even greater ones. Jesus tied this (along with loving each other) to discipleship, not apostleship. Thus, it applies to all followers and disciples of Jesus today. Ask and receive. Ask and receive. Ask and receive. On this side of the atonement, the Preacher encourages his listeners that the time is now. Jesus finished the atonement. He’s now on the throne. Today is the day you have direct and immediate access to the gracious throne of Jesus Christ. Ask and receive. Jesus even says in John 15 that by asking and receiving what you ask for, you “bear much fruit” for His “Father’s glory” and “prove to be My disciples.” The Preacher’s applied eschatology aligns with how Jesus taught it.

This is radically God-focused. No wonder so many hate it. There’s not enough focus on man, because man is who they look to for praise, approval, and value. True eschatology is radically focused on God’s throne, power, and authority. It’s not focused on apostles. It’s not about crawling to the cross but confidently approaching the throne of Almighty God.

In fact, Hebrews 11 is entirely about mountain-moving faith. It even offers strength for those facing true persecution for their faith. So, whether they need inner strength to be martyrs or earthquakes to open prison doors, believers under real persecution have access to all sorts of power and options. However, most Christians aren’t in this category of true persecution, so such scenarios aren’t directly applicable to them. Most face normal life difficulties, and thus, all the promises of faith to ask and receive anything apply to them. This is the command of Jesus and the exhortation of the Preacher.

“Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ for the pagans seek after all these things. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:31-33).

One person tried to rebuke health-and-wealth teachers by citing Moses in Hebrews 11. Their point was that “Moses gave up the treasures of Egypt for God, whom Moses

considered a greater treasure (this is correct). Thus, the health-and-wealth guys are wrong because they ask and believe God will bless them financially.”

Jesus says you can't serve God and money or have two masters. He doesn't say you can't have Jesus as your master and not have money or not ask for it, believing God will help you. If this person works 40-50 hours a week to earn money, aren't they seeking money more than God, whom they might seek for a few hours a week at best? But they claim they seek money to be blessed, to bless their family, and to bless the church. Okay, so they can do this by working all week, but a person can't do this by seeking GOD, His promises, and asking GOD to help them financially through a miracle, wisdom, and favor, so they can be blessed, bless their family, and bless the church? They're delusional.

Jesus says if you seek Him first, He'll bless you financially with what the pagans seek after—not what poor monks seek, but what greedy pagans seek. Pagans don't seek the smallest amount; they seek great wealth. Let's look at Moses, since the non-faith person brought him up. Moses sought God first rather than the world. His master was God, not the riches of the world. Thus, Moses fulfilled the requirement to seek God's kingdom first in faith. What happened? Not only did Moses walk out with the treasures of Egypt, but all Israel pillaged and left Egypt with pagan treasures lining their pockets and packs. They had so much pagan-level wealth they could easily fund the tabernacle and its entire system. That's financial abundance. The Bible and what Jesus said aren't complicated, but unbelief takes the simplest truths and twists them defectively. This type of monetary increase is just one basic way God blesses His chosen ones with money; there are many more promises and ways to ask and receive increase and abundance.

The Hebrews Preacher's all-in on Jesus' throne power, urging us to waltz into His grace-packed HQ and snag whatever we ask—miracles, money, you name it. John 14-16's mantra? Ask, receive, repeat; its discipleship 101; its orthodoxy validation. Moses ditched Egypt's bling for God, and then God let Israel looted pagan vaults. The very treasures that Moses rejected to seek God first, are the very treasures they looted like a cleared boss room. Seek God first, and pagan-level wealth's yours to fund the Kingdom, haters be damned.

Hebrews 12 (NIV)

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,

2 **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the pioneer and perfecter of faith...

22 But **you have come to Mount Zion**, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly,

23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

25 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.”

27 The words “once more” indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our “God is a consuming fire.”

Again, in case the audience missed it, the application is to “fix our eyes on Jesus.” Eschatology is focused on Jesus, who sits on His throne. As Jesus sits on the throne, wielding all His power, He uses this power to “author” our faith, based on His unmerited favor for His elect. Eschatology is about faith and focusing our faith on Jesus Christ in Heaven. The encouragement is that even the responsibility of growing faith is fulfilled by focusing on Jesus, who authors our faith. Jesus’ throne is one of unmerited favor and help. It’s this Jesus who’ll author a mighty story of victorious faith in and through us because He’s for us, not against us. He was like us. He sympathizes with us. He’s no longer weak or humbled. He’s on His throne, using His power to work mighty faith in us.

Look to Him. There’s no better author. There’s no more compassionate author. There’s no more powerful author than Jesus. He’s the author and perfecter of your faith. Your only job is to shift your focus off yourself and man and onto Him who sits at the right hand of the Power. He’ll help. Thus, even with besetting sins, look to Him. He’ll help. He’ll heal your spiritually dislocated shoulder and restore you. He’ll author a story of victorious faith for you. Need miracles? Then look to Jesus on His throne of grace and power. In faith, you have access to climb Mount Zion, that most holy hill—yes, even into the sanctuary on this holy hill. You can march into the city of God and walk its streets. You even have the right to enter the throne room. Yes, you have access to open the doors of God’s throne and approach. Yes, you have access to the Power who sits on the throne to receive help and mercy in your time of need. This is applied eschatology.

The end of this chapter shows the Preacher teaching about the “shaking of heaven and earth,” quoted from Haggai. The context is the temple. Thus, he’s referring to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The old harlot bride, the old Jewish kingdom and system, is about to be destroyed. The Kingdom of Jesus on His throne, and those who are citizens of His kingdom, cannot be shaken. His kingdom will remain. The cleansed and faithful bride will remain. Thus, don’t be like the unbelieving Jews in the desert who didn’t enter the Promised Land (symbolically, the Kingdom of God); rather, be like Joshua and Caleb, who became citizens of the Promised Land by faith. Don’t look to the giants or your own calculations of them. Don’t start knowledge with human empiricism and observation. Start knowledge with God’s revelation. Jesus has already been victorious in the atonement. He’s already on the throne. Those giants are food

and bread for the elect. See those high walls? Good, because they'll come down. God is with us.

Hebrews' Preacher doubles down: glue your eyes to Jesus, the throne-sitting champ who authors epic faith sagas for His elect with unrivaled grace. Forget man's measly math—eschatology's about storming Zion's throne room, snagging mercy like royal heirs. Giants? Walls? Mere snacks for faith-fueled victors. Jerusalem's old system's toast, but Jesus' unshakable Kingdom stands forever.

Few specific passages.

This section will briefly address a few short explanations about partial preterism and partial postmillennialism as taught in the Bible.

I use these terms with hesitation due to how loaded they are. I usually avoid loaded terms, but they can serve some minor convenience.

By “partial” postmillennialism and partial preterism, I mean I broadly agree with the basic doctrines of these views, but not their entirety.

TERMS

Postmillennialism has, at its core, the teaching that the millennial reign of Christ began with His resurrection from the grave when He sat down at the right hand of Power. From this position, the church expands the Kingdom of God through the preached Word, with Jesus at the helm, seated at God's right hand. This camp leans more toward preterism for Matthew 24 and Revelation, but not 100%. Since most of Matthew 24 and Revelation concern the destruction of the temple and the Jewish system, postmillennialism has a more positive outlook on the future. It sees the Kingdom of God advancing and gradually encompassing the world in victory. As a military campaign, it involves ups and downs in this warfare, but the overall trajectory is upward for Christ's kingdom. It doesn't mean all governments and cities will be bastions of perfect Christian conduct, but in terms of Satan's former stranglehold over the world, Christianity advances and wins. This occurs through intellectual worldview battles, miracles, casting out demons, and, as a result, cultures shift from practices like voodoo and human sacrifice to ones that look more Christian.

Premillennialism teaches that the millennial reign of Christ starts later, after worldwide destruction, when Christ physically comes down to sit on a throne in Jerusalem, ushering in a 1,000-year golden age on earth. After this, all saints are taken to reign in Heaven with Christ as He's re-seated at the right hand of Power. This camp leans more toward futurism, but not 100%. It has a more pessimistic view of the future, anticipating Satan's destruction of the world before Jesus returns.

Amillennialism holds that the millennial reign is merely symbolic of Christ's spiritual reign in the hearts of those born from above. Because it's symbolic, it has less impact on how one views the millennial reign or whether Matthew 24 is mostly about the

destruction of the temple. The emphasis on spiritual symbols allows for flexible interpretations. This view can lean pessimistic or optimistic, but in my experience, it's usually more pessimistic, with authors encouraging people to expect more suffering rather than miracles, healings, and victories.

Preterism and futurism broadly address passages like Matthew 24 and the Book of Revelation, determining whether their teachings mostly refer to past events (e.g., the destruction of the temple) or future ones.

As with many terms, they're defined relatively, like big or small. The same applies to preterism and futurism. Every Christian, even those who've only mildly considered end-times theology, believes some events occurred during the destruction of the temple and some are for the final coming and resurrection of the saints. Thus, everyone has some preterism and futurism in their theology to varying degrees. I've never met or read anyone who was 100% futurist or preterist, though I know some exist. When these terms are used, they typically describe someone who places "more" (even if only 55%) of the relevant end-times passages into one of these categories, not all. I've read writers commit slander and bear false witness by using these terms to suggest their opponent is nearly 100% preterist or futurist when they're not. Don't participate in such foolish sin.

A categorical statement is none, some, or all. Thus, the most accurate statement is that we teach partial preterism.

The Bible teaches postmillennialism with partial preterism (Matthew 24 is mostly about the destruction of the temple) and expansionism. Postmillennialism and partial preterism form the basic structure of eschatology, while expansionism is how we apply eschatology in our lives.

Postmillennialism nails it: Jesus kicked off His reign from the throne at resurrection, steering the Church to steamroll Satan's turf with truth and miracles. Partial preterism? Yup, Matthew 24's mostly temple takedown vibes. Premillennial gloom and amillennial symbol soup miss the mark. Expansionism's the real deal, fueling kingdom wins over voodoo and despair. Labels like preterism or futurism? Everyone's got a mix, so skip the slander and stick to Scripture's victory script.

It shouldn't be surprising after reading this section that the Bible teaches a form of postmillennialism. I say a form because the classical definition of this teaching is correct in its structure or form but not in its application. The structure of understanding the millennium is correct, but the application, as seen in the Book of Acts, is largely missing. Additionally, classical postmillennialism doesn't correctly apply covenant theology, largely due to the Reformed tradition's flawed formulation of covenant theology. Covenant theology is about God going overboard to demonstrate He'll do what He promised. God removes case-by-case scenarios and commits to always act toward us in certain ways. Thus, when Jesus says if you have faith and ask, you'll get what you ask for, God will always do what He says. Or when James says the prayer of faith will heal the sick, Jesus' blood covenant guarantees God will do this because He's eliminated case-by-case interactions. We know exactly how He'll act toward us. We know He'll give us what we ask for.

Moreover, classical postmillennialism doesn't correctly apply Jesus' finished atonement. For example, in Hebrews, the warning to enter God's rest was addressed to the church—those who experienced God's salvation from slavery but doubted God would empower them to take the Promised Land by miracle-working power. It was addressed to those who heard the gospel promising to empower them to wield a sword and, through miracle power, take possession of the land. God was angry with them and swore in His wrath to cast them aside as reprobates. God wanted to baptize them in the Jordan River (today, the baptism of the Spirit) to work miracle power to take the land, but they didn't believe He could do it. They had enough faith for God to lead them through the Red Sea to save them, but they refused to be baptized in the Jordan to be empowered to destroy giants and fortified cities. They had enough faith to believe God could use Moses to deliver them from slavery, but when God wanted to change the game and empower them to work miracles, they limited the Holy One of Israel. God swore they wouldn't enter His rest.

In this context, it's crucial to note the diverse ways Israel sinned, yet God didn't use any of these to say, "You're permanently barred from entering My rest." It wasn't until they disbelieved God could empower them to work miracles to take the land that God rejected them from entering His rest. He made them wander in the wilderness until they all died. Their 40 years was a rejection, damnation, and reprobation. Today, we can learn from their example what not to do; however, for them directly, their 40 years wasn't a learning experience. God wasn't working all things for their good. It was the opposite—a total rejection. God was working all things for their harm. They suffered not because they had faith but because they lacked it. Their suffering wasn't used for training and growth but to damn them.

Yet, I can imagine them saying, "We're suffering for God's glory. Sola Gloria. God's sovereignty ensures our lives are working for His good. Look how beaten down we are. Look how God-centered we are in our suffering." I can see some writing books titled *Suffering the Wilderness for the Glory of God* or *Wilderness and God's Sovereignty*. This is how many talk about their suffering and God's sovereignty today. They're in denial that God rejected them, spinning His label of reprobation in a positive light to feel better. Their suffering isn't God leading them to grow and enter His rest but a damnation to keep them out. There's good suffering from faith, like persecution, and bad suffering from unbelief. The wilderness was the latter. Many suffer due to unbelief and deflect the cause of their suffering and rejection onto God's sovereignty and providence. The wilderness experience isn't God working all things for their good but working all things for their destruction and wrath.

This cry in Hebrews to "enter God's rest" puts many churches and Christians in the same place as the wilderness Israelites. They think because they were baptized in the Red Sea for deliverance, they're safe. But, like the wilderness Israelites, they still haven't entered God's rest. The only two who did were Joshua and Caleb, who had faith in God to empower them to take the land by miracle-working power. These two, with faith, were the only original Israelites for whom God was working all things for good. The unbelief of their fellow church members caused delays, but God was faithful. They had faith, so God slowed their aging—they felt 40 at 80. They used miracles to stop the sun and bring down walls with nothing but shouts and horns. Joshua and Caleb suffered for their faith in God to work miracles through them. The Israelites even tried to stone them for their faith. Their suffering was legitimate, stemming from faith, and God rewarded them for it. Those working miracles, speaking

in tongues, casting out demons, and healing the sick are like Joshua and Caleb. They've entered the Land and are driving out its inhabitants. They're the ones who've entered God's rest.

God's blood-sworn contract guarantees miracles and answered prayers, no case-by-case waffling. Hebrews' wilderness warning? Don't be faithless like Israel, dodging Spirit-powered giant-slaying for a 40-year divine smackdown. Joshua and Caleb believed, bagged miracles, and entered God's rest. Today's tongue-talking, demon-zapping saints are their heirs, while doubters wallow in self-inflicted rejection.

The kingdom of God is advanced by the preached word and hearts being recreated with new-birth. This gives an intellectual and ethical power. However, as discussed above, without obedience to receive the baptism in power with continual healings, casting out demons, prophecy and judgment miracles (etc.), the kingdom advancement is only "partially" successful. This is the main reason why I say I am only a "partial" postmillennialist. Due to this "partial" success, both postmillennialism and premillennialism and amillennialism teachers often have a systematic and habitual focus on man. They disobey God to use His power. With God now shoved out of the picture, where do men turn to? They naturally turn to a man-centered focus theology, to make up for their lack in power. They are men who love to focus on men, governments of men, pastoral elitist of men and more men. Their theology is a theology of man, for man to man. They have their reward.

The past 1500 years of the church's disobedience against the doctrine of "expansionism" cannot be subtracted out of the definition of postmillennialism. It is only a partially true doctrine. It cannot be saved, for it has over a millennium reign of tradition that falsifies the Scripture in heresy. If you cannot save Catholicism, then how much more the reformed, who are just as guilty in many points that falsify the Scripture. So what, if the Catholics indulgence kept the gospel hidden and men in continual disobedience, when the Reformed's rejection of expansionism keeps the gospel hidden and men in continual disobedience? So what, if the Catholics add the Pope as an epistemology to the Scripture when the Reformed's teaching on "cessationism," "God's will," "paradoxes," "God and creature distinction," the "metaphysical cause of sin," "secondary causes," and etc. essentially add *empiricism* to the Scripture as a dual epistemology? Both are committing blasphemy at the most fundamental level of Christian doctrine. One is not "so much" better than the other.

Also, after reading one of the Reformed's postmillennialist teachers, Kenneth Gentry, I realized that those who say the historical records show the early church did not teach postmillennialism, but they mostly taught premillennialism are liars. I do not rely on any epistemology that is based on empiricism and inductive logic, and I would never use "history" to prove any doctrine. However, if you are to refer to history at least be honest and do not bear false witness. Gentry does an admirable job in comparing the historical documents, and demonstrates there is no clear historical winner in this debate, and he shows that to say the earlier church taught premillennialism as a majority, is false.²³² And so we move on from this historical nebulous.

²³² See Kenneth Gentry, *"Before Jerusalem Fell."*

Below are some quotes from Kenneth Gentry on some of the most important points about interpreting the book of Revelation, but also for any apocalyptic speech in the bible about end times. (1) Reading the words. Let me repeat that. Reading the actual words, and not some other words. Getting clear terms from them, as the author meant them. And this (2) second part leads us to remember, if terms have already been defined by other first mentions in the bible, and if a specific type of language already has first mentions of how it is read and interpreted.

The two most destructive mistakes an interpreter of Revelation can make are: (1) overlooking John's clearly stated temporal expectation, and (2) not recognizing his interpretive methodology. If we ignore John's own near-term perspective, we will literally turn Revelation on its head, placing at the end of Christian history what John claims lies at its beginning. If we ignore his symbolic approach, we will not understand the historical nature of his prophecies.

Anytime we attempt to interpret a work, we must seek to do so on the basis of the original author's theme. This is especially true when the author expressly states his theme. As with the temporal indicators, John places his thematic statement early in his prophecy. In fact, it appears in his seventh verse (in our modern versions):

Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. (Rev. 1:7)

Literary Theme

The initial impression this verse leaves on us today is that John is speaking of the Second Advent. It certainly does involve language quite applicable to the future, glorious, history-ending Second Coming of Christ. The Scriptures speak often of his Second Coming, and even with this sort of cloud-coming judgment language (cp. Acts 1:9–11; 1 Thess. 4:16–17; 2 Thess. 1:7–10). The historic, universal Christian Church has always affirmed that majestic event.

Yet looks are deceiving. Despite this first impression, strong evidence compels us to interpret Revelation 1:7 differently. I believe this verse presents us with a judgment prophecy against first century Jerusalem, whose destruction occurs in A.D. 70. John's theme looks to the approaching devastation of the Temple and Jerusalem under the Roman generals Vespasian and Titus. Since this interpretation is not immediately obvious and is quite unfamiliar to most modern Christians, I will need to defend it in some detail. Several compelling reasons move us away from a Second Advent interpretation to an A.D. 70 one. I will explain seven evidences.

The Preceding Context of the Theme

Perhaps the leading interpretive principle for understanding any document can be summarized in three words: "Context. Context. Context." Before we arrive at Revelation 1:7 upon opening John's book, we must pass through verses 1 and 3. And as we have seen, these two verses emphatically declare that the events

expected in Revelation “must shortly take place” (Rev. 1:1) because “the time is near” (Rev. 1:3).

We must carefully note that not only does John declare the events of his book near, but in those nearness declarations, he relates the purpose of his writing the book and applies that purpose to his first century audience. Revelation 1:1 informs the original recipients that he is writing about “the things which must shortly take place.” One would think that if he is writing about “the things which must shortly take place,” this would involve his very theme. It would be strikingly odd if John were to declare temporal nearness for the very purpose of his writing, then give a theme which reached thousands of years beyond his day. After all, does he not declare the nearness of “the time” as reason why his first century readers must read, hear, and “heed the things which are written in it” (Rev. 1:3)? Why would he urge them to heed the things written if his thematic purpose lies untold centuries in the future?

So then, just four verses before John states the theme of Revelation, he declares the events near and applies them to his original audience.²³³

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John.

Revelation 2:16

“Repent therefore; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.”

Revelation 3:11

“I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.”

Revelation 22:6

And he said to me, “These words are faithful and true”; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly take place.

Revelation 22:7, 12, 20

“And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”

²³³ Gentry, K. L., Jr. (2010). *The Book of Revelation Made Easy: You Can Understand Bible Prophecy* (Second Edition, pp. 33–34). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

“He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

A cursory reading of the passages before us unavoidably leads even the casual reader to conclude that John expected the fulfillment of the prophecies within a very short period of time following his writing. The crucial word in the statement in the opening verse, for instance, is “shortly.”²³⁴

The translation under question (i.e., in Revelation 1:1, although the other references cited should be kept in mind, as well) has to do with the proper interpretation of the Greek phrase ἐν τάχει. Τάχει is the dative singular of the noun τάχος. Lexicographers seem to be universally agreed with the translators as to the meaning of the word. According to the Arndt and Gingrich Lexicon, τάχος is used in the Septuagint (and certain non-canonical writings) to mean “speed, quickness, swiftness, haste.” In the prepositional phrase ἐν τάχει, the word is used adverbially in the Septuagint and Josephus to mean “quickly, at once, without delay.” The New Testament uses τάχος in this manner, says Arndt and Gingrich, in Acts 10:33; 12:7; 17:15; 22:18. In Luke 18:8; Romans 16:20; 1 Timothy 3:14; Revelation 1:1; and 22:6 this lexicon translates it “soon, in a short time.” The various entries proffered at the τάχος entry by Thayer include: “quickness, speed” and “quickly, shortly, speedily, soon.” Thayer lists Revelation 1:1 and 22:6 with the “speedily, soon” entries. Abbott-Smith concurs; for the Revelation 1:1 and 22:6 texts he offers: “quickly, speedily, soon.” Hort translates it “shortly, soon.”¹³ Noted Greek scholar and church historian Kurt Aland agrees, when he comments on the word as it is used in Revelation 22:12:

In the original text, the Greek word used is ταχύ, and this does not mean “soon,” in the sense of “sometime,” but rather “now,” “immediately.” Therefore, we must understand Rev. 22:12 in this way: “I am coming now, bringing my recompense.” The concluding word of Rev. 22:20 is: “He who testifies to these things says, ‘surely I am coming soon.’” Here we again find the word ταχύ, so this means: I am coming quickly, immediately. This is followed by the prayer: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” ... The Apocalypse expresses the fervent waiting for the end within the circles in which the writer lived—not an expectation that will happen at some unknown point X in time (just to repeat this), but one in the immediate present.

It would seem that only an interpretive a priori against the translation of the noted lexicographers and modern translations could account for the views of the commentators cited above.²³⁵

²³⁴ Gentry, K. L., Jr. (1989). *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation: An Exegetical and Historical Argument for a Pre-A.D. 70 Composition* (p. 134). Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics.

²³⁵ Gentry, K. L., Jr. (1989). *Before Jerusalem Fell: Dating the Book of Revelation: An Exegetical and Historical Argument for a Pre-A.D. 70 Composition* (pp. 138–139). Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics.

I'll briefly recap the first part of John's terms in Revelation chapter one. These terms, as pointed out by Kenneth, almost always mean fast and immediate. Thus, at the beginning of Revelation, John's thesis statement(s) declare that what's happening will happen quickly and immediately.

Imagine being back in middle school and turning in a five-page essay. Imagine the subject was so important to you that you zealously wrote your thesis statement ten times in your five-page essay: "Mount St. Helens will erupt very soon and immediately." Your teacher might say it's poor form to repeat your thesis statement so many times, as it might imply you think your readers are dull. Yet, in Revelation, John—both in the introduction and throughout this short essay—repeatedly says this will happen soon, over and over. Whether you agree with his subtlety or not, you shouldn't misunderstand his meaning.

I don't find apocalyptic language hard to understand, but many do. So, what's a good reading and comprehension skill to apply here in the introduction of John's letter, which isn't apocalyptic? Wouldn't it be wise to note what John clearly says in plain, non-apocalyptic speech? John provides clear summaries and thesis-like statements to offer clarity before the apocalyptic language begins. How wonderful and helpful this is. John says it'll happen fast and immediately.

Sometimes, good interpretation just requires remembering the golden rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you took time to write a thesis statement in your letter or essay, using clear terms with commonly understood words and methods, would you want your readers to ignore it? Theologians and pastors need to return to middle school and spend a few years studying and practicing reading comprehension workbooks.

When I write an essay or book, I often use a deductive syllogism, paraphrasing the conclusion as the thesis statement. It may not be overly creative, but it makes my argument easy for readers to follow. John provides clear summary and thesis statements for Revelation. These statements say the "apocalyptic" vision will happen immediately and quickly. We'll address apocalyptic language more in a moment. There's no context in John's opening remarks that can be used to alter the natural meaning of these terms. This is John's vision. He'd be the one to know when it'll happen. He states in his opening remarks that he knows: it'll happen immediately and soon. Thus, this is what we use to interpret the apocalyptic language.

John's Revelation intro hammers one point like a middle schooler with a thesis obsession: it's happening fast and soon! No cryptic apocalyptic haze here. John's plain talk screams urgency. Ignore his clear "it's now" vibe? That's like flunking reading comp 101. Theologians, grab a workbook! John's vision is on a fast-track schedule, but most of you have snoozed past the alarm.

The Apocalyptic Language.

I will now quote Kenneth at length on this point, since he says it better than me. See this work for more reading and raised objections.

The Apocalyptic Language in the Prophecy

John frames his thematic statement in apocalyptic imagery by speaking of Christ “coming with the clouds” (Rev. 1:7). And though this sounds like the Second Advent, and though that glorious event will be literally “with the clouds,” we find this type of language can be used symbolically of divine historical judgments other than the Second Coming. Anyone reading Revelation quickly recognizes that he is in a work with strange imagery (as I showed in my preceding chapter). And that imagery must often be understood symbolically. I believe such is true here in our theme verse as well. Let us note just two examples of apocalyptic imagery used of historical events.

In Isaiah 19, we find a warning to Old Testament Egypt. In that prophecy God threatens judgment upon that ancient nation, a judgment which transpires when the Assyrian king Esarhaddon conquered Egypt in 671 B.C. Yet notice the language Isaiah employs:

The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud, and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them (Isa. 19:1).

Clearly, the prophecy applies to Egypt. And just as clearly it claims the Lord “is about to come” to Egypt. Yet no interpreter believes the Egyptians saw God Almighty sitting on a cloud and descending among them in judgment.

In Matthew 26, the Lord Jesus himself uses this language in speaking of his judgment against Israel in A.D. 70:

And the high priest stood up and said to Him, “Do You make no answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?” But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, “I adjure You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Jesus said to him, “You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:62–64).

Verse 64 is similar to Revelation 1:7: “You shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” And note that he is speaking to the high priest and those gathered around him: “you shall see.” This must be a reference to the A.D. 70 judgment, which is prophesied in several places by Christ (see particularly Matt 21:33–43, 45; 22:1–7; 24:1–34), and which would be witnessed by many of those who stood against Christ on that day.

So then, Revelation 1:7 can be applied to the historical judgment befalling Israel in A.D. 70. Nothing in Scripture prohibits such an apocalyptic rendering. As the evidence mounts, we will be driven to that very conclusion.

The Lord’s Prior Teaching on the Subject

In the preceding evidence, I mentioned as an aside that Christ himself employs apocalyptic judgment-coming language when referring to the approaching destruction of the Temple. Let us look a little more closely at this phenomenon as we unpack the meaning of Revelation 1:7.

In Matthew 21:33–45, Jesus presents the Parable of the Vineyard Owner. In that parable we have a picture of God’s loving blessings upon Israel over the centuries (21:33–34). But God’s providential care of Israel is portrayed against the backdrop of her stubborn disobedience leading her to kill the prophets whom God sent to her (21:35–36). Finally, God sends his very son, only to have Israel kill him (21:37–40). Based on this parable, Jesus asks the religious leaders of Israel:

Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers? (21:40)

Israel’s leaders unwittingly respond to his query:

They said to Him, “He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.” (21:41)

He shocks them by catching them in their own words:

Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and be given to a nation producing the fruit of it. And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust. (21:43–44)

They then understand his point:

And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. (21:45)

This parable and its consequent discussion look to the A.D. 70 destruction of the Temple, speaking of that judgment as a “coming” of the Lord: “when the owner of the vineyard comes” (21:40). In the following context, another parable speaks more literally:

But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. (Matt 22:7)

Clearly then, Revelation 1:7 can at least theoretically be applied to A.D. 70. And given its contextual setting (and other matters I will rehearse below), this is the preferred understanding of John’s theme.

The Specific Cause of the Judgment

Having established the context and the possibilities, we must now focus on the express wording of Revelation 1:7. John applies the prophecy particularly against “those who pierced him”:

Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen. (Rev. 1:7)

This provides a clue for the proper interpretation of the theme which is as overlooked as the clues regarding John’s temporal expectations.

We are all aware that the Roman soldiers were the immediate, physical instruments of Christ's crucifixion. The Bible, however, strongly and repeatedly emphasizes Israel's covenantal responsibility for the whole terrible event. I will list several verses that point directly to Israel as the cause of Christ's crucifixion (in a later chapter, we will see how relevant this is to the message of Israel).

- And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children!" (Matt 27:25)
- They therefore cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:15)
- This Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and fore-knowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. (Acts 2:23)
- The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered up, and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses. (Acts 3:13–15)
- The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. (Acts 5:30)
- Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become. (Acts 7:52)
- And we are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. (Acts 10:39)
- For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost. (1 Thess. 2:14–16)

The unrelenting testimony of Scripture blames Israel for Christ's death. She is covenantally responsible; she should have known better (Luke 19:41–44). So then, Revelation 1:7 promises judgment upon "those who pierced him," which demands that that judgment fall in the first century while "those who pierced him" were still alive—especially given the near-term temporal indicators in the very context of this statement (Rev. 1:1, 3). The events of A.D. 70 present us with a most perfect, relevant, and compelling fit.

The Ultimate Focus of the Judgment

But there is more! Revelation 1:7 also states that “all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him.” Who are these “tribes of the earth”? And why do they “mourn”?

The reader must understand that the Greek word translated “earth” (gē) can also be translated “land.” In fact, it often refers to “the land of Israel,” i.e., “the Promised Land.” In a number of places in the New Testament this word speaks either of the Promised Land as a whole, or some portion of it. In those places we find it in such phrases as “the land of Judah” (Matt 2:6), “the land of Judea” (John 3:22), “the land of Israel” (Matt. 2:20–21), “the land of Zebulun” (Matt. 4:15), “the land of Naphtali” (Matt. 4:15), and “the land of the Jews” (Acts 10:39). Thus, upon purely lexical considerations, the term can be understood as designating the Promised Land.

When we note that this “land” contains “tribes,” we move even closer to the proper interpretation. The Greek word for “tribe” is *phulē*, which in Scripture most frequently refers to the Jewish tribes. The New Testament often names particular “tribes” of Israel: Asher (Luke 2:36); Benjamin (Acts 13:21; Rom. 11:1; Phil 3:5); Judah (Rev. 5:5; Heb. 7:14). The “tribes” found their home in Palestine; these are “the tribes of the land” Revelation 1:7 mentions. John’s reference to the “tribe of Judah” in Revelation 5:5 clearly points to the tribal division among racial Jews. The term “tribe” obviously has that racial import in Revelation 7:4–8, where it is used of each of the specifically named Twelve Tribes, and in Revelation 21:12, where John refers to “the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” As a matter of fact, literal translations of the Scripture lean in this direction:

Lo, he doth come with the clouds, and see him shall every eye, even those who did pierce him, and wail because of him shall all the tribes of the land. Yes! Amen!

Behold he comes with the clouds, and will see him every eye and [those] who him pierced, and will wail over him all the tribes of the land. Yes, amen.

This not only fits nicely with the near-term temporal indicators, but also Jesus’ warnings of impending judgment upon Jerusalem. Notice three examples from Luke (in addition to the parables mentioned previously in Matthew):

- And when He approached, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will throw up a bank before you, and surround you, and hem you in on every side, and will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.” (Luke 19:41–44)
- But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled. (Luke 21:20–22)

- But Jesus turning to them said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.’ Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ For if they do these things in the green tree, what will happen in the dry?” (Luke 23:28–31)

The evidence for an A.D. 70 meaning of Revelation 1:7 is becoming insurmountable. John’s theme in Revelation is Israel’s judgment for rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Particular Parallel in the Gospels

Interestingly, Revelation 1:7 finds a remarkable parallel in the Lord’s teaching in the Olivet Discourse. Observe the similarities between Revelation 1:7 and Matthew 24:30, noting particularly the words I italicize (see next page)...

Both of these verses are unique in Scripture in that they merge portions of Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10. John draws the “coming on the clouds” imagery from Daniel, and the “mourning of the tribes” from Zechariah. No other passage in Scripture does this.

Furthermore, both prophetic discourses in which we find these verses speak of “the great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21 and Rev. 7:14). Most commentators note the parallel between Matthew 24:6–11 and the first four seals in Revelation 6:1–8. Both prophecies are associated somehow with the Temple of God (Matt. 24:1–3, 15; Rev. 11:1–2). In fact, we should note that Luke’s version of the Lord’s teaching appears to be the source of John’s language in Revelation 11 (note especially the italicized portions):

They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24)

And leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. (Rev. 11:2)

Interestingly, John’s Gospel lacks the Olivet Discourse which is found in the other three Gospels—perhaps because John covers the same material in another work, Revelation.

Now remarkably for our purposes, both prophecies also expressly focus on near-term events. I show above that John insists his Revelation prophecies “must shortly come to pass” (Rev. 1:1; 22:6) “for the time is near” (Rev. 1:3; 22:10). In Matthew, the Olivet Discourse is immediately preceded by Christ’s denouncing the Temple (Matt. 23:38) and the disciples pointing out the Temple’s beauty (24:1). Jesus responds to their wonder by stating: “Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down” (24:2), to which the disciples reply: “Tell us, when will these things be?” (24:3). After providing them with precursory signs, he finally answers their question: “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place” (Matt 24:34). This matches very

nicely with John's assertion that these things "must shortly take place." We know from history that that very Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70, just forty years after Jesus spoke.²³⁶

If we're to do proper hermeneutics, we must remember the rule of first mentions. The first mention of apocalyptic language is the judgment of Pharaoh. In fact, I've published a pop song titled "Sky Rider" that directly addresses this.

"There is no one like the God of Jeshurun,
who rides across the heavens to help you
and on the clouds in His majesty." (Deut. 33:26 NIV)

Did God literally ride across the sky in a chariot made of clouds and fight Pharaoh to the death in armed combat?

The flood account in Genesis isn't symbolic language about what happened; it's a straightforward record of historical events. The Exodus story happened just as revealed, and most of its narrative in Exodus is a straightforward record of historical events.

To define apocalyptic language, we need to clearly state what it is and isn't. Starting with the Exodus story, we're introduced to the first mentions of apocalyptic language. This language is symbolic, describing historical events that occurred.

Yahweh didn't physically ride a chariot of clouds, but He did turn water into blood, rain down hail, cause darkness, and send an angel of death (etc.). This salvation of Israel was in the context of judging the Egyptians. God judged Egypt and passed over the Israelites who trusted Him by putting blood on their doors.

Thus, in defining what apocalyptic language isn't, we can say it's not symbolic language about spiritual, invisible things or further symbolic things. Therefore, amillennialism is wrong, as it uses apocalyptic language in an unbiblical interpretation method. One hermeneutic principle worth affirming is, "The Bible interprets itself," but it's only valuable if you actually apply it.

An important note here is that apocalyptic language is used to describe "past tense" history with Egypt. So, is this language only for past events? Interestingly, in Isaiah 19:1, we see similar language about a future judgment:

"See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt.
The idols of Egypt tremble before Him,
and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear."

We've already seen this phrase of God as a "Sky Rider." It's symbolic of historical events involving God's judgment. The difference here is that it's in the future tense. Thus, apocalyptic language can refer to past or future events and relates to historical events about God's judgment.

²³⁶ Gentry, K. L., Jr. (2010). [*The Book of Revelation Made Easy: You Can Understand Bible Prophecy*](#) (Second Edition, pp. 35–43). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

Did the Egyptians' hearts literally melt in their chest cavities? Since we know this is already symbolic, we understand they didn't, though God is more than capable of such a feat.

Apocalyptic language debuts in Exodus, with God as a cloud-riding "Sky Rider" smiting Pharaoh. Not a literal chariot joust, but real plagues and judgment. It's symbolic flair for historical smackdowns, not amillennial spiritual fluff. Stick to Scripture's first mentions and let the Bible decode itself, no PhD in symbolism required.

However, if we consider the Sun, Moon and Stars, the first apocalyptic language is found with Joseph's dream in Genesis.

One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever. "Listen to this dream," he said. 7 "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!"

His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?" And they hated him all the more because of his dreams and the way he talked about them.

Soon Joseph had another dream, and again he told his brothers about it. "Listen, I have had another dream," he said. "The sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed low before me!"

This time he told the dream to his father as well as to his brothers, but his father scolded him. "What kind of dream is that?" he asked. "Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow to the ground before you?" But while his brothers were jealous of Joseph, his father wondered what the dreams meant.

(Genesis 37:5-11 NLT)

The context is a dream about future events for the person dreaming it, but there are some similarities when compared to apocalyptic prophecy for nations.

Here we see the stars, moon and sun bowing to Joseph. The stars, moon and sun did not bow to Joseph; rather, it was symbolic of a historical event, where God both saved and judged Joseph's brothers and family. Although it was minimal, Joseph judged his brothers by the scheme to put his stuff in their packs. Their conscience tormented them for a year. They bowed to him. They did not spiritually or symbolically bowed down, but His family literally bowed before Him. God also used this to save them. Thus, this personal dream has all the check marks for apocalyptic language of judgment, and then some more about salvation, due to the specific situation.

Let us go back to apocalyptic language in pronouncement against nations.

Isaiah 34 and 13 both speak of the sun and moon and stars.

The heavens above will melt away
 and disappear like a rolled-up scroll.
 The stars will fall from the sky
 like withered leaves from a grapevine,
 or shriveled figs from a fig tree.
 And when my sword has finished its work in the heavens,
 it will fall upon Edom,
 the nation I have marked for destruction.
 The sword of the Lord is drenched with blood
 and covered with fat...
 (Isaiah 34:4-6 NLT)

They come from distant countries, from beyond the farthest horizons. They are the Lord's weapons to carry out his anger. With them he will destroy the whole land.

Scream in terror, for the day of the Lord has arrived—the time for the Almighty to destroy.

Every arm is paralyzed with fear. Every heart melts,
 and people are terrified. Pangs of anguish grip them, like those of a woman in labor.
 They look helplessly at one another, their faces aflame with fear.

For see, the **day of the Lord is coming**— the terrible day of his fury and fierce anger.
 The land will be made desolate, and all the sinners destroyed with it.

The heavens will be black above them; the stars will give no light. The **sun will be dark** when it rises, and the moon will provide no light.
 Isaiah 13:5–10 (NLT)

Isaiah 34 is dealing with the destruction of Edom.

Isaiah 13 is dealing with the Medes destroying Babylon. Later in the chapter it says,

Isaiah 13:11 (NLT) *"I, the LORD, will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their sin. I will crush the arrogance of the proud and humble the pride of the mighty."*

Well, obviously the "**day of the Lord**" in reference to "**punishing the whole world**," in context is about the Medes destroying Babylon.

Thus, we can add a little more to our definition of apocalyptic language. Even when the symbolic language is about the "*day of the Lord as punishment for the whole world*," with "*stars falling*," and "*the sun darkening*," and "*God riding chariots of clouds*," it is defined by context, as only about specific nations within specific historical events. God uses other nations or people or natural destructions, to be the instruments of these historical events, and not that God Himself is at these locations riding in His cloud chariot. Again, the symbolic language is not about more illustrations or symbols, but historical events. A nation was judged. God did not swing His personal sword, but another nation swung their swords to cut down people and many laid slain in the streets. The stars did not fall from the sky but arrows rained

down from the skies. God's face did not appear in the sky with an angry face, but the nation God used, had faces full of anger as they stormed the gates. This is why amillennialism is wrong.

Daniel

What about Daniel's reference to the "*Son of man coming on Clouds*,"?

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a **son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven**. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. (Daniel 7:13-14)

"And immediately after the tribulation of those days,
'the sun will be darkened
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will fall from heaven,
and the powers of heaven will be shaken.'

And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man arriving on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect together from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other end of it.

... 34 Truly I say to you that this generation will never pass away until all these things take place! 35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.. (Matthew 24:29-35 LEB)

Interestingly, Jesus combines the passages of Isaiah 13 and 34 (which we just discussed) with the language of Daniel's "Son of Man coming on the clouds" as a "whole package deal" about Himself, referring to the same historical incident. In Matthew 24:34, Jesus sums up both the references to Isaiah and Daniel about Himself: "Truly I say to you that this generation will never pass away until all these things take place! Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away." He declares these things will happen within this generation and, to ensure we don't miss the point, adds that His words will never pass away. Jesus is saying, "Yes, I meant that you, 'this generation,' will not pass away until you see this."

Isaiah's apocalyptic language describes historical judgments on specific nations and groups. The imagery of God coming on clouds is used for judgments on people or nations in history, starting with Egypt in the Exodus story. Jesus then takes both Isaiah and Daniel and applies them to Himself, pronouncing judgment on the Jewish people for rejecting Him.

Rather than God coming on the clouds to judge Egyptians in Egypt and pass over the Jews, Jesus is coming on the clouds to judge the Jews in Jerusalem and pass over His chosen ones who have faith in Him.

You can understand why this would have been deeply offensive to the Jews. You can see why it enraged the High Priest when Jesus quoted Daniel's apocalyptic language, applying it to Himself and against them. Their anger at Jesus indicates they understood the implications of Him quoting Daniel and Isaiah as a judgment against them!

Jesus is telling them the Jews are the "evil Egyptians," but His chosen ones, who've put the blood on the door, are those who believe in Jesus Christ. Just as He protected and rescued His people before, He'll do it again. Jesus is now seated at the right hand of Power. Thus, just as He judged His enemies, the Egyptians, and passed over the Israelites, He'll do so in this generation—only now, the enemy is them. When God judged Egypt and passed over Israel, He protected and advanced His Kingdom on earth. The same happened in Jesus' generation. When Jesus judged the Jews and passed over the elect in the destruction of Jerusalem, He protected and expanded His Kingdom on earth. The same holds true today. Let the Lion roar!

Jesus remixes Isaiah's cloud-riding judgments and Daniel's Son of Man swagger, slamming them into His generation's face—Jerusalem's toast, and His elect get the Passover VIP pass! The Jews flipped out, catching His threat loud and clear. It's an Exodus rerun here; however, the Jesus flips on script, saying they have become the reprobate Egyptians. Jesus is judging rejectors and shielding believers. The Kingdom is rolling stronger and louder than ever.

Let us now go back to that prophetic, apocalyptic language that Jesus used to describe exactly what would happen immediately after the great tribulation of [Mt. 24:21](#). In vss. 29-31, He said: "*...the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*" In examining a number of "old testament" prophecies, we learned that the use of expressions involving the sun and moon not giving their light, and the stars either falling or not giving their light, were symbolic "judgment prophecies," concerning the fall or collapse of kingdoms, governments, and authorities. Then we also found that the phrase "coming on the clouds" was also used frequently as a symbol or sign. For example, the picture of God coming in judgment on Egypt, "riding on a swift cloud" in [Is. 19:1](#), or when He came in judgment on Nineveh in [Nah. 1:3](#), with the clouds being the dust under His feet, or as David said in [Psa. 104:3](#), "He makes the clouds His chariot." Then there was the cloud upon the mercy seat atop the ark of the covenant, which symbolized the very "presence" of God. So, it seems very clear that clouds were commonly used to symbolize God's presence in judgment on all His enemies.

So, dear brothers and sisters, if we understand what all of those various terms symbolized in the “old testament,” what should we think when we then see the same terms used in the “new testament?” Wouldn’t they still mean the same things? I would certainly think so! ...

So, from such verses as [Mt. 24:15](#) and [Lk. 21:20-22](#), it becomes evident that all of those things in [Mt. 24:29-31](#), [34](#), were in regard to the fall of Jerusalem, the temple, and the Jewish nation. Daniel had prophesied that this would be the time of the “shattering of the power of the Holy people” [[Dan. 12:7](#)]. The time of God’s vengeance on Jerusalem [[Lk. 21:20](#), [22](#)] was also the time of the great harvest [[Mt. 13:24-30](#); [36-43](#); [Mt. 24:31](#)]. As for when all of these things would transpire, the Master said very plainly to His apostles in v-34, “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.”²³⁷

Matthew 24 & Revelation.

For you, brothers, became imitators of God's churches in Judea, which are in Christ Jesus: You suffered from your own countrymen the same things those churches suffered from the Jews, who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and also drove us out. They displease God and are hostile to all men in their effort to keep us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. In this way they always heap up their sins to the limit. The wrath of God has come upon them at last. (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)

Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, and they plotted to arrest Jesus in some sly way and kill him. (Matthew 26:3-4)

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. (Matthew 26:59)

Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the decision to put Jesus to death. (Matthew 27:1)

The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching. (Mark 11:18)

Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. (Mark 14:1)

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree. (Mark 14:55-56)

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built,

²³⁷ From unknown author. From the website,
“<https://endtimesstudy.com/apocalyptic-language>”

in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. (Luke 4:28-30)

Every day he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. (Luke 19:47)

Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him. (John 5:17-18)

Jesus answered, "...Has not Moses given you the law? Yet not one of you keeps the law. Why are you trying to kill me?" ...At that point some of the people of Jerusalem began to ask, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill?" (John 7:16, 19, 25)

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "'The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.' Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, *whom you crucified*, both Lord and Christ.'" (Acts 2:32-36)

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. *You killed the author of life*, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. (Acts 3:13-15)

If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. (Acts 4:9-10)

"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you... (Matthew 23:33-37 NIV)

These enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.'" (Luke 19:27 LSB)

'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

"But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."...

The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them. (Luke 20:14-16,19).

This Is Where Our Eyes Meet!

Jesus said to him, “You have said it. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” (Matt. 26:64 LEB)

And Stephen said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” (Acts 7:56 LEB)

I remember seeing a Korean manhwa (anime cartoon) called Noblesse. The Noblesse was a loner character who kept bad vampires in check, by destroying them. In the first main showdown the Noblesse would not look at the villain in the eye, when they were face to face. This infuriated the villain. The Noblesse, then used his power to force the bad guy into a kneeling position. Now, when their eyes met, from the position of the villain looking up and the Noblesse looking down, he said, “this is where our eyes meet.”

The Noblesse, makes the villain look up to him in defeat, mirroring how Jesus will flip the script on His adversaries. When Jesus talks about coming on the clouds, He’s not planning a peaceful parade; He’s promising a divine showdown. Think less “slice-of-life” genres and more “apocalypse horror.”

This is like what is happening in the above passages. The high priest in a position of authority, forces Jesus to answer the question if He is the messiah. Jesus answers by confirming that He is the messiah. Jesus follows this up with a threat. He says, from now on, you will see Me at the right hand of the power, and coming in the clouds of glory. This is both a statement of reality and a threat. Right now, in the position of a man born under the law, and under the authority of the high priest He is forced to answer his question. But Jesus says, from now on forward, the roles will be flipped. I will be in the position of authority, looking down on you. Jesus has a mic-drop moment with the high priest, essentially saying, “You’re the boss now, but wait till you see Me in My final form!” He’s not just the humble carpenter; He’s hinting at His gig as the cosmic judge, riding on clouds like a divine superhero.

The Old Testament quote of “coming on the clouds of glory,” is about God’s judgments. It is apocalyptic language that describes God destroying His enemies. (see Deut. 33:26, Isaiah 19:1, Isaiah 34:4-6, Isaiah 13:5–10 Daniel 7:13-14) It is symbolic language describing real acts of God’s horrific judgments. It is not symbolic language to describe invisible spiritual or more symbolic things, but historic acts of God’s judgement. The first mention of this apocalyptic language is the Exodus story and God’s destruction of Egypt. God did not literally ride the clouds, like a Sky Rider, but God did bring in darkness, sickness, storms, frogs and a real angel came and killed all the first born of Egypt. Jesus in Matthew 24 quotes Isaiah 13, 34, and Daniel 7 as a packaged deal that belongs to Him. He rides the clouds. He will bring judgement. He will be the one bringing the plagues of Egypt on His enemies.

Thus, when Jesus says that not only, will His and the high priest's positions change, but also defines Himself with the Old Testament apocalyptic language, it is a full on threat. Jesus is saying, I will be in authority, the next time our eyes meet, but I am also judgment. He is saying, My authority will not be used for your salvation, but destruction. From now on, when our eyes meet, you will be kneeling looking up, and I will be looking down on you, with a sword in My hand. This is where our eyes will meet.

This will help us understand why Stephen was asking Jesus not to hold their murder of him, against them. Stephen, right before becoming the first Christian martyr, has a vision. He sees Jesus not as the guy who walked on water, but as the celestial commander in chief, standing (not even sitting!) at God's right hand. It's like Jesus went from indie band lead, at the corner café, to the headliner at the universe's biggest rock concert. Stephen saw Jesus in all authority and power, at the right hand of the Power. Jesus is not the humbled man that we all read about in the gospel. He is now in all authority and power. From His position of power He works in the saints to advance the Kingdom of God on earth. He is in a position of military power. He is a ruling king who is currently in a military campaign. He is the King who rides the skies to bring destruction on His enemies. This is His status.

Thus, when Jesus is looking down on the murder of Stephen, He is a King, in a current military campaign, watching His enemies killing His soldier. Any normal King would bring down fast destruction. In about 70 AD, in the destruction of Jerusalem, King Jesus did just that. This is why Stephen is crying out for Jesus to hold back, because Jesus' position is the current Sky Rider. Stephen knows Jesus' position and so is asking for more time for the church to try and bring the Jews to repentance and faith. He's basically asking Jesus, "Hold off on the divine wrath, okay? Give us a bit more time to win some souls." He knows Jesus isn't just chilling up there; He's actively directing the celestial troops.

Jesus was correct. The next time His enemies saw His eyes, they were kneeling in terror, and He was Riding across the Sky in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Let us not forget that this is the same Jesus we pray to everyday. It is this same Jesus, who is still sitting at the right hand of Power. He is still in a military campaign to advance the kingdom of God, through the church by preaching, baptism of the Spirit, healing, casting out demons and resurrecting the dead. Sometimes it is good to repeat Stephen's prayer for more time, and other times it is good to ask king Jesus to mount up and ride the skies

Jesus isn't just the gentle shepherd. He is also the king with a sword, ready to ride the clouds into battle. So next time you pray, remember, you're talking to the Cloud-Rider, the Sky King, and He is ready to bring the thunder! He is so ready, that Stephen begged King Jesus to hold back.

Below I will quote Vincent Cheung at length talking about how Jesus and the apostles said it was the Jews who murder Jesus, the prophets, the apostles and Christians. This is important because it will help interpret Jesus' words in Matthew 24.

The New Testament is clear in teaching that the Jews murdered Jesus. It states this explicitly and repeatedly, in different settings, and in various ways. It states

that the Jews intended to kill Jesus, that they plotted to kill Jesus, that they tried to kill Jesus, that they would kill Jesus, and that they did kill Jesus. Here Paul writes, "the Jews...killed the Lord Jesus" (v. 15) – a direct, concise, and explicit statement that the Jews murdered Jesus. This fact receives repeated emphasis in the preaching of the apostles, whether they are addressing Jews, or whether they are addressing Gentiles, as in this letter to the Thessalonians.

This testimony so pervades Scripture that it is impervious to the efforts of those who would revise or obscure history. In fact, the biblical passages stating that the Jews murdered Jesus are so numerous that a full exposition of them could make up a whole book. Thus we shall cite only a limited number of passages with brief comments, and in the process we will address some common attempts at neutralizing this scriptural record.

First, many passages establish the Jews' intention and a number of actual attempts to murder Jesus. The case to convict the Jews for the murder of Jesus does not require these passages that show their long-held intention to commit murder, but it contributes to the overall picture. Although they do not refer to the crucifixion, which came later, morally speaking the intention to murder and the attempt at murder are equal to actual murder (Matthew 6:21-22). A person who intends to commit murder has already performed it in the moral sense, so that even if he transgresses no law of the state, he has still committed murder in his heart and in the sight of God. This is especially true if he makes actual attempts at committing murder, even if he fails at it. From a moral perspective, his failure does not make him less guilty.

In addition, once it is established that there has been a persistent intention to murder and multiple attempts at carrying it out, then when the victim is killed by his active and necessary involvement, without which the murder could not have happened, it cannot be said that he is in any way free from blame, as if he has been reluctant or that his contribution was unnecessary or even accidental...

...The active and direct role that the Jews played in the murder of Jesus was prominently featured in the preaching of the apostles since the beginning of their post-ascension ministry. Because the doctrine of the apostles defines the very meaning of the Christian faith, their interpretation of the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion must be regarded as authoritative, even the final word on the attitude that any Christian must affirm on the matter.

"This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and *you*, with the help of wicked men, *put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*" (Acts 2:23)

The verse acknowledges that the crucifixion of Christ occurred by God's foreordination, and it also recognizes that the Jews had "the help of wicked men" in putting Jesus to death. These two factors are often used in diverting attention from the Jews for the murder of Jesus. But by mentioning them, this verse frustrates this diversion. This is because, despite the recognition of these two factors, the verse still makes the Jews the subject that performed the crucifixion, that is, it says, "*you*...put him to death by nailing him to the cross." Peter does not even say, "You pressed the Romans to crucify him," but rather,

"You crucified him (by the Romans)." The crucifixion itself, and not just the murder in general, was blamed on the Jews. So by acknowledging these factors that are often used as excuses for the Jews, the verse neutralizes these same excuses...

...The way the early Christians reacted to the murder of Jesus was to place almost all the blame on the Jews, with scarcely any mention of the role that the Romans played, and to say directly that the Jews murdered Jesus. But against this background, they preached to these same Jews the need for repentance and the hope of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, the very one whom they murdered without mercy. True Christians, therefore, do not excuse the Jews, but they blame the Jews for the murder of Jesus as a matter of upholding truth, justice, and history.

The Christian response is not revenge, or to return violence with violence, but to preach truth and mercy – the truth that the Jews murdered an innocent man, their own Messiah, and the mercy that is to be found in this same person whom they murdered. Unlike Brown and many others, the apostles and disciples did not revise history and say that the Jews did not kill Jesus, that the Romans killed Jesus, or that no one killed Jesus. No, the Jews murdered Jesus, but they could repent and receive forgiveness for this and all their many, many other sins.

Moreover, the fact that the Jews murdered Jesus is declared not only to the Jews themselves, but also proclaimed to all nations, as Paul does in our passage (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16). In fact, Paul does not say only that the Jews murdered Jesus, but also that the Jews murdered the prophets, and that even as he writes, the Jews are persecuting Christians in every place and in every way.

Again, the apostles made this a part of the preaching of the gospel not so that those who are converted would then exact revenge on the Jews for the murder of Jesus, the murder of the prophets, and the murder and persecution of countless Christians. Rather, they stated this in their preaching as a matter of truth and justice, and as part of the historical background of the ministry and atonement of Christ, and then the propagation of the Christian faith.

On the other hand, the despicable practice of trivializing or covering up the murder of an innocent man, no less the God-man that is Jesus our Lord, should have no place in Christian preaching, and should be thrown out of the church wherever it is found. Anyone who distorts history and obscures the truth about how the Jews murdered Jesus, the prophets, and countless Christians should be harshly reprimanded, and if he does not repent, he should be expelled from all Christian fellowship.

We are not doing the Jews a favor by telling them that their predecessors did not really commit all those murders. Doing this would only encourage hard-heartedness, defiance, and self-righteousness in a people that is already characterized by these evil qualities. The Bible teaches that they are a rebellious culture accustomed to persecuting and murdering God's messengers. Their repentance and salvation will involve a break with this tradition. And how do we give them an opportunity to do this, unless we inform or remind them of all the

atrocities that they committed? If we do not insist that they committed all these murders, then our message is not faithful to even the Old Testament, which records how the Jews resisted and murdered the prophets. Unless we insist that the Jews committed all these murders, we have not preached the whole Christian faith to them, since this is a prominent aspect of both Jewish and Christian history.

The Christians who have the moral courage to tell the truth about these atrocities committed by the Jews will be accused of anti-Semitism. But this is a most absurd and dishonest reaction, since even if the Jews wish to deny that they murdered Jesus and countless Christians, it remains that the Old Testament testifies that they persecuted and murdered the prophets. And since the record that the Jews also murdered Jesus and his disciples is an integral part of Christian history and doctrine, we respond that to accuse us of anti-Semitism is to be anti-Christian. Are the Jews allowed to make accusations against us, but we are not allowed to make accusations against them? People are all about tolerance when it is their religion, their race, or their culture that is on the line. How about my religion, my race, my culture? Their so-called tolerance is sustained by a much stronger hypocrisy.

Modern Jews want us to sympathize with them about what they suffered under Hitler, and demand us to acknowledge past aggression that Christians showed toward the Jews. And they use threats and accusations based on past suffering to manipulate others and to stifle criticisms. But this represents the height of injustice and hypocrisy unless they also acknowledge that they murdered Jesus and countless Christians. Some of them are proficient at bringing up the past violence and oppression performed by others, but they show no remorse and no repentance about their own past actions. The Jews who repented in Acts 2 were "cut to the heart" and said, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (v. 37). But some of the Jews today want us Christians to be cut to the heart so that they can tell us what to do.

The real issue should be whether this is the truth, that the Jews really murdered Jesus, the prophets, and the disciples. If the Jews deny this, then they must defeat us in argumentation – complaining of anti-Semitism is useless. From a rational perspective, it is only a whiny noise and is irrelevant to the truth. But if it is indeed the truth that the Jews committed all these murders, then to complain of anti-Semitism only means that the truth is anti-Semitic. And if the truth is anti-Semitic, then the Jews really have a problem, do they not? If the truth testifies against them, then it is futile to complain against us. Christians did not create the problem of anti-Semitism. If the truth is anti-Semitic, it is because the Jews killed all these people.²³⁸

Because of accusations of anti-Semitism, the Jews have effectively silenced Scripture, and Christians have aided them in this. They don't want to hear its infallible testimony that the Jewish leaders murdered Jesus, the prophets, and countless innocent Christians. The apostles, who were Jews themselves, clearly, directly, and implicitly

²³⁸ Vincent Cheung. Commentary on 1st and 2nd Thessalonians. From the section, 1 Thessalonians, 2:14-16.

stated that the Jewish leaders murdered Jesus. Even when acknowledging Roman involvement, the apostles, under the power of the Holy Spirit, summarized the matter as the Jewish leaders being responsible for Jesus' death. Jesus, in His parables, foretold that the Jewish leaders would murder God's Son. Thus, the apostles, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit all declared that the Jewish leaders murdered Jesus. In response, Jesus said the blood for all these murders would be exacted from that generation. For the murder of the prophets, the apostles, Christians, and ultimately Himself, that generation would face the full force of God's wrath.

Jesus even said to bring them to Him so He could watch as they're slaughtered before Him (Luke 19:27). Jesus made such statements leading up to Matthew 24, where He discusses the destruction of the temple and declares it will happen within that generation. In context, Jesus says, "Truly I tell you, this generation will be judged for the blood and crucifixion of the prophets and those whom God sent to the Jews." Then, when the apostles ask about the temple, Jesus speaks in apocalyptic language, quoting related Old Testament apocalyptic passages and applying them to Himself. He reiterates, "Truly I tell you, this will happen to this generation." At this point, I could delve into how Jesus called the Jewish leaders fools, morons, and vile snakes, but the key is that Jesus repeatedly said God would pour out His wrath on that generation, including the temple.

Beyond the immediate context of Matthew 23 and Jesus' parables stating God would judge the Jews for killing His only Son, Jesus also declared that God would destroy the entire Jewish religious system. In John 4, Jesus turns water into wine, then goes to the temple and overturns the tables. The Jewish religion had run out of wine—not because the Old Testament was flawed, but because the Jews, with only a few elect exceptions, never believed in their own God and consistently disobeyed Him. They murdered His prophets and rejected their own God. The religion Jesus confronted was a human invention, not the one revealed in Scripture. Moreover, even if they'd been faithful, the Mosaic law was only a temporary addition. God always planned to fulfill the promise to Abraham—to bless the whole world—freely by grace.

Lastly, in Matthew 21, just a few chapters before Matthew 24, Jesus curses the fig tree. This isn't only a lesson on His extreme faith doctrine and prayer but is also set in the context of Jesus approaching Jerusalem. Jesus was about to curse His own brethren. In the same chapter, He gives the parable of God sending His only Son, with the tenants conspiring to kill Him. Jesus said the owner would destroy them and give the vineyard (the gospel) to another people who'd bear fruit. Matthew notes the Jewish leaders knew Jesus was speaking about them. Thus, leading up to Matthew 24, Jesus declares the Jews would murder God's only Son, had murdered the prophets, and would murder those He'd send in the future. Through miracles like new wine and the cursed fig tree, Jesus illustrates God's rejection and destruction of the Jewish system. He says this destruction will happen to that generation. When the disciples specifically ask about the temple, Jesus reiterates it'll happen to that generation.

The Gospels devote significant space to describing how the Jewish leaders killed the prophets and God's Son, God's anger over this, and His plan to destroy the Jewish system for killing His righteous ones. These themes are restated leading up to Matthew 24. Jesus declares it'll happen to that generation. Therefore, the context points to the apocalyptic quotes (used in the Old Testament for historical judgments) that Jesus applies to the judgment of the Jews in the destruction of the temple and

Jewish religion, not to the end times. Thus, Matthew 24 is primarily about Jesus' judgment and destruction of the Jewish system. This is also mirrored in the Book of Revelation.

Jesus didn't mince words: the Jewish leaders killed prophets, His followers, and Him, and God's wrath was set to crash down on that generation—temple and all. Matthew 24's apocalyptic zingers, riffing on Isaiah and Daniel, nail the Jews' doom, not some far-off end times. From cursed fig trees to table-flipping, Jesus called out their fake faith and flipped the script—His elect experience the Passover, while the old system's toast.

“Jesus came to destroy the Jewish religion, and to set his people free from the burden that it placed upon men's conscience. Of course, he could have cleared the temple a hundred times and it would not have effected a permanent change. What he did at the temple foreshadowed the destruction of Jerusalem that would occur within one generation of his earthly ministry. He was committed to the permanent conclusion of the Jewish religion and he came in AD 70 through the Roman army, which slaughtered thousands of Jews and destroyed their temple. The Jews that survived were dispersed, and their system of worship was dismantled. As Jesus says in one of his parables, “What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others” (Mark 12:9). Jesus in his human body overturned the Jews' tables. Jesus in his divine power overturned the Jews' nation and religion.

The Jewish religion had no reality and no power, only a long list of self-serving traditions designed to excuse themselves from obeying the commands of God. Those who offered genuine worship did so through faith, and in spite of the human traditions that stood in their way. Jesus, on the other hand, came and brought reality, truth, power, salvation – wine superior to all that went before. He did not effect this change through economics or politics, or the methods of men, but by truth that came from heaven, and a divine power that was beyond a mere form of religion, but that could change water to wine, and that could bring the dead back to life. It is through him that people can find reality and power in religion, and worship God in spirit and in truth. The Gospel tells us about this reality and power, and how we can sit at the wedding feast of Christ.”²³⁹

Joel.

“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
18 Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.

²³⁹ Vincent Cheung. “When Religion Runs Out of Wine.”
From the Ebook, The View From Above. pg 45 2009.

- 19 I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
20 The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
21 And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Acts 2:17-21

What is interesting about this quote is the usage of the sun and moon. This is apocalyptic language for judgment, power and destruction. This is said in context of Jesus, from the position of the right hand of the Power, pouring out the baptism of the Spirit for power for miracles. In essence, Jesus, in pouring out the baptism of the Spirit on His followers, will bring destruction against His enemies. Some conveniently forget about the judgement Psalms, as they do judgment miracles that both Jesus and His followers performed. In chapter 4 of Acts the disciples ask for miracles and signs to be used to fight back against the Jewish leadership. God used earthquakes to destroy government property to release His chosen ones. Peter, by the Spirit, cursed Ananias and his wife with death. Paul cursed a person with blindness, who was opposing him preaching the gospel. And with every demon cast out and cancer healed, the Kingdom of God burst into the scene (“if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you”), and the gates of hell torn down one bar at a time. The ultimate judgement miracle that Jesus poured out was the destruction of the Jewish temple, the people and their empty traditions.

Peter’s quoting of Joel’s prophecy is a subcategory of the blessing of Abraham, which is the gospel.

What is also interesting is that the baptism of the Spirit and miracles is argued by Paul in Galatians 3 as being part of Abraham’s blessing promised by God, by grace. Did not God bless Abraham with military victories? Paul’s argument and Joel’s prophecy reveals God gives military victories, about actual militaries, gospel victories and pushing back intellectual, demonic and physical oppositions. This happens by the Spirit and miracles because of the blessing of Abraham.

Conclusion:

Summary. Jesus makes power so available and accessible that supernatural power, (as in Solomon’s time when silver became common in the streets), flows out of His chosen ones as a common thing.

Because Jesus is on the throne, Elijah’s faith is for everyone (James 5). Joshua’s faith is for everyone. Joshua’s courage is for all. Abraham’s blessing is for all. Abraham’s rich supply is now for all (2 Corinth 8-9). Abraham being blessed by Melchizedek is for all, as the lesser, give tithes to the greater. Jesus’ miracle works is now for all to work His miracles. Jesus’ love for others is now for all to love others. Jesus’ empowerment

by the Spirit is for all. Jesus' closeness to the Father is for all to have this closeness to the Father.

Because Jesus is on the throne, why play favorites with men, as Paul asked the Corinthians? Why look to men? Did Paul die for your sins? Who's righteousness was deposited into your account, Jesus or the apostles? Is Peter sitting on God's right hand? Did the apostles pour out the Spirit or Jesus? Do we work miracles in Jesus's Name or the name of the apostles? Why look to men, unless you love man more than God? Why define God with the limitations of men? Why be so man focused when Jesus is alive on the throne, pouring out the baptism of the Spirit and ready to answer all bold prayers with the things we ask for? Jesus is yours, therefore, all things are yours.

As per our maximum, Jesus is the foundation for eschatology, not men and not the apostles.

"When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be let out of his prison. 8 He will go out to deceive the nations—called Gog and Magog—in every corner of the earth. He will gather them together for battle—a mighty army, as numberless as sand along the seashore. And I saw them as they went up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded God's people and the beloved city. But fire from heaven came down on the attacking armies and consumed them." (Revelation 20:7-9)

The Egyptians chased after them with all the forces in Pharaoh's army—all his horses and chariots, his charioteers, and his troops. The Egyptians caught up with the people of Israel as they were camped beside the shore near Pi-hahiroth, across from Baal-zephon. As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them.

...The Egyptians tried to escape, but the Lord swept them into the sea. (Exodus 14:9-10,27 NLT)

Notice the similarities. Pharaoh, with his army, surrounds Israel, and God, with one quick watery breath, destroys them. Then, at the end of the age, Satan, with his army, surrounds Jerusalem, and God, with one quick fiery breath, destroys Satan. In both cases, neither Pharaoh nor Satan fires a single shot or draws a sword. They surround and installed fear, but before the enemy can truly do anything, God steps on them like a man crushing a bug. In both instances, the enemy is destroyed in an anticlimactic ending—at least from the villain's perspective. They gather, they prepare, their swords are sharpened, and then it ends in one swift moment with God's overwhelming power. God ends them both like the anime One-Punch Man: one punch, and it's over.

This is how God deals with His so-called great enemies. They're nothing, and He destroys them as the nothings they are. This is seen in the Book of Revelation. John spends most of the book addressing the destruction of Jerusalem, with the last few chapters focusing on the last day. Satan will be allowed to gather and threaten God's people in a way he wasn't permitted before, but then God will destroy him before he can do anything truly horrific. This anticlimactic ending, like Pharaoh's, showcases how pathetic God's enemies are compared to Him. God allows His enemies to puff up

their chests and look scary so He can obliterate them in a moment. The anticlimactic end publicly shames God's enemies and demonstrates His awesome power.

This is how this age will end. The main content of eschatology is expansionism. The final structure of eschatology will mirror Pharaoh and his army.

Pharaoh's army and Satan's endgame? Same vibe—big talk, bigger flop! Both surround God's crew, only to get one-shotted by His watery or fiery flex, One-Punch Man style. Revelation's mostly Jerusalem's doom, but the finale's a quick Satan smackdown, proving God's enemies are just cosmic chumps. Eschatology's core? Expansionism—through and through—with quick side of divine bug-squashing at the end.

Provoking the Jews with Jealousy

Paul first quotes (Rom. 10:19) “provoke them to Jealousy,” from Deuteronomy 32:21. This was Moses' prophecy in how God was going to deal with Israel's unfaithful heart. In Romans 11:11 and verse 14 Paul repeats this and says his plan to save the Jews is to provoke them to jealousy.

This isn't some cult leader. This is the scripture. This is Moses and Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit writing scripture. They think the best way to save the Jews is the provoke them by making them jealous of the gentiles. Some elitist fool might think there is a better way, but God's way is always the best way.

How does jealousy work? You become jealous when someone has something you want or you think rightly belongs to you. The Jews became the Jews because of Abraham. The Jews started with God singling out Abraham and blessing him with the gospel (Galatians 3) of health, wealth, fame, favor, blessings, military victories, supernatural healing and promising to do the same for Abraham's descendants.

The blessing of Abraham, which we have today through Jesus, (Galatians 3) includes the baptism of the Spirit and healing. Healing, long and strong life, the Spirit and miracles is part of the ancient promise of God, and not even the law, which came after, or the atonement of Jesus can negate it; rather, Jesus' resurrection makes it accessible to the whole world. Jesus also carried our curses on the cross, so that we have the blessing of Abraham today.

The blessings and curses of the law teach us about the blessing of Abraham, they do not negate it. The blessings of the law is nothing less than the Blessing of Abraham based on works and merit, rather than grace and promise. Yet, the blessing of Abraham came first, based on grace. In Christ the curses are gone and the blessing of Abraham is already active for the believer.

What is the blessing of Abraham when spelled out in the law? It is the Deuteronomic blessings as seen in Deuteronomy 28. In Exodus it says God will turn off sickness, so that sickness doesn't even happen. Another good summary of these blessings is in Leviticus 26: 3-13,

“If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you the seasonal rains. The land will then yield its crops, and the trees of the field will produce their fruit. Your threshing season will overlap with the grape

harvest, and your grape harvest will overlap with the season of planting grain. You will eat your fill and live securely in your own land.

“I will give you peace in the land, and you will be able to sleep with no cause for fear. I will rid the land of wild animals and keep your enemies out of your land. In fact, you will chase down your enemies and slaughter them with your swords. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand! All your enemies will fall beneath your sword.

“I will look favorably upon you, making you fertile and multiplying your people. And I will fulfill my covenant with you. You will have such a surplus of crops that you will need to clear out the old grain to make room for the new harvest! I will live among you, and I will not despise you. I will walk among you; I will be your God, and you will be my people. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so you would no longer be their slaves. I broke the yoke of slavery from your neck so you can walk with your heads held high.”

Yet, in Jesus Christ the law is fulfilled and the curse is taken away. We are forgiven, which by this alone makes us righteous(because the law is both commission and omission) and we are also declared to be God’s righteousness. If we want to see the full manifestations of these blessings we must take them in faith and obedience, but Jesus alone has already purchased them and given to us by unmerited favor.

Jesus gives us the blessing of Abraham. When Jesus was healing people, He would make remarks that healing was daily bread as part of the Abrahamic blessing. This is how the Jews understand themselves as children of Abraham.

Yes, it includes things like forgiveness, a peaceful home, pleasure with your spouse, joy with your children and communion with God. But it also includes all the miracles of health, wealth and various miracles to overcome troubles and be victorious in life.

Paul’s strategy is for the gentiles to be so full of Abraham’s blessing manifesting in their lives with being declared righteous, healed, healthy, wealthy, victorious, favored, peaceful homes, famous, and regular miracles from God that the Jews become Jealous and envious. Paul wants the Jews seeing God lavishing so much attention and good things on the gentiles that they turn green with envy.

Thus, the only way to provoke the Jews to jealousy is to have the full blessing of Abraham manifested in your life. The only people who have the potential to do this are Expansionist. The cessationist reject the blessing of Abraham that includes the baptism of the Spirit and miracles on the demand of faith, thus, it is impossible for them to provoke the Jew to jealousy because they cannot produce the full blessing of Abraham in their lives. The charismatics are better, but their weak stance on the gifts and faith make it only slightly better. Only those who in principle believe Matthew 21:21, John 14:12, Acts 1:8, 2:39, Gal. 3:5,13-14, have the potential to provoke the Jews to Jealousy.

Thus, those who understand this have the honor and responsibility to do it. Only Expansionist can bring an end to this age, by provoking the Jews to jealousy.

Eschatology Bread

But as for you, only do not rebel against Yahweh; and do not fear the people of the land, for they are our bread. Their protection has been removed from them, and Yahweh is with us; do not fear them.”

(Numbers 14:9 LSB)

Joshua and Caleb entered the Promise Land by faith. This is the crucial point about eschatology when looking at it from man's perspective. From God's, or the ultimate perspective God has a plan and a structure and He will carry it out. Because we are His children and friends He has told us the basic outline of this plan. However, since God, the Scripture and Jesus mainly deals with man's level of interaction with God, we will end this section on this same God centered perspective, which is man's will and faith.

Like Joshua and Caleb, we only enter the true Promise Land by faith. God wants us to know that what we think God will do to us, is what God will do to us. If we say, “they are too big and we are too small,” then God will do this to you. If you say, “this cancer and arthritis is too much for the doctors and so it is God's will and so I will suffer slowly, grow weak and die,” then God will do this for you. But if you say, “these giants are too weak for us, because God will strengthen us,” then God will do that for you. If you say, “Jesus already took on my sickness so that I am healed,” then God will do this for you. If you say, “demons must flee when I command them to leave, because I have the position, authority and Spirit of Jesus,” then God will do this for you.

Joshua and Caleb did not consider the outcome by observation, for the people where indeed giants, had fortified cities and were trained fighters. Going by empiricism and induction, they should concluded this is a hopeless fight. The Israelites would make David Hume and his empiricism blush with envy. If knowledge did not come from God but by human observation and speculation then I would agree with them. But since it is impossible for knowledge to come by sensation and observation, the Israelites had no rational basis to say one way or the other. Because induction is not rational you can always make the conclusion say what you want. Because they were filled with unbelief and fear, then that is what they made the conclusion to be.

Joshua and Caleb considered God's word to be true in contradiction to what they saw. Paul says Abraham believed God's Word, which was “contrary” to what he observed. Paul further says Abraham did not “consider” that his body was sexually dead. The word for “consider” here means to fixate your eyes or mind on something. He did not fixate his thoughts on what he observed; rather, Abraham fixated on what God said. He did not play over and over in his mind that his wife's body and his were sexually dead, but played over and over in his mind that God will do what He promised. That is, he did not entertain in his thoughts and meditate about what he saw, felt and heard. Abraham did not deny what his observations were saying about his and his wife's dead bodies, instead he simply did not think about it. He did not entertain thoughts about this. Why? God's word was more powerful, faithful and absolute than what his sensations and feelings was telling him. God makes things that do not exist, to exist. Abraham exchanged thinking about what his observations was telling, with thinking about God's promise and the certainty of God's love to him. This is Christianity 101. This is why Abraham is the father of faith. He showed us how to do it.

Joshua and Caleb also followed in Abrahams' footsteps. They did not think about what they saw and felt, but meditated on God's faithful promise and love. Thus, when they were tested, they spoke what they had been thinking about, God's faithful promise. If you meditate and think about what you see and feel, when you are tested, then this is what you will declare; you will declare faith in human observation. And God will give this declaration to you. Out of the abundance of your heart you will speak faith or unbelief in God's promise. Upon your faith confession in your observation or in God's promise, is the very thing God will do for you. Your confession will damn or save you. As Jesus is infamous for repeatedly saying, "your faith saved you (from sins) and your faith healed you."

Joshua and Caleb spoke God's promise and said the inhabitance of the land are "bread" for us. This is great faith. Humanly speaking they were facing giants, fortified cities, and well-trained armies. What would you have done as a leader? Yet, they looked at human impossibilities and roadblocks as "bread" for them. By faith, the impossible is food to help them grow. That is how faith sees the future and difficulties.

And let us not forget that Joshua and Caleb said to the people "do not rebel" against Yahweh. Thus, if God is asking you to do something humanly impossible, such as defeating an untreatable cancer or disease (Isaiah 53:4-5, James 5:15), and you experience fear and back away, you are in rebellion and disobedience. God expects you to be so convinced of His love and faithful promise, that when He commands you to do impossible things, you look at them with no fear but only faith. You see them as food. This is the tipping point that shows those who are with unbelieving Israel and who has the faith of Joshua and Caleb.

We are in the age of Jesus sitting on His throne of Power, who has baptized us into the Jordan river of His Holy Spirit. He has given us a shield of favor and sword of triumph. We face the same type of situation. We need to replay over and over the promises and love of God in our minds. If we turn our minds away from what we see, but think and meditate on the promise of God, then we will look at this world, with all its difficulties and see an endless sea of bread and food. We will speak faith and expand the kingdom of God.

When Jesus said the gates of hell will not prevail against Peter, He was referring to Peter's confession. Peter confessed Jesus is the Son of God. It was on this confession that marches forward, for which the gates of hell will not prevail in stopping. Some see this in the reverse, as if hell is marching against them and hell will not prevail in overtaking them. No. That is the opposite of what Jesus is saying. Our faith filled confession in the Son of God is an unstoppable forward moving power. It is spreading across the earth and hell cannot prevail against such a powerful attack. If we have faith and have this confession, we are unstoppable.

Value/Glory

This section will be brief but important for two reasons. There's often an overemphasis on the issue of "value" when not taught through strict biblical deductionism. The reason is simple: non-Christian philosophers are misguided. The doctrine is straightforward but has significant implications.

The biblical word for "glory" usually means a weighty value or a bright, beautiful radiance. In a world without light, the sun's light has immeasurable value and beauty. On a scale, greater weight signifies greater value. Both definitions of glory apply to God in immeasurable degrees. Thus, the terms "value" and "glory" are largely interchangeable.

Per our maxim, God is the foundation for theology. Therefore, God is the foundation for value.

This doctrine of value is divided into two main parts: epistemology and ethics. Epistemology: God creates and defines this reality. Any definition contradicting God's is false by logical exclusion, as taught by our apologetic method. Consider this carefully: God provides definitions about reality with a necessary connection to reality. Man's definitions rely on speculation and superstition. God's definitions are more trustworthy, faithful, and everlasting than anything man deems "permanent" within creation. Even the setting sun isn't truly permanent. All concepts of what is faithful and eternally permanent stem from God's definitions. Man's attempts are mere shadows.

God defines things in Scripture with basic categorical statements, such as man being distinct from animals by bearing God's image. However, God also defines things in greater detail, including the concept of value. God's image in man is described as valuable because God Himself is valuable. The Bible states that money and gold have some value but emphasizes that eternal rewards have greater value. Paul says bodily exercise has some value, but spiritual things have far greater value. Sarah is noted for her great beauty, implying some value. The passion and intimacy of a married couple in the Song of Songs are highlighted as valuable. Yet, we're also told that the inner beauty of a woman and purity in marital intimacy are even more valuable. We're instructed to seek all the Spirit's gifts but to prioritize the greater ones because they hold greater value.

Ethics: God commands us to seek things of value, and the more you're strengthened, the more you should seek the most valuable things.

Thus, because value's foundation is God's definition and command, it's inherently intellectual and spiritual. As previously noted, even ethics is fundamentally intellectual and rational.

This is truly all you need to grasp for a profound understanding of the often-debated philosophical topic of "value."

That said, it's worth noting that God's value is so immense that the nations He created are like a drop in a bucket to Him (Isaiah 40:15-17). God's value is so great that it's righteous and glorious for Him to create reprobates to highlight His love for the elect, which in turn showcases His own glory. His value is so vast that it's an infinite act of righteousness for God to think and act in ways that exalt Him infinitely above all others. This doctrine will either lead your thoughts to be God-centered or man-

centered when reflecting on Scripture and doxology. It's crucial to settle this doctrine and guard it from being stolen.

One way to test your maturity and understanding of this doctrine is to see if you value what God values, prioritizing the things He shows and commands us to value. Jesus could've spent more time preaching the gospel, which is defined as highly valuable. Yet, He repeatedly focused on healing the sick—over and over and over. Jesus said, “If you’ve seen Me, you’ve seen the Father.” Jesus, and thus the Father and the Spirit, highly value healing. Jesus commands His disciples to do the same through faith and authority in His name. He also commands them to be baptized with the Spirit for greater power to perform acts like healing the sick. In places like James 5:15, it's an outright command to do so. Thus, those who don't prioritize healing the sick, at best, have an immature understanding of glory and value. They're not even adept at obeying God. Those who actively teach against it have declared war on God's public definition, His personal enjoyment of valuable things, and His direct command. In ethics, God commands us to seek what is valuable.

God's glory screams infinite value—think dazzling sun in a dark world or a scale-busting treasure. He's the ultimate definer of worth, torching man's flimsy guesses. From gold's “meh” to the Spirit's top-tier gifts, God sets the value bar and commands us to chase the best. Jesus obsessed over healing, so why don't we? Skimp on it, and you are barely crawling in faith; bash it, and you're picking a fight with God Himself. Value what He values, or miss the divine VIP list.

Defective Metaphysics

In Christian epistemology we learned that empiricism is Satan's doctrine for man's knowledge. In Christian metaphysics we learned that Arminianism is Satan's ontology.

The problem of Evil?

“...If God is perfectly good/loving, God is willing to prevent all suffering...”

The Bible doesn't teach premise one, nor is the term “good/love” defined the way the Bible defines it. Thus, the argument is irrelevant and pointless if meant to challenge the Christian God.

The “problem of evil”? Yawn—it's a non-starter, built on shaky premises that dodge the Bible's take on “good” and “love.”

The essence of their mistake is that they're merely saying, “My worldview contradicts yours.” No duh. Tell me something I don't already know. The problem of evil is their problem, not ours.

Because premise one and the term “good” aren’t biblical, the burden of proof lies with the objector to demonstrate knowledge for their definition of “good” or “love.” Biblical epistemology differs from non-biblical epistemologies. This is why I reject terms from these sources. If I used terms from foreign epistemologies, I’d be presupposing their starting point, thereby rejecting my starting point, which asserts that only it is true and all others are false. If I presuppose an anti-Christian starting point, I’d be treating it as a greater authority than the Bible. But I only use my starting point for knowledge. Thus, if they propose a non-biblical term, I won’t proceed in the debate until they prove it constitutes knowledge.

If they rely on empiricism, they’ll need to defend that empiricism can produce knowledge. How can they when empiricism is a fallacy, and induction is a fallacy? If they can’t provide knowledge for the terms in their first premise, why should they be taken seriously?

Only the Christian worldview can provide rational definitions and knowledge about concepts like good, love, evil, and power.

Non-Christians whining about suffering? Their worldview’s the mess, not ours. Demand they prove their terms with real knowledge—spoiler: they can’t, since empiricism’s a logical flop.

Greater than a Puppeteer

Sometimes, you’ll hear a fool say, “*If what you’re saying about God’s sovereignty is true, then God controls me like a puppet on a string.*” This shows our opponents don’t even understand our position. If God is as sovereign as I claim, His control surpasses that of a puppeteer over a puppet or even a fantasy writer over characters in their story. God as a puppeteer? His sovereignty’s way beyond that, making puppet strings look like child’s play. Only the Bible nails the truth; the rest are just chasing lies.

3. Logic.

A quick point to remember when starting to read this section.

Logic IS THE STRUCTURE of “God’s,” thinking, and by extension, the structure of “our,” thinking. Logic is the geometry of thoughts.

Logic is NOT THE CONTENT of thinking. Truth (subject and predicate) is the content of thoughts, while logic is how to structure truth. For example, how you structure something as simple as a single premise is crucial. It matters how you structure the subject and predicate of, “All bulldogs are dogs,” versus, “All dogs are bulldogs.” This shows how you need more than just correct subjects and predicates, you also need to structure them correctly. This is what logic does. By understanding logic, you will know when thoughts are structured correctly or incorrectly. Most thoughts are basic, and so, only knowing basic logic will be enough for most thinking. Sometimes thinking can get complex and so knowing more advance logic can be helpful; however, since most mistakes happen on the basic level, by only mastering basic logic, you will be more intelligent than 99% of all pastors and theologians who constantly make basic mistakes.

To start this section, I will shamelessly quote Gordon Clark, “God and Logic,” because he says it so well.

Psalm 31:5 addresses God as “O Lord God of truth.” John 17:3 says, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God....” 1 John 5:6 says, “the Spirit is truth.” Such verses as these indicate that God is a rational, thinking being whose thought exhibits the structure of Aristotelian logic.

If anyone objects to Aristotelian logic in this connection-and presumably he does not want to replace it with the Boolean-Russellian symbolic logic-let him ask and answer whether it is true for God that if all dogs have teeth, some dogs-spaniels-have teeth? Do those who contrast this “merely human logic” with a divine logic mean that for God all dogs may have teeth while spaniels do not? Similarly, with “merely human” arithmetic: two plus two is four for man, but is it eleven for God? ...

... It was God’s eternal purpose to have such liquids, and therefore we can say that the particularities of nature were determined before there was any nature.

Similarly in all other varieties of truth, God must be accounted sovereign. It is his decree that makes one proposition true and another false. Whether the proposition be physical, psychological, moral, or theological, it is God who made it that way. A proposition is true because God thinks it so.

Perhaps for a certain formal completeness, a sample of Scriptural documentation might be appropriate. Psalm 147: 5 says, “God is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite.” If we cannot strictly conclude from this verse that God’s power is the origin of his understanding, at least there is no doubt that omniscience is asserted. 1 Samuel 2:3 says, “the Lord is a God of knowledge.” Ephesians 1:8

speaks of God's wisdom and prudence. In Romans 16: 27 we have the phrase, "God only wise," and in 1 Timothy 1:17 the similar phrase, "the only wise God."

Logic Is God

It is to be hoped that these remarks on the relation between God and truth will be seen as pertinent to the discussion of logic. In any case, the subject of logic can be more clearly introduced by one more Scriptural reference. The well-known prologue to John's Gospel may be paraphrased, "In the beginning was Logic, and Logic was with God, and Logic was God.... In logic was life and the life was the light of men."

This paraphrase-in fact, this translation-may not only sound strange to devout ears, it may even sound obnoxious and offensive. But the shock only measures the devout person's distance from the language and thought of the Greek New Testament. Why it is offensive to call Christ Logic, when it does not offend to call him a word, is hard to explain. But such is often the case. Even Augustine, because he insisted that God is truth, has been subjected to the anti-intellectualistic accusation of "reducing" God to a proposition. At any rate, the strong intellectualism of the word Logos is seen in its several possible translations: to wit, computation, (financial) accounts, esteem, proportion and (mathematical) ratio, explanation, theory or argument, principle or law, reason, formula, debate, narrative, speech, deliberation, discussion, oracle, sentence, and wisdom.

Any translation of John 1:1 that obscures this emphasis on mind or reason is a bad translation. And if anyone complains that the idea of ratio or debate obscures the personality of the second person of the Trinity, he should alter his concept of personality. In the beginning, then, was Logic.

That Logic is the light of men is a proposition that could well introduce the section after next on the relation of logic to man. But the thought that Logic is God will bring us to the conclusion of the present section. Not only do the followers of Bernard entertain suspicions about logic, but also even more systematic theologians are wary of any proposal that would make an abstract principle superior to God. The present argument, in consonance with both Philo and Charnock, does not do so. The law of contradiction is not to be taken as an axiom prior to or independent of God. The law is God thinking.

For this reason also the law of contradiction is not subsequent to God. If one should say that logic is dependent on God's thinking, it is dependent only in the sense that it is the characteristic of God's thinking. It is not subsequent temporally, for God is eternal and there was never a time when God existed without thinking logically. One must not suppose that God's will existed as an inert substance before he willed to think.

As there is no temporal priority, so also there is no logical or analytical priority. Not only was Logic the beginning, but Logic was God. If this unusual translation of John's Prologue still disturbs someone, he might yet allow that God is his thinking. God is not a passive or potential substratum; he is actuality or activity. This is the philosophical terminology to express the Biblical idea that God is a living God. Hence logic is to be considered as the activity of God's willing.

Although Aristotle's theology is no better (and perhaps worse) than his epistemology, he used a phrase to describe God, which, with a slight change, may prove helpful. He defined God as "thought-thinking-thought." Aristotle developed the meaning of this phrase so as to deny divine omniscience. But if we are clear

that the thought which thought thinks includes thought about a world to be created --in Aristotle God has no knowledge of things inferior to him-- the Aristotelian definition of God as “thought-thinking-thought” may help us to understand that logic, the law of contradiction, is neither prior to nor subsequent to God’s activity.

This conclusion may disturb some analytical thinkers. They may wish to separate logic and God. Doing so, they would complain that the present construction merges two axioms into one. And if two, one of them must be prior; in which case we would have to accept God without logic, or logic without God; and the other one afterward. But this is not the presupposition here proposed. God and logic are one and the same first principle, for John wrote that Logic was God. At the moment this much must suffice to indicate the relation of God to logic. We now pass to what at the beginning seemed to be the more pertinent question of logic and Scripture...

... On this basis--that is, on the basis that Scripture is the mind of God --the relation to logic can easily be made clear. As might be expected, if God has spoken, he has spoken logically. The Scripture therefore should and does exhibit logical organization. For example, Romans 4:2 is an enthymematic hypothetical destructive syllogism. Romans 5:13 is a hypothetical constructive syllogism. 1 Corinthians 15:15-18 is a sorites. Obviously, examples of standard logical forms such as these could be listed at great length.

There is, of course, much in Scripture that is not syllogistic. The historical sections are largely narrative; yet every declarative sentence is a logical unit. These sentences are truths; as such they are objects of knowledge. Each of them has, or perhaps we should say, each of them is a predicate attached to a subject. Only so can they convey meaning.

Even in the single words themselves, as is most clearly seen in the cases of nouns and verbs, logic is embedded. If Scripture says, David was King of Israel, it does not mean that David was President of Babylon; and surely it does not mean that Churchill was Prime Minister of China. That is to say, the words David, King, and Israel have definite meanings.²⁴⁰

The key takeaway here is elementary-level simple. The Bible has a doctrine and teaching on logic. Some doctrines have only a few verses, but the topic of logic is supported by many. Thus, any Christian who refuses to understand what the Bible teaches on this subject and fails to obey it should be excommunicated. Since all thinking about Scripture involves logic, it’s critical to know what our God says about it and to follow His teaching.

The basic laws of logic are faithful motions or structures of the Mind of God. These are the patterns within which His Mind always operates. We identify one of these constant motions and give it a name, such as the Law of Contradiction or the Law of Identity. Some of these motions are so fundamental to God’s Mind that if we, who are made in His image, don’t think using these patterns, we cease thinking altogether. Since our image reflects the rational Mind of God, if we stop thinking rationally, we stop being

²⁴⁰ Gordon Clark, *God and Logic*.

God's image. This is why Jude and Peter, in their letters, insult false teachers by calling them "irrational animals." Since the image of God consists of a rational mind, and an irrational animal lacks a rational mind, these false teachers bear not the image of God but that of dumb animals.

A mind is a system of propositions. The laws of logic are the structures or motions that these propositions (subjects and predicates) must follow. Some mistakes are worse than others. Certain errors are so fundamental that if you violate them, the system of propositions stops functioning entirely, halting all movement. It becomes akin to an unthinking page from a book, which is to say, it ceases to be a mind. To say God is logic is like saying God is the I AM. It's so intrinsic to His Mind that you can't remove it without removing God Himself. Thus, logic isn't an external standard; rather, Logic is God.

I often hear Christians say something like, "We need to stop using logic and trust God." This is blasphemy and utterly foolish. If you stop using logic, you stop thinking. If you abandon logic, the premise "don't use logic" becomes unintelligible. If you forsake logic, you must also forsake God, because God is Logic.

Some of these errors stem from ignorance about logic itself, while others arise from those who relish making war with God. For those who are ignorant and have been taught incorrectly, we'll review the reasons for this and the correct doctrine to rectify it. Obviously, knowing "God is logic" is the foundation for a correct biblical understanding of this topic.

In John 1:1-3, when it says God is Logos, it may encompass more than the laws of logic and valid inference, but it certainly includes them. The best word choice might be "wisdom" or "reason" rather than bare logic or word, as these terms capture both the dialogical aspect of "word" and the intellectual aspects of logical structure and order. We'll begin with Scripture appealing to logic, using logic, and presupposing it. From here, we'll build a doctrine of logic to apply, correct, and rebuke with.

Logic's no sidekick—it's God's very Mind in motion, baked into His I AM essence. The Bible's stacked with logic lessons, so dodging them is a one-way ticket to excommunication. Christians whining "ditch logic, trust God"? That's blasphemous nonsense—if you ditch logic, you ditch thinking and God, and are left with nothing. John's Logos vibes scream reason, so let's build a rock-solid doctrine to wield logic like a divine sledgehammer.

The Basic Laws of Logic:

These laws are the most fundamental for two reasons.

First, they're the most essential to the motion of God's mind itself. Per our theological maxim, God is the foundation for theology, and thus God is the foundation for logic. God's knowledge is the content of His mind, His love for His Son is the state of His mind, and logic is the motion of God's mind. If we don't follow these basic motions, we cease to think.

Second, they form the foundation for all other logics and mathematics.

Jesus the Law of Noncontradiction:²⁴¹

Jesus appeals to it in:

“Therefore David himself calls Him “Lord”; how is He then his Son?’ And the common people heard Him gladly.” (Mark 12:37)

The law of contradiction, or non-contradiction, simply means a term cannot mean its opposite: “X” is not “non-X.” In predication, “A is B” and “A is not-B” is a contradiction. In two premises, denying an “All” premise with a “some is not” premise is a contradiction. Denying an “All” premise with an “all No” premise is called a contrariety, closely related but distinct. Thus, “forgiven” doesn’t mean “unforgiven.” For example, “All in Christ are those who are forgiven” contradicts “Some of those in Christ are not forgiven.”

In normal speech, we might use two different terms and call it a contradiction when term “Y’s” definition contradicts an essential aspect of term “X.” If I define a square as a figure with four equal sides and four 90-degree corners and say, “A square is a circle,” I’ve denied the definition of a square. I’ve said a square is also not a square—a contradiction. I can’t draw a square circle in my mind or reality. If I say, “This particular square is yellow,” that’s fine, as I’ve predicated it with a non-essential attribute that doesn’t deny the definition of a square.

If the Law of Contradiction (LoC) isn’t an immutable motion of thinking, Jesus’ appeal to it would mean David’s son (Jesus) is both not David’s Lord and David’s Lord, canceling each other out. There’d be no doctrine to affirm or deny—no knowledge, no thinking. Jesus’ point was that David’s promised Son isn’t merely human, for then He couldn’t be David’s Lord. But as the God-man, He can be both David’s son physically (through incarnation) and David’s Lord as the eternal Son of God. This avoids violating the laws of identity (no category fallacies) and contradiction, ensuring subjects and predicates are properly categorized and affirmed.

If the LoC weren’t an immutable motion, Jesus’ appeal would imply the possibility that Jesus isn’t David’s Son.

Notably, Jesus presupposes logic as strongly as He would a passage of Scripture. The Pharisees misunderstood a Scripture, and Jesus uses logic to prove their understanding false. Those new to the Bible’s systematic teaching on logic should meditate on this for many nights. Jesus appeals to the LoC with the same authority as Scripture. This passage led me to realize the Bible has a doctrine of logic, and I needed to understand it.

Also, in 1 Corinthians 14:7: “Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played?”

²⁴¹ For more practice with understanding this law, which I highly recommend, see my essay on my website, “Logic & Jesus Christ: The Law of Non-Contradiction.”

Doing some extra practice in thinking about this is important, because every premise of Scripture is based on these basic laws. By consistently apply these basic logical laws when reading scripture, it maker you better at knowing the scripture without errors.

For a word or sound to have intellectual meaning, it must not only mean something but also not mean something else—it must have definite meaning, making a distinction from other meanings. Aristotle’s explanation clarifies this further. In summary, if there’s distinction in understanding, the LoC must be true. Denying this law would mean attributing every subject term (an infinite number) with every predicate term (an infinite number). To say a fish is a mom, 3, tree, yellow, brick, house, God, Oshea, imaginary, headphones, blue, 9, cloud, finger, you, paper, stomach, boat, moon, smell, injustice, law-keeping, star, pineapple, etc., with an infinite number of predicates for every subject term would make thinking impossible because no term could be understood. To think is to make a distinction. Stop making distinctions, and you stop thinking. By saying “X is not non-X,” you’re making a distinction—not fully defining “X,” but clarifying what it’s not.

“Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better” (Hebrews 7:7). This is akin to Paul saying in Ephesians 5:3, don’t let there be even a “hint” of sexual immorality among you. The Greek word for “contradiction” in Hebrews means “anti-logic.” Under the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, the writer of Hebrews stresses it’s critical that his argument has no trace of anti-logic or contradiction. The context is a biblically based argument from the Old Testament. In this context, we’re told it’s vital to be beyond any hint of anti-logic. This challenges our current age of anti-logic and anti-intellectualism, where it’s common to hear pastors say, “Don’t use logic, use faith.” This is sinful and foolish because they must use logic to even make that statement; otherwise, “use faith” would mean “don’t use faith.” The simple solution is to obey Scripture. Hebrews shows we must make biblical connections free of any anti-logic. Attempting to deny the LoC, if consistent, means the denial also affirms its opposite, thus affirming the LoC. There are two ways to view this. First, since both are affirmed and denied, they say nothing—no distinct thought, nothing for us to comprehend intelligently. Second, only by using the LoC can they present a distinct thought that their denial is a denial of the LoC, not an affirmation. But if they use the LoC to deny it, their argument collapses—they’re using what they deny. For example, ask a skeptic to deny their existence without using their existence.

From Jesus being the LoC itself, and thus the Bible as the revealed portion of God’s mind, we can formulate the basic idea of biblical presuppositionalism: to deny the Bible, you must use it. To deny the public portion of God’s mind revealed to the world, you must use it to deny it.

Logic’s the heartbeat of God’s mind—His thoughts dance and create the law of contradiction, and Jesus wields it like a lightsaber in Mark 12, slicing through Pharisaical fog. Deny it? You’re not thinking—you’re a blank page or Jude’s “irrational beast.” Hebrews demands zero anti-logic vibes, yet pastors peddle faith is anti-logic nonsense. John’s Logos screams reason, so embrace the Bible’s logic doctrine or flop like a sceptic denying their own existence.

We have already practiced the presuppositional aspect in how to use this as a “method” to strike back at arguments made against the scripture. This presuppositional aspect is what happens when an attack against the LoC (or

Scripture)²⁴² must be inconsistent to their own claim, and use the LoC so they can intelligently communicate their pathetic argument.

Below Vincent Cheung explains the concept of how a contradiction cancels the two propositions out. Thus, in theology there would be no doctrine to affirm or deny. There would be no salvation, no God or no man to affirm or deny. This is what happens if a person attacks the LoC and is consistent in their position that there is no LoC, so that their denial is also an affirmation. Such an attempt has no thinking, no distinction, no subject or predicate. It is nothing.

For any proposition that affirms X, the proposition that contradicts it is one that affirms not-X. This is what a contradiction means. Any proposition that affirms one thing is by necessity also a denial of its opposite. To affirm X is to deny not-X, and to affirm not-X is to deny X. To keep this simple, let us assume that Y = not-X, so that the opposite of X is Y. Thus to affirm X is to deny Y, and to affirm Y is to deny X. Or, X = not-Y, and Y = not-X. Then, since to affirm a proposition is to deny its opposite, to affirm X and Y at the same time is the equivalent of affirming not-Y and not-X. Thus to affirm two contradictory propositions is in reality to deny both. But to affirm both not-Y and not-X is also to affirm X and Y, which again means to deny Y and X. And so the whole operation becomes meaningless. The upshot is that it is impossible to affirm two contradictory propositions at the same time.

To affirm the proposition, “Adam is a man” (X), is to deny the contradictory proposition, “Adam is not a man” (Y, or not-X). Likewise, to affirm the proposition, “Adam is not a man” (Y), is to deny the contradictory proposition, “Adam is a man” (X). Now, to affirm both “Adam is a man” (X) and “Adam is not a man” (Y) is only to deny both propositions in reverse order. That is, it is equivalent to denying “Adam is not a man” (Y) and “Adam is a man” (X). But then we are back to affirming the two propositions in reverse order again. When we affirm both, we deny both; when we deny both, we affirm both. Therefore, there is no intelligible meaning in affirming two contradictory propositions. It is to say nothing and to believe nothing.

To illustrate, it is clear that divine sovereignty and human freedom contradict each other. If God controls everything, including man’s thoughts, then man is not free from God. If man is free from God in any sense or to any degree, then God does not control everything. Yet some theologians claim that the Bible teaches both divine sovereignty and human freedom, and so they insist that we must affirm both. However, since to affirm divine sovereignty is to deny human freedom, and to affirm human freedom is to deny divine sovereignty, then to affirm both only means to reject both divine sovereignty (in the form of an affirmation of human freedom) and human freedom (in the form of an

²⁴² As said earlier when quoting Vincent Cheung, the Scripture is more complex than the LoC and so it takes a little more time to explain this. Three important points are 1st, the scripture also says all others are false, thus, the consequence is that all anti-scripture systems are false by logical exclusion. The 2nd, is the scripture is not only our epistemology, (the portion of God’s revealed Mind), but this scripture, being God’s mind is the creation and cause of reality. Then 3rd, we do not need to show every premise is presupposed, because God is one reality, if you presuppose any part, you presuppose the whole God, otherwise you violate the law of Identity.

affirmation of divine sovereignty). But to deny both means to affirm both in reverse order, and to affirm both means to deny both in reverse order again.

The necessary result is that the person who claims to believe both divine sovereignty and human freedom believes neither. In claiming to believe all of the Bible, he in fact believes none of it. In this example, since the Bible affirms divine sovereignty and denies human freedom, there is no contradiction – not even an apparent one. On the other hand, when non-Christians allege that the incarnation of Christ entails a contradiction, the Christian does not have the option to deny either the divinity or the humanity of Christ. Rather, he must formulate the doctrine as the Bible teaches it, and show that there is no contradiction. The same applies for the doctrine of the Trinity. In any case, if a person claims that he sees contradictions in the Bible, this means that he does not – he cannot – believe the Bible.

A popular response is that these are only apparent contradictions; that is, the doctrines only seem like contradictions to the mind of men, but they are in perfect harmony in the mind of God. This answer is futile. There is no difference between an apparent contradiction and an actual contradiction when it comes to affirming it. It remains that to affirm one thing is to deny the other at the same time, so that to affirm both is to deny both, and that to deny both is to affirm both again. Thus the person who affirms an apparent contradiction really affirms nothing and denies nothing. Whether the contradiction is only an apparent one is irrelevant. As long as it appears real to the person, it is real enough.

Moreover, how can a person distinguish between an apparent contradiction from an actual contradiction? He can never know that a contradiction is only an apparent one.

Unless he knows how to resolve the apparent contradiction, it will appear the same to him as an actual contradiction. And if he knows that a contradiction is only an apparent one, then he has already resolved it, and the term contradiction no longer applies. If we must tolerate apparent contradictions, then we must tolerate all contradictions. We often challenge non-Christian views on the basis that they contradict themselves. But if we tolerate apparent contradictions, then there is nothing to prevent non-Christians from claiming that the contradictions in their worldviews are only apparent ones.”²⁴³

So at this point Jesus is the law of non-contradiction. Jesus appeals to the LoC. Paul uses it as a description to make a “distinction” of understanding. And lastly, a biblical argument should be “beyond” all contradiction, or another way to say this is to be beyond all anti-logic. Because the laws of contradiction and identity are the foundation of all logic, to violate these is to be “anti-logic,” and not merely pseudo-logic. Because God’s logic is the laws of contradiction, identity and excluded middle, any type of so-called logic that does not presuppose these and or violates these is not

²⁴³ Vincent Cheung. Systematic Theology.

2010. www.vincentcheung.com. Chapter, *Scripture*, sub-section, *The Unity of Scripture*.

only anti-logic, but anti-God. Any other so-called logic, is a human speculation about logic.

Thus even without giving technical definitions to what kind of logic this is, we know this is God's logic and we need to follow it.

For the Christian it is therefore important, to master these basic laws of logic, knowing these are defined as part of the God nature itself and we are made in His image. Because God is the law of non-contradiction and Identity, the bible is written in a perfect coherence to these laws of logic. Thus, the better we have mastered these basics of logic, the better we are equipped to read and understand His revelation. Most pastors would be better at doctrine and theology if they master the basics of logic rather than doing advanced hermeneutics.

This foundation of God being the Logic, is also an insight to the nature of God's faithfulness and impossibility to tell a lie. The combination of contradiction, identity and excluded middle, means your yes is yes and your no is no, and there is no mixture of them. When God reveals something it is what it is, it is not contradictory and there is not a third option to pick from. Because God is the Logic, it is impossible for Him not to be the Logic. Thus what God reveals always correct and faithful.

The Law of Identity:

The Law of identity means A is A. In layman's terms, it means to clearly define something and then, if this definition is true, then this definition necessarily corresponds to reality. For an argument context, it means once x is defined it keeps this definition through the argument. This law is the foundation for where the informal fallacies of ambiguity come from. Ambiguity fallacies deny the law of Identity.

“And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work,” (Romans 11:6)

“For what does the scripture say? “And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his pay is not credited according to grace, but according to his due. 5 But to the one who does not work, but who believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited for righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks about the blessing of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works,” (Romans 4:3-5 LEB).

Romans 11 Paul is saying grace is grace and work is work. Then Paul uses the law of contradiction. Because it is a truth that the biblical definition of grace is grace and works is works, then to say grace is works is a contradiction.

In Romans 4 Paul is showing the aspect of Identity in the use of an argument. God gave righteousness to Abraham as a gift and not a debt. Thus, as the argument continues Paul will continue to define a gift as a gift and debt as debt. Paul is not making a contradiction of the two. Or referring to this in an informal fallacy, Paul will

not use gift (or grace) in an ambiguous way so that it means a free gift in one premise, and then transformers into a meaning of earned payment later on in the argument. It will lead to the conclusion having more information in it, than what the premises have, or unclear and undefined terms.

If one tempts to deny this Law of identity, in that “X is not necessarily X,” then they must use the law of Identity, so that a “denial must mean denial,” otherwise they cannot deny it. However, in this they just used the law. Thus, even in their denying they proved it. Historically some fools try to say everything keeps changing. Modern fools even turn this into a hybrid worldview of empiricism and changing, to formulate evolution. The problem with saying something is in constant change, so that it has no one true identity, is twofold. One, it is using the law of identity (as shown above) and second, it exposes the problem in “identifying” what has been changed. That is, if you cannot “identify” what has been changed, then how can you say this has been changed? If you cannot say what has been changed then you have no knowledge of changing, the very thing you are trying to assert.

This is where we get the informal fallacies of ambiguity. If you do not have a clear identity of a term, you cannot intelligently conclude anything about it. A conclusion cannot necessarily follow from a term that is not clearly identified/defined. To say an unclear term in the premise is now a clear term in the conclusion denies the law of contradiction and of necessary inference.

A category error has aspects of both contradiction and identity, but for now our purpose is to focus on identity. Also, when looking at errors, we can focus on the formal aspects or informal aspects. The informal fallacy of a category error, if we focus on the formal aspect of a deduction can often be a four term fallacy. A category error simply happens when you change categories. Example, the bible in Romans 3 says that all have sinned and fallen short of God’s glory. However, what if I conclude that, “therefore, dogs have sinned.” If so, then I made a category fallacy. This denies contradiction and identity. The essential attribute of human beings being rational, like God is, would be contradicted by an essential attribute of dogs, which are not rational like God. Because Jesus appeals to the law of contradiction and the bible affirms the law of identity, and category errors violate these laws, we therefore know category errors are false and do not give us knowledge. As for identity, the definition of dogs and humans are not the same. If I deny the law of identity, it would mean I cannot know what a dog or human (or any term) is, and so I cannot know if they contradict one another. Even if I wanted to affirm that it does not matter if humans and dogs are different, I would have to use the law of identity to affirm a denial is a denial, in order to say identity doesn’t matter. F@#king nonsense.

Some might feel it is belittling for Paul to say, “a circle is a circle, and a square is a square, and they are not the same thing,” but due to the unrenewed parts of our minds and all the things fighting us to receive the word of God, the bible speaks in a basic and clear way, to make sure we understand its message. Rather than be offended us to image our God. The bible is God’s revealed mind. Therefore, let us be masters at the law of identity. Let our grace be grace and our works be works. Let our yes be yes and our no be no.

We will go over category errors later, but for now, it will suffice to say, they violate the most foundational, most important laws of logic.

This will be important when we examine science. Because of people's love of science, they become alarmed when we say science is anti-logic. At the end of the day, to say science has knowledge is to say the law of contradiction and identity are not true. To affirm one is to deny the other. Science has multiple category errors that come from empiricism, observation, unsound use of falsification and other non-sequitur fallacies. Because of this, science is a systematic denial of the laws of contradiction and identity. In science you will use empiricism and observation. You only see particular, transient moments that are copies of the real things, but you conclude in category errors by saying, "a sensation is the same as invisible true or false propositions," "some is all," or "some is probable," and "past is present," "a negative is a positive," and etc. In order to affirm these category errors you must deny the laws of contradiction and identity, over and over again. But since you cannot deny these laws without using them, then they are necessarily true. It means what led you to deny them, is false and irrational. It means the epistemology that led you to deny these laws, leads to skepticism and this also denies the law of contradiction. This means this epistemology, and all who rely on it have no knowledge.

The other issue with science and the violation of the law of identity is that induction cannot be conceived without pretending the law of identity does not exist. I am talking about the most basic idea of induction and how one even conceives of it, or creates inductive systems. With deduction we want to adhere to the laws of identity, and thus, it never enters into our minds to say, "grace and works" have the same identity. Men create inductive thinking for "likelihood." When we observe we only observe some. The "identity" of this "some" is changed to "likely." Induction does this so that it can focus on probability. If we were only thinking in God's logic, grace is grace and works is works, and Jesus is Jesus, and forgiveness is forgiveness. In God's thinking you do not change the identity of God's definitions and thoughts. However, to say, we will change the identity of "some" to "likely," can only be done if you pretend the law of identity is not self-authenticating. If your goal is to always be consistent to God or to Logic, and we are dealing with knowledge about reality, then it would never enter into your mind to say the identity of "some" is "likely," because this violates the law of identity, and also the law of contradiction, either directly or indirectly. Thus the whole system of induction is anti-logic by its very definition. The conception of induction starts by denying the laws of logic, or at the very least, pretending they don't exist for the sake of probability. But if we are pretending, then that's all it is, pretending and never rises to the level of knowledge. Because the framework of induction is a denial of the laws of identity, it is no surprise to realize that conclusions based on induction, creates violations of the laws of logic.

The issue to note here, is that category errors that result from observation, induction is not about denying complex advanced logics; rather, they deny the most basic necessary aspects of logic. They deny the foundational laws of logic, that without, you cannot even think. Without these logical laws, my opponents cannot even communicate their disagreement with me.

These basic laws of logic that makes mathematics work, so that $2 + 2 = 4$, is the very laws that science systematically violates and denies over and over. Thus any worldview that uses empiricism, induction and science does not have a body of knowledge; rather they have a body of speculation that denies the law of contradiction. Only non-Christians could be so stupid as to base their worldview on such a knowledgeless foundation.

Induction, observation and science, violates the laws of Logic, but the laws of logic is God Himself; thus, if you affirm that these can produce knowledge means you at the same time deny God's nature.

The Law of Excluded Middle:

1 John 2:21, *"I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth."*

This means a premise is either true or false. In God's mind the premise, *"Jesus is the only begotten Son of God,"* is true and not false. There is not a third option of Jesus might be, or Jesus is partly the only begotten of God and partly a fish. $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$. Thus the Trinity is either made up of 3 persons or it is not.

Some like to reject this particular law, but they do so as non-Christians who ignorantly separate the basic laws of logic, as independent things. The basic motions of God's mind never stop, and they never stop being "one system" of perfect order. Thus, the laws are never to be taught as completely separate things, for if they do, it would reject the Scripture. If they did, God would stop having definite thoughts about me and I would stop existing, because He alone upholds me into being. Thus in context of a "premise" which is the context of the Law of excluded middle, we must not divorce it from the law of Identity and contradiction. Identity is a truth claim about a term with a clear definition about reality. If we put two terms together to form a thought, it must be done correctly or there is no comprehension. Thus, if I were to deny or affirm a premise as true, I must be able to comprehend it. I cannot apply this logic to "A super cat blue tree injustice yellow walking five," because I cannot comprehend it. I cannot comprehend the statement of a square circle, or "Jews worship Yahweh in Solomon's Temple in present Israel," because there is no present Solomon's temple in Israel.

Romans 8:24-25 is an example of both Excluded middle and Identity and contradiction. Paul uses these laws to help define his terms and then he follows in verse 25 with affirming the antecedent syllogism.

We end this section by reminding the reader that these 3 basic laws of logic cannot be removed from reality. This is important because God is the foundation of logic, not man. God's mind and thinking being the same as His power, means His logical thinking is never separate from reality, because His thinking about reality creates it. And so, the law of contradiction, identity, and excluded middle are laws of reality, and not mere abstract thoughts. We might, for teaching purposes, identify these laws as abstract thoughts to narrowly describe them, but with God, these laws are never separate from reality.

H.W.B. Joseph gives a short summary of the Three Laws of Logic.

The Three Laws of Thought.

The connection between questions about our thinking, and what we must think things to be, is excellently shown in the so-called Laws of Thought. These are certain very general principles exemplified in all thinking, and some have

supposed the task of Logic to consist merely in developing their implications. They are known as the Law of Identity, the Law of Contradiction, and the Law of Excluded Middle. The Law of Identity may be formulated by saying that whatever is, is ' : or symbolically, that A is A' ; the Law of Contradiction, that ' a thing cannot both be and not be so and so ' that ' contradictory propositions cannot both be true ' , or that A cannot be B and not be B ; the Law of Excluded Middle, that is a thing either is or is not so and so ' , that contradictory propositions cannot both be false ' , or that ' A either is or is not B ' . In other words, if we think about anything, then (1) we must think that it is what it is; (2) we cannot think that it at once has a character and has it not; (3) We must think that it either has it or has it not.

Now though these are called laws of thought, and in fact, we cannot think except in accordance with them, yet they are really statements which we cannot but hold true about things. We cannot think contradictory propositions, because we see that a thing cannot have at once and not have the same character; and the so-called necessity of thought is really the apprehension of a necessity in the being of things. This we may see if we ask what would follow, were it a necessity of thought only; for then, while e.g. I could not think at once that this page is and is not white, the page itself might at once be white and not be white. But to admit this is to admit that I can think the page to have and not have the same character, in the very act of saying that I cannot think it; and this is self-contradictory. The Law of Contradiction then is metaphysical or Ontological.

So also, is the Law of Identity. It is because what is must be determinately what it is, that I must so think. That is why we find a difficulty in admitting the reality of absolute change, change when nothing remains the same; for then we cannot say what it is which changes.

The Law of Excluded Middle is so far different as a disjunctive proposition expresses doubt, and doubt belongs to the mind, not to things. But to deny that this page need either be or not be white is to deny that it need be anything definite; determinateness involves the mutual exclusiveness of determinate characters, which is the ground of negation; and that is a statement about things. In other words, unless the primary Laws of Thought were Laws of Things, our thought would be doomed by its very nature to misapprehend the nature of things.²⁴⁴

Necessary/Deductive Inference.

Some of this information will be fast, and so if this is new, then you will likely need to re-read.

This rule is simple. When you have truth and you structure these truth claims in a correct order, then the conclusion is necessarily true. If you follow the "form" or "formal structure," of deduction, then the conclusion has a necessary relationship with the premises. Formal validity adheres to the laws of contradiction and identity. Because the conclusions of deduction do not add new information not already

²⁴⁴ H.W.B. Joseph. 1906. An introduction to LOGIC. Pg.13.

contained in the premises, and because the relationship is necessarily connected to the premises, the laws of logic are not violated but maintained.

Deduction is established with a *necessary connection with the 3 laws of logic*: to always adhere to them. This is good. The bible reveals God is the Logic, and reveals the 3 laws of logic.

Induction does not have a necessary connection with the 3 laws of logic. Induction is not established to adhere to the laws of logic; rather, induction, for the sake of “probability,” denies the laws of logic. *It is men, and not an adherence to the laws of logic* that said, “we will go from “some” in the premises, to “likely,” in the conclusion for the sake of probability, and we will call this reasoning inductive.” The law of identity would never lead you to say, “some” is “likely.” Thus, despite men agreeing for the sake of probability, to say, let us go from “some” to “likely,” it remains this is an unjustified category leap and denies the law of identity. The very foundation of induction is a violation of the laws of logic; it is anti-logic. Grace is grace, and works is works, and grace is not works. It is never rational to say grace and conclude with works; and no amount of a consensus of men justifies this. It is the same for having “some” and concluding with “likely.”

“Deduction is the process of reasoning by which the conclusion is inferred from the premises by logical necessity. On the other hand, induction is the process of reasoning by which the conclusion is not inferred from the premises by logical necessity. In deduction, the conclusion includes only information that is already contained in and necessarily implied by the premises. But in induction, the conclusion includes new information that is not already contained in and necessarily implied by the premises.

An inductive argument yields a conclusion that is supposedly but not necessarily implied by the premises. For this reason, ***induction is always a formal fallacy***; that is, the conclusion is never certain, and never rationally established. In fact, since the conclusion is not necessarily implied by the premises, there is no way to logically show that there is any necessary relationship between the conclusion and the premises...”²⁴⁵

Notice that the form of induction produces the opposite definition of “formal” validity and “deduction.” The “form” of induction produces new information in the conclusion, and conclusions that do not have necessary relationships to the premises. Thus induction is by strict definition a “formal fallacy.” Because formal logic adheres to the laws of contradiction and identity, and formal fallacies violate these laws (by directly and indirectly), then induction is by strict definition anti-logic. Because science uses inductive logic in empiricism and observation science is by definition anti-logic.

As in all things per our maximum, ***God is the foundation of logic, and not something else***. God’s thinking is inherently deductive, when thinking about a specific aspect of His creation. Remember that God’s power and thinking/decreeing is the same thing. When God thinks about something, it becomes reality. When God thinks and decrees about a tree in the middle of the forest, it creates the tree. God’s

²⁴⁵ Vincent Cheung. Professional Morons.
Emphasis added by Author.

knowledge is infinite, and He is immutable. All the knowledge He has now, He has always had.

As for deduction, God does not learn knowledge by observation or sensation. God has knowledge of a tree, because God thinking about decreeing it, created it. When God thinks about Oshea Davis, it comes from the totality of His mind. God's mind is not linear like ours. He knows all things as one intuitive thought. In our current discussion, this one intuitive thought would be the major premise of a syllogism. When thinking about me as a conclusion, God does not add new information to His Mind (major premise), He only pinpoints a specific knowledge already contained in His major premise. When God thinks about a specific aspect of creation, which is a conclusion, it does not add new information from His Mind, it only pinpoints one small aspect from it.

I want to make a quick clarification about a term called, "perfect induction." This is a misfortunate name, because a perfect induction is technically a deduction and not induction. A perfect induction can only be done in abstract concepts or if you are dealing with reality you must be Omni-knowing. This means, unless God reveals that this set of information is perfect, you cannot do perfect induction. When we start with human sensation and observation it automatically makes perfect induction impossible.

Vincent will explain more. Remember deduction does not add new information to the conclusion, and induction does add new information.

"Induction is always a fallacy, even in biblical study and systematic theology. The difference is that in cases where all the possibilities are available and considered, then it can be called a "complete induction" (the term could mean other things in various contexts), and a complete induction is the equivalent of deduction, because in that context, you possess "omniscience." Your conclusion is made by deduction from a singular and complete knowledge.

Suppose I have ten marbles in a bag, and I take out three of them to show you. All three are red. If you then say that most or all the marbles must be red, this is induction, or the method of empiricism and science, and it is always fallacious. However, suppose I take out all of them. You count that there are ten, and then you count that there are seven red ones. If you then say that most of the marbles are red, this is not fallacious. It is based on "omniscience," or complete knowledge, and it is the same as deduction. On this basis, you can say, "There are ten marbles. There are seven red ones. Therefore, most of the marbles are red." This is deduction. Still, this is not to say that we can sometimes achieve complete induction outside of revelation. This is only an analogy that cannot truly represent what we have in Scripture. We will come back to this.

In biblical study and systematic theology, all the data is contained in one place. God himself has revealed and secured all the propositions as a single closed unit. So if you formulate a doctrine based on the entire Bible, then the doctrine is deduced from the Bible. It is deduction. But if you take two verses from one book and make a doctrine that claims to represent the whole revelation, this would be induction, and it is a fallacy. This is how false doctrines and heresies are formed. What is said may be true as far as it goes, since what the Bible says

is always true even if it says it just once, but it is fallacious to claim that it is the whole doctrine. And if you neglect the context, then the text might not even say what you claim that it says. Theology must consider the whole revelation, and when it does, it is based on deduction.

God always performs deduction, because he possesses true omniscience in every context. Some wish to appear clever but fail to grasp the simple concept of deduction, and therefore object to this characterization. Since all the information in deduction is contained in the starting point, in God, deduction is identical to his intuition or knowing, and does not entail a process of reasoning. When our theology is performed correctly, that is, based on a complete consideration of Scripture, the doctrine is based on God's omniscience (his omniscience revealed this part of his knowledge), and it is therefore always correct. In any case, because God is the one who produced this closed system from his own omniscience, it is also unique. It is the only system that allows us to make a valid complete induction. A complete induction from the Bible would be a deduction from a portion of God's mind, and therefore, truth."²⁴⁶

From an email correspondence asking about clarification on this essay Vincent responded by saying,

I added that statement because someone said that I was wrong, since God does not perform deduction, but only direct intuition. In other contexts, I myself have taught that God knows all things directly but the focus here is induction vs. deduction in the context of theology. The person nitpicked at me because he wanted to sound clever and throw himself into the discussion. You know how people are. But it showed that he really didn't know what deduction is. Would he say the same thing about a discussion on the order of the eternal decrees? When we talk about that, we sometimes qualify it by reminding people that the order is a logical order, not a chronological one, since there is no process of reasoning in God, as if he does not have in mind premise #3 when he is still on premise #1. No, he is directly aware of all premises at the same time, but it remains that he is aware of them, and of the logical relationships between premises. But whether we remind people of this or not, it is always assumed. This person did not understand deduction, [yet] he thought he had room to show off his knowledge. So I added this in case other people failed to assume the obvious. I was surprised, in fact, since it was so basic.

Deduction always produces correct conclusions, because the conclusions never produce information not already in the premises. *Deduction is more like an application of knowledge, unlike induction, which is a fallacious attempt at arriving at more knowledge.* So when applied to God in this context, deduction is the same as his intuition. Using the same example, when we talk about the eternal decrees, we are talking about God's deduction. But if we, like the person who complained, cannot even talk about God in terms of deduction, then we cannot even discuss the topic of the eternal decrees, because it would all be just one "thing." Take it to the extreme, we cannot even talk about God thinking, speaking, acting, or anything about God. Everything would just be one eternal "thing" in God's mind. But of course we can talk about God's

²⁴⁶ Vincent Cheung, "Induction and Bible Study." From the ebook, Fulcrum. Chapter 17. 2017.

deduction, thinking, speaking, acting, his before and after, and all that, just like the way he talks about himself. Several times I have pointed out that some Christians, after learning a little, makes what little they know the whole thing, and then try to police everyone else with it, including their expressions. Many Calvinists are like that. They become trapped in their own personal terminologies. It happens when they talk about justification, predestination, and many other things. This is a sign of ignorance, not knowledge or orthodoxy.

Let my reader say this again with me so that this next statement sinks in. *God is the foundation of logic, not something else.* Therefore, this deductive aspect of God's thinking, cannot be removed from truth and reality. Another way to say this in logical jargon is this, God who is the foundation of logic, does not think deductively outside of "sound arguments." Or that is, deduction and sound argument is the same thing with God. The bible's definition of a sound argument is the same thing as deduction; biblically they are interchangeable. God and the bible does not know of deduction that is not a sound argument. We are discussing God's thinking, as the source for getting our definition for truth and logic. When He thinks, it is truth and it is logical. When God thinks about creation there is never a time when truth and deduction are not together. In God's thinking about the world, they are two sides of the same coin. We can for sake of argument, narrowly and technically talk about one side of the coin, but the coin never stops from being one single unit.

A person who has tried to teach you about deductive logic without presupposing truth, is a person who has lied to you. They do not know what they are talking about. When asked about divorce Jesus says, "it was not so from the beginning." Jesus' point was that from the start, God as the creator, made marriage permanent. God is the foundation of marriage, not man. God thinks marriage is permanent, and so it is. The same with deductive logic. From the beginning deduction presupposes truth.

When we consider this, we can glean a few important insights into deductive thinking.

A is contained inside of B.

We will get more into this later with categories and the actual process of syllogisms, but the foundation starts here. When God thinks about a particular aspect of creation (A) it is contained inside of the larger category of His one intuitive thought (B). This is like saying the category of Johnny my golden retriever (A), is inside the larger category of dogs (B).

We do this when we take the scripture, which is the public portion of God's mind revealed to us, and pinpoint specific information, without adding any additional.

From this we can infer some important rules.

1. Deductive reasoning does not add more information into the conclusion. It applies specific information already contained in the premises.
2. Deductive reasoning has a necessary relationship in two ways. First. The mind of God does not think, "all trees are cedars." Do a mental picture of a smaller circle of trees contained in the bigger circle of cedars to visualize why this is wrong. This is a wrong structure of the subject and predicate. It would leave room that not all cedars are trees, and that oak trees are not trees. Thus, apart from being wrong, it would not

make the connection necessary that all cedars are trees. Rather, “God thinks all cedars are trees.” God does not think “all those who are forgiven are Christians.” This is a wrong structure of subject and predicate. It would leave room that some Christians are not forgiven. This is very important, because it means the way the subject and predicate are structured, would mean there is not a necessary relationship that every Christian is forgiven. Rather, God thinks “All Christians are those who are forgiven.”

The rule we can infer from this is that deduction presupposes that the major premises of syllogisms are necessary. It means the subject to predicate combinations in category logics is a necessary combination, and for the connection of “if... then” logic is also a necessary combination.

The second part is that the relationship between premise and conclusion is a necessary connection/relationship.

(1) All cedars are trees.²⁴⁷ (2) This thing in my yard is a cedar. (3) Therefore, this thing in my yard is a tree.” The conclusion does not add any additional information to the conclusion that the premises do not already have. The subject and predicate combination is necessary, and therefore, connection from the premise to the conclusion is necessarily implied.

This revelation that God’s own understanding of premises, as being true and necessary, means when we say that the major premise of a syllogism is presupposed to be necessary, it also means it presupposes truth. God is the foundation of logic, not something else.

This means deduction, as taught from scripture, only makes sense when God gives you truth up front, and from this you apply knowledge with a specific and necessary relationship. Deduction that does not presuppose truth is only pretending. There is nothing wrong with pretending “if this is true,” then let us see if the “form” is valid or fallacious. However, it is only pretending to use deduction to narrowly check the formal validity of something, but it does not, as a whole, satisfy the biblical definition of deduction.

Paul in 1 Cor. 15 uses a *reductio ad absurdum*, which uses the deductive form called *Modus Tollens*. Paul says, “if we pretend, for the sake of argument, that what you say is true, that there is no resurrection, then it would result in the absurdity that our faith is vain and for nothing. If there is no resurrection then why bother being a Christian?” In this case of pretending to have truth, with the use of a destructive deduction, it does not give any new knowledge. It only says, even if we pretend what you say is true, it still concludes to absurdity. The bible only affirms Christian knowledge and reality, and so when Paul was pretending their claim was true, to falsify it, it means he falsified a pretend scenario. Thus it is more like saying, even if we pretend what you say is true, it still concludes in an absurdity, about a pretend reality.

Also, it is a negative argument, and so it cannot produce a positive statement. This means falsification gives no positive statement about reality. This is where science

²⁴⁷ The bible reveals this. The bible says cedars are trees, and that plants have seeds that bear their own kind.

makes a mistake by using falsification (unsound modus tollens) to disprove hypotheses and then turn around and publish “scientific laws,” as positive statements. To have a negative (this is not that), and restate it as (this does this, or this is that) adds more information than what was started with. It violates the very nature of deduction and logic.

If you are using deduction without truth, then One, you are admitting you do not have a truth claim to begin with. If this claim comes from your starting point of knowledge, then your epistemology leads to skepticism, and thus denies the law of contradiction. If you do not have truth, then the connection in the major premise is not necessary. It is pointless to do deductions at this point; you do not have necessary combinations of categories, for necessary relationships of premises to work with. Deduction makes sense if you have truth given to you up front. The reason you use inductive reasoning is because you do not have truth, and must use a human starting point at an attempt to find knowledge.

Second, it can lead to a denial of the foundation of what a necessary inference is. You will end up adding information in the conclusion that is not found in the premises. Some do not take time to consider that a deduction presupposes you have a truth statement, and thus, it presupposes the connection of subject to predicate is a necessary connection (or the “if...then” connection in basic propositional logic). This means the premises contain the knowledge that there is a necessary connection, and so, to conclude with the knowledge of a necessary connection is valid. If you do not have or do not know if your major or minor premise, for example in category logic, is necessary, but you state your conclusion as if the predicate and subject combination is necessary, then you violated the very idea of necessary inference and violated the law of contradiction. You took information not found in your premises, and added it to your conclusion.

This would indirectly result in contradiction. To say in the premise, “I have no knowledge of a necessary connection,” and to also say in the conclusion “I have a necessary connection,” results in a contradiction. This is also true in the reverse. This is also true for Modus Ponens and Tollens arguments. To say your connection in Modus Tollens is only sufficient, but conclude with a necessary connection, so that you can assert that what you falsified is indeed false, is a violation of what deduction is, by adding more information in the conclusion than what the premises say. It also indirectly results in a contradiction. To say a non-necessary connection is the same as a necessary connection is a contradiction.

To avoid this anti-logic, you would need to be honest and say that you do not know if the connections in your premises are necessary, and so you also do not know if the connection(s) in your conclusion is necessary. If these premises were produced by your epistemology, for example, by empiricism, then this leads to skepticism at the foundational level of your worldview, and skepticism denies the law of contradiction.

Scientists do this with falsification. They formulate the modus ponens, to apply falsification on, with inductive observation and affirming the consequent reasoning. Thus, the modus ponens is unsound. There is no knowledge of a necessary connection between the “if...then” connection. Some scientists might be honest and say the connection is therefore only “sufficient.” However, such an admission violates the very definition of deduction, which has necessary inferences. Thus, to call it a deduction would be false. Their so-called modus ponens and falsification (modus tollens) has no

knowledge of a necessary connection, because the major premise was produced by means not able to produce knowledge. However, some scientists insist that falsification means science is deductive. To assert that the falsification is necessary, they must assert that the connection from premise to conclusion is necessary. This leaves them two options. One is to admit there is a contradiction. To say “no knowledge of a necessary connection,” in the major premise and “knowledge of a necessary connection,” in the conclusion, is a contradiction. Or they can pretend their major premise, produced by induction is in fact a necessary connection, so that they can pretend the connection to the conclusion is necessary. But if you do that, all you can say is that falsification is only a “pretend” falsification of a unsound argument, and that it is not a statement about reality. It is only “valid” because the scientist pretends to have knowledge. At best the scientist can say, if we pretend this scientific law is true, it leads to pretend false applications.

I asked Grok AI (2024) about deduction and sound arguments and it gave this response,

“Deduction doesn't presuppose that the premises are true ***in the real world***; it only presupposes that if the premises were true, then the conclusion would necessarily follow. Deduction is about the logical structure of the argument, not the ***empirical*** truth of the premises.²⁴⁸”

I want to point out the *empirical* worldview that is baked into the AI's response, which is of course programed by men. The *empirical* worldview baked into its thinking, leads Grok, and those who programed it and the source material influencing it, to automatically see deduction and truth separately. They see truth and deduction separately because they presuppose knowledge comes by sensation and observation and scientific experimentation, where you must admit you don't have knowledge, but are attempting to find it. It is nothing less than a rehashed modification of the Socratic Method. Because they do not have knowledge, they play around with deduction in a pretend way, and then men, not logic, agree if something is knowledge. This contradicts the biblical doctrine on deduction and knowledge and sound arguments. Deduction and sound arguments are not different things in the biblical worldview; they are essentially the same thing for the Christian.

Thus, be warned that an empirical worldview has so influenced our modern times and education that even the AIs presuppose it and thus, give contradictory and misleading statements about logic, which should be more strict and technical than math is.

It is also a bold admission for the AI to say, “*doesn't presuppose that the premises are true in the real world.*” If you admit your premises do not have a necessary connection to the real world, then all you are doing is pretending, when you do deduction. You have no knowledge.

Grok on this topic says, “in the context of logical analysis, you “pretend” or “assume” the premises are true to evaluate the argument's deductive validity... You “pretend” the premises are true only within the context of evaluating the argument's logical form. This pretense is a tool for logical analysis, not a claim about the nature of reality.”

²⁴⁸ Emphasis added by Author.

This is logically damning for any empirical worldview and science. If you only pretend to have knowledge for the sake of checking validity, then you cannot use the conclusion of deduction as a statement with a necessary connection to reality. If you did then you violate the laws of identity and contradiction and the very definition of necessary inference. If you admit that even after deduction you do not have a statement which necessarily connects to reality, then you end up in skepticism and this also denies the law of contradiction.

As said before, it is fine to say, for the sake of argument, we will assume and pretend our premises are true, to check the validity of a logical structure. However, once you know which structures are deductive and which ones are not, then there is no need to keep checking. *If you know your premises, do not have necessary connections, then pretending they do, is a delusion.*

The bible presupposes the use of valid inference, even as a chain syllogism in Romans 5:3-4 and in Romans 8:30, and in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.

“(A) Those whom He predestined, (B) are those He called.
(B) Those whom He called, (C) are those He justified.
(C) Those whom He justified, (D) He also glorified.”

The implied conclusion is, (A) those whom He predestined (D) are those He glorified.

The bible presupposes us to place ourselves as a deduction into the premises of scripture. When it says, all have fallen short of the glory of God, I am meant to apply myself to this in a deduction. Oshea has fallen short of the glory of God.

We define logic as reasoning that adheres to these 4 foundations, which are the 3 laws of logic and deductive inference. We define logic this way, because the bible uses and presupposes these as foundations for its own intelligibility. God is our foundation for what is logic, not something else. God is the Logos. He is the laws of logic and His thinking is deductive. Deductive reasoning is an inevitable working of the 3 laws of logic.

The reason we went over the laws of contradiction, identity and excluded middle, was to give a foundation for deductive inference. Deduction does not violate the 3 laws of logic in its conclusions, whereas induction by adding new information in the conclusion violates the laws of logic, in addition to being a formal fallacy.

Therefore, Induction is anti-logic.

Deduction and the Laws of Logic and Truth. This is God’s foundation and context for logic.

An argument that uses deduction but does not have a truth claim, means the argument is unsound. You end up with the same problem as induction. Induction cannot prove the conclusion is necessarily true, and if you use deduction without truth claims, and as stated above (without necessary connections) then the conclusion is not necessarily true. The “form” is valid, in name only, because you cannot prove you have knowledge; however, if you cannot prove you have knowledge in your conclusion, then you end up with the same problem that the formal fallacy of induction has, which is uncertain knowledge in the conclusion. Unsound arguments,

are not deductions in the strictest and technical sense. Unsound arguments are pointless. If you cannot prove the premise in the conclusion is necessarily true, then you end up with skepticism and this indirectly denies the laws of logic. Deduction works because it does not violate the laws of logic, but a deduction without truth, ends up denying the law of contradiction because of skepticism. That is, if deduction is used for any statement about reality, rather than just a “pretend” scenario, the only way to avoid denying the law of contradiction is to have truth. This is another reason why deduction presupposes truth.

Because the conclusions produced by induction does not necessarily follow from the premises, you do not know if it is true or not. Even if you started with biblical premises of truth, if you use induction, you cannot know if the conclusion is still true or not, because the conclusion is not necessary. “All humans have sinned.” This is true. “Oshea is a human. Monkeys look like humans and have similar DNA and thus, monkeys have sinned.” Maybe monkeys have indeed sinned, but by adding more information in the conclusion (i.e. induction) you do not know from the argument if it is true or not. “You know that you do not know,” or “I do not know that I know.” This leads to skepticism, and this also denies the law of contradiction

I asked Grok AI (2024), *"conclusions that do not logically follow from premises, do they adhere to the laws of contradiction and identity?"*

The big idea is that deduction, by not adding new information to the conclusions and the connections being necessary, means it follows the 3 laws of logic. Induction, on the other hand, does violate the laws of logic. Thus, any worldview, any epistemology, and sub/starting point that uses induction violates the laws of logic.

The AI responded correctly with:

"Conclusions that do not logically follow from premises, by definition, do not adhere to the principles of:

Law of Identity: If a conclusion changes or misrepresents what is being discussed or the nature of the entities involved in the premises, it fails to respect the law of identity. This law asserts that something is itself and its properties remain consistent. If the conclusion introduces or alters these properties in a way not supported by the premises, it's not maintaining identity.

Law of Non-Contradiction: If the conclusion contradicts either the premises or itself, it clearly violates the law of non-contradiction, which states that contradictory statements cannot both be true in the same sense at the same time. A conclusion that defies the premises would be contradictory.

For example:

Premise: All dogs have fur.

Non-logical Conclusion: Therefore, some dogs have feathers.

Here, the conclusion does not adhere to:

Identity: It changes or misrepresents what it means to be a dog (with fur) by suggesting they might have feathers.

Non-Contradiction: It contradicts the premise that all dogs have fur by implying some could have feathers.

So, no, conclusions that do not logically follow from premises typically do not adhere to these fundamental laws of logic. "

This is interesting because Science uses the formal fallacy called induction (observation, which uses the fallacy of empiricism and induction) and the fallacy of affirming the consequent to formulate their hypotheses (as a modus ponens). They try to compensate their foundation of inductive with falsification, but this does not magically erase the previous irrationality that induction introduced into the science process. Also, how much falsification is needed? There is no logical way to say. Thus, science is not based knowledge, but men coming to a consensus. Science is men, not knowledge.

This means science is a repeated and systematic denying of the laws of contradiction and identity. Scientist will try to get around this by saying we do not change "some" observations to an "all" in the conclusion, but we only change "some" to "likely," or "probable." In my experience they do in fact mean an "all," because when they publish their journals they restate their past conclusions as Modus Ponens scientific laws. However, we will ignore this. It still violates the law of contradiction and identity to go from "some" observations and change it to "likely." This also is ignoring the other category errors such as "past tense observations" to conclusions about present and future tense., and etc. It also ignores the fallacy of empiricism. It is impossible to go from "sensations" in the premise, to the category of "knowledge (i.e. a true or false premise) without denying the laws of logic. This is why science is not a body of knowledge.

If the laws of identity and contradiction should be so easily violated, then when Paul says grace, he does not mean grace, but something else like fish. When he says works, he really does not mean works but something else like grace. And so the statement "Jesus is the son of God," means Jesus is not the son of God. Even though Jesus' argument (Matthew 22:32) hinged on the identity of a "present tense" premise, it should be fine to conclude in the past tense; therefore God is not the God of the living, because He was the God of Jacob, and not that He is the God of Jacob now. When the bible says all our sins are forgiven, it is logical to say, they are probably forgiven, right? Induction says it is intelligent to make "past to present," and "some to probable" interchangeable. Thus, that is how we read the bible, right?

Beyond the direct violation of contradiction and identity, this also leads to skepticism at the epistemology level. And skepticism also denies the law of contradiction.

As a Christian we understand the absolute unmovability of logic when reading and understanding the bible; and yet, some still think science can produce knowledge, despite it systematically denying the laws of logic.

The summary of deduction.

God already has the truth, and so deductive logic or (thinking structure) is used. God simply applies a specific knowledge from the all-knowledge He has. Because God knows all things and knows it all at the same time, as one intuitive thought, when he

thinks about anything specifically, He is only applying (the conclusion) a specific knowledge from the knowledge He already started with.

Without an epistemology to give you truth, all uses of deduction are unsound. A system of thinking without a starting point to produce knowledge, is a system where every use of a deductive argument is unsound. This ends up violating the law of contradiction by leading to skepticism, which violates the very idea of deduction. Thus, for deduction to not violate the laws of logic, or that is, in order for deduction to be deduction, then it must presuppose truth. To follow a valid formal structure, but still end up violating the laws of logic, even indirectly, denies the very idea of deduction. Since God, who is the foundation of logic, always has deduction and truth together, it is no surprise to find deduction does not work correctly if truth is not presupposed. This is important because if a worldview does not have a necessarily true epistemology that gives substantial knowledge about the world, then no amount of deductive argumentation will save it. Such a system would be a systematic affirmation of unsound arguments on top of other unsound arguments, which would lead to skepticism and the denying of the law of contradiction. To do deduction and end up denying the law of contradiction, whether directly or indirectly, is pointless. Deduction only works in a worldview with substantial truth.

God is the Logos. The Logic was God; Jesus is the laws of logic. God's thinks deductively. With God, deductive thinking, the laws of logic and truth presuppose each other. They are always together. God has revealed a public portion of His mind to the world. This is the foundation of truth. All connections are necessary connections, within this public system. Thus, when we do deduction correctly, what our conclusion declares, is what the very mind of God declares.

People who do not believe God's word, do not have truth, cannot properly use deductive thinking, without being imbeciles.

To use deduction without truth is the definition of insanity, "Oshea is a cloud; clouds are things that float: therefore, Oshea floats." Valid but insane.

The Law of Categories:

The understanding of categories is simple. All you do is apply the 3 basic laws above, to the idea of a group. The bible teaches the 3 basic laws above, and it teaches that God has created groups or categories within the reality He created. There is more to it, but by simply being consistent with the 3 basic laws above and then applying them correctly to groups of things, you will have a HUGE intellectual advantage over scholastic cattle and theologians.

Genesis 1:1–13 (LEB)

The Creation

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth— 2 Now the earth was formless and empty, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. 3 And God said, “Let there be light!” And there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good, and God caused there to be a separation between the light and between the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, “Let there be a vaulted dome in the midst of the waters, and [let it cause a separation between the waters].” 7 So God made the vaulted dome, and he caused a separation between the waters which were under the vaulted dome and between the waters which were over the vaulted dome. And it was so. 8 And God called the vaulted dome “heaven.” And there was evening, and there was morning, a second day.

9 And God said, “Let the waters under heaven be gathered to one place, and let the dry ground appear.” And it was so. 10 And God called the dry ground “earth,” and he called the collection of the waters “seas.” And God saw that it was good. 11 And God said, “Let the earth produce green plants that will bear seed—fruit trees bearing fruit [in which there is seed]—according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth green plants bearing seed according to its kind, and trees bearing fruit [in which there was seed] according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

Universal Categories

*“The categories are indeed innate, but in addition God has fashioned both the mind and the world so that they harmonize.”*²⁴⁹ G.H. Clark.

The non-Christian has no epistemology to give the truth claim that reality and categories harmonize; they have no rational argument for this presupposition that is necessary to understand and think. This necessary connection, or that is, this “causality of categories” between the mind and reality, is necessary to have, if you are to think about reality. As per our maximum, God is the foundation for the ontology of categories, as He is the causality of knowledge.

In verse 11 we are told God created—out of nothing like everything else—plants (Genus). Then in this category of plants we are told God created another subcategory (species) called fruit-bearing trees. The phrase, “after their kind,” signifies many species of the genus.

I am using the terms “genus” and “species,” in the logical sense of predication of comprehension and numerical extension, rather than the biological use of it. Thus, when I say species, I am not referring to the ability to breed with each other, which is what is meant in the biological/evolutionary use of the word. In predication/logical

²⁴⁹ Gordon Clark, Vol.1, “A Christian View of Men & Things,” (2005, pg.214). Published by The Trinity Foundation, Unicoi TN.

sense, Genus has less comprehension but a greater numerical extension, and species has greater detailed comprehension but a smaller numerical extension. And so another way to say universal categories is to call it, “class concepts,” in a hierarchical order of numerical extension and comprehension of the terms.

By categories we are talking about the “whatness,” of an object. Therefore, when I say, “a bird is an animal,” I am predicating “animal,” as a larger numerical group (or at least potentially larger) to “bird” or putting bird into a larger hierarchical class concept called animal. Birds would be in this logical sense “species” of animals. The category of bird has more comprehension to the term and is in a smaller extension group than animals. To say, “birds are those that have traits like “feathers -vertebrate - eggs,” is to predicate birds with proper/essential characteristics. To say, “birds fly,” is to predicate birds with an attribute that is not essential to be a bird, but that which *naturally flows from* being a bird. To say, “this bird is featherless,” is to predicate a bird with a characteristic that is not essential, and does not naturally flow from being a bird; this is a characteristic that *can come and go*—an accidental attribute if you would.

Another example to show what is meant by a logical genus and species is with geometry. To say, a “square is a plane figure,” is to predicate a large genus category, “plane figure,” to the term “square.” To say, “a square is an equal four-sided plane figure, with 90 degree angles,” is to predicate a species category of “four sided plane figure,” to the term square. “Equal Four sided, with 90 degree corners” is an essential or specific deference that predicates a square.

The Scripture predicates mankind in the genus category of, “created by God.” This is a very large numerical category—God alone does not belong to this category. The Scripture predicates mankind in the species of a “rational/invisible mind(made in God’s image) that belongs with a body.”

Having necessary and universal categories is important because if categories are not universal (such as all men are born sinners), then how do I know, “Oshea, was born a sinner,” even if I logically place him in the category of man? If the categorical proposition of, “*those whom God saved are forgiven from all their sins,*” is not universal, then what assurance do I have that I am forgiven, even if I am part of those whom God saved?

This idea of universal categories is not a word game. In Genesis, we are told of a class/category called, “plant.” Logically speaking (not biologically) this “plant” class is a higher (hierarchical order) numerical category of other small classes or (sub-class – numerically speaking). We are given one of these lower sub-classes called “fruit bearing trees.” The important thing here to remember is that the Bible—**as divine revelation**—is telling us at the formation of reality that God made and sustains “logical” categories. Thus, we can think about reality with understanding and intelligence.

There are **contingent** categories, such as the laws of nature, (which I call *God’s normal motion within creation*—they are not actual laws), which have changed (rain instead of dew to water the earth) and others which will not change until the Second coming of Jesus. They are certain categories within a particular time or space (etc.). Then there are eternal, unchanging and necessary categories such as with Logic itself. Logics are absolute categories that apply to God as to reality in a necessary way—in

the sense they are how God thinks. Others are only for God such as: God never lying, or God being Trinity, or God being the only God, or God has, is and will always be the absolute and direct sovereignty over all reality—*“we live move and have a being in God.”*

Some categories such as “I was a sinner” will always be true as a description of a past category, but “I am a child of God,” if one is born-again, is a category that will never change. Thus, to say I am a sinner, as a present tense category would be a lie and false category. To say I will be a child of God, in the future, but not now, would also be a lie and false category. God made up categories as He wants. And He gets to define and put us into the categories He wants. We can either agree with God and be truthful, or disagree with God and affirm delusions.

Only Christian metaphysics answers how categories pervade reality.

Here is the big idea that determines it all: God’s thoughts, will, decrees and His power are one in the same. If God decrees for all the elect children to be saved, forgiven and holy before Him in Christ, then this becomes a “category” in reality, even if it were not before. If creation was not under corruption before Adams’ sin, then if God’s sovereignly decrees it, then this becomes a universal category for all reality. Not even Jesus’s physical body escaped this category when he came to earth: “God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” (Rom. 8:3)

Continuing with Christian metaphysics, consider how Jesus speaks of marriage, divorce, remarriage and adultery. *“But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, ..., causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”* (Matt. 5:32). LEB

Romans 7:2-3 (NKJV)

“For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.”

“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate....Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.” (Matthew 19:4-6, 8). NIV

Marriage is different, because it is not associated with any cult. Rather, what “makes” a marriage is the agreement between a man and a woman that they will form such a relationship. God is the **only necessary witness**, and he is the witness to every marriage, whether or not he is acknowledged. The first marriage had no third human witness. There was no state and no church, unless we use the word “church” so loosely that Adam and Eve counted as the church. Even then, we perceive a difference, since there was no formal cult.

Thus, no state and no church can create or destroy a marriage – the relationship has no necessary relationship with them, but it is formed only

between the man and the woman **before God**. The state and the church can only acknowledge the agreement between the man and the woman, and the agreement still stands even if the state and the church refuse to acknowledge it.²⁵⁰

The category of “one flesh” between one man and one woman was created by God in the beginning of the creation. God is sovereign over His reality, which makes a woman and man one flesh. Christianity denies metaphysical dualism. God created this category, and He sustains it by His own power. This means that when a man and woman who became one flesh, God is the only necessary witness because He is the only one who controls reality and the categories that permeate it. God is the only necessary witness to a man and woman’s vow to each other (either before a pastor or secretly between themselves). God is the only witness that makes them “one flesh,” because He alone controls both the categories, and the connection of these categories to the rest of reality. Therefore, even if a sanctioned pastor or state official declares them divorced—in essence to declare them “two fleshs,” because God’s definition does not recognize they are two fleshs, then “*Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*” (Luke 16:18).

Some delusions are more visible than other delusions. To affirm you can deny the law of contradiction is a more visible delusion. (“I deny that I exist.”) That is, even without acknowledging God, the necessary connection of the LoC to reality is so powerful that the denial of it exposes someone living in a mental delusion and lie. However, the mental delusion and lie in affirming people who God witnesses as “one flesh” can be “two fleshs” again and then “one flesh” with someone else, are just as crazy, delusional and insane. People struggle with what is an ethic. The only intelligent way to understand an ethic is God’s command. Any other method is no less logically crazy as saying, because blues are 8’s therefore 9’s are clouds. Ethics are God’s own arbitrary definition; any departures from this are delusions. Example: just because I can use my hands to murder, does not mean, it magically creates a “category” that murder is good. It means I perverted and behaved in a delusional way to the definition for how a person is to act. A tree does not think. It behaves in its definition to produce seed after its own kind. A person can think about their definition, which God has revealed to them (unbelievers have God’s innate knowledge). They can act in a perverted and insane way that is contrary to their definition. These wicked and delusional actions do not re-create categories, all it does is fatten them up for more punishment.

God created reality. He both established and controls what are categories. Even if men are too stupid to diagnose what these categories are, God is still sustaining reality in the categories that He wants. God is the only thing that matters for knowledge, logic and reality.

²⁵⁰ Vincent Cheung. Civil Marriage. Web. 2010. www.vincentcheung.com. Emphasis added by author.

God's truth given to us in revelation also bridges the connection of epistemology and metaphysics. God decrees what reality is and He revealed these definitions to His chosen ones, by giving faith to believe His scripture.

Man's attempt with Categories

God is eternally omniscient. God being outside of time and observation (since He has no body, it does not "categorially" even apply to Him) has all knowledge. He did not learn His knowledge, or observe it. God is an invisible system of premises, and there was no material universe for God to observe, and God does not even have a body to observe with. Since God has self-existence, independent of everything else, He is the source of His own knowledge. Thus, knowledge is not empiricism, is not inductive and is not observed.

As with all things, "God is the foundation," is our maximum, and the other is that man is stupid. That man thinks knowledge comes by sensation, induction and observation shows how truly delusional they are. When men leave divine revelation to grasp at knowledge they dive into delusions and insanity.

"At the beginning of the Christian era, Philo, the Jewish scholar of Alexandria, made an adjustment in Platonic philosophy to bring it into accord with the theology of the Old Testament. Plato had based his system on so-called three original, independent principles: the World of Ideas, the Demiurge (god like figure), and chaotic space. Although the three were equally eternal and independent of each other, the Demiurge fashioned chaotic space into this visible world by using the World of Ideas as the model. Thus, the World of Ideas is not only independent of but also even in a sense superior to the maker of heaven and earth. The Demiurge is morally obligated, and in fact willingly submits to the Ideas of justice, man, equality, and number.

Philo, however, says,

"God has been ranked according to the one and the unit; or rather even the unit has been ranked according to the one God, for all number, like time, is younger than the cosmos, while God is older than the cosmos and its creator." This means that God is the source and determiner of all truth. Christians generally, even uneducated Christians, understand that water, milk, alcohol, and gasoline freeze at different temperatures because God created them that way. God could have made an intoxicating fluid freeze at zero Fahrenheit and he could have made the cow's product freeze at forty. But he decided otherwise. ***Therefore behind the act of creation there is an eternal decree.*** It was God's eternal purpose to have such liquids, and therefore we can say that the ***particularities of nature were determined before there was any nature.***

Similarly in all other varieties of truth, God must be accounted sovereign. It is his decree that makes one proposition true and another false. Whether the proposition be physical, psychological, moral, or theological, ***it is God who made it that way. A proposition is true because God thinks it so.***"²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Gordon Clark, God and Logic. Copyright © The Trinity Foundation, www.trinityfoundation.org. Post Office 68, Unicoi, Tennessee 37692 Phone: 423.743.0199 Fax: 423.743.2005
Emphasis added by author.

Categories—whether assumed by Aristotelian logic or arbitrarily made up in more modal or modern logic—are necessary for thinking in general to work and for syllogism/deduction to work. For this reason, even the famous Plato desperately grasped for universals in, “*The Forms*,” which not only make thinking work²⁵², but it made deduction work. Plato of course, had no warrant or justification for his description of, “*The Forms*,” (universal categories) as a separate world that the material world must follow. However, he realized enough that a necessary connection of categories and thinking exists. Aristotle’s book on Categories, in general, had the basic idea, even if not all aspects were correct. Parts of his categories does not overlay with God correctly. The technical ideas of essential categories of predication (All S is P) and accidental predication (Some S is P) are generally correct.

Pragmatic categories. Some categories are inductively made in science. We will call these pragmatic categories. They are fallaciously made on observation, induction, affirming the consequent and an unsound use of modus tollens. They are liable to change at any time. Therefore, they give no knowledge. But if they pragmatically work, then they pragmatically work. We are commanded by God to subdue the earth, and thus, if something works in subduing the earth, (making electricity,) then we use it. This is like the story of Daniel giving a 10 day trial without the king’s meat. They appeared healthier. It does not reveal truth,²⁵³ but if it seems to work and what is working is the goal you want, then make a “*pragmatic category*,” out of it *until it changes*. By pragmatic category, we mean a category that is opinion. It is based on speculation and superstition, but it seems to give a good pragmatic result we want. This is all we can say about science.

This is different than making an inductive category based on empiricism (using it like an epistemology), for cosmology or the study of fossils, and then making a so-called truth category out of it in how you interpret the observations from empiricism. There is no knowledge produced by empiricism. A pragmatic category is for “*pragmatics*,” and is a subcategory under Christian epistemology and Christian metaphysics. ***It becomes a sub-category for opinion-based usefulness.*** Delusional morons, use inductive pragmatics as their epistemology and not as sub-category—for opinion based usefulness. Many mistakes in thinking are made on this point. Epistemology is the highest level in one’s worldview, therefore, a mistake here affects everything.

Empiricism as an epistemology is unable to establish any universal whatsoever. Sensing and noting transient moments never validly infers to a universal. Also, one’s personal experience/sensation of a transient moment is not the same as another person’s experience of it. There is no logical way to prove it. Thus, even if one could establish a universal from their personal sensation, it could not logically be used by

²⁵² How does one deny the category of Chairs or Trees without assuming them first? “There is no category of tables.” How does one do this without knowing the category first? How do you say “ALL” doors are different unless there is a category for “all doors?”

²⁵³ In this instance, because it is the bible’s testimony, then this could be said to be an infallible testimony of a particular instance of experimentation that happen to be correct. This does not negate the fallacious foundation of induction and experimentation. Remember, we are not saying by observation and induction that all instances are false; rather, there is no justification to know if any given instance or conclusion is true, unless God divinely reveals if it is so.

anyone else. Such a position again collapses into skepticism. If this worldview is true, it is false at the same time.

Deductive Vs Inductive

Before We dive into deduction it is good to follow our own rules of a good definition and say in a few ways what it is not by contrasting it to induction.

We can label deductive logic as “*God’s logic*.”

And we can term, inductive logic, as “*man’s logic*.”

What makes one God’s logic and man’s logic has to do with epistemology. Your starting point for knowledge will determine if your system is deductive or inductive. Deductive logic has its foundation with God. When man bypasses himself and starts a structured system of thinking from God’s revelation it necessarily is deductive. That is, it is not a matter of your arbitrary choice or desire. If a man’s epistemology starts with God’s revelation it has to be deductive and cannot be inductive. It is the nature of the thing. However, if man starts with himself, the structure of his premises necessarily becomes inductive. If a man has a human starting point, such as sensation, then the foundation of his thinking must be inductive and cannot be deductive.

Deduction	Induction
Application of Knowledge	Misapplication of knowledge
Application of the laws of logic	Misapplication of the laws of logic
Conclusion only has knowledge that is found in the premises.	Conclusion has new information that is not from the premises.
Valid	Invalid
Rational	Irrational
General to particular.	Particular to General.
Necessary	Not necessary
Logical reasoning	Scientific reasoning
From cause to effect	A guess from effect to cause
Downstream reasoning	Upstream reasoning
Conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.	Conclusion is always a non-sequitur fallacy.
God’s thinking structure.	Fallen man’s thinking structure.

1. Deduction starts with truth. Induction does not have truth and tries to find it grasping in the dark. Thus, deduction starts upstream with the cause “a fountain” and follows it downstream to the effects. Induction starts down in the valley and guesses where the stream comes from.
2. Deduction is necessary and valid because it applies only the knowledge found in its premises (truth revealed by God) by merely putting a finger on a specific point that is already there. Induction is unnecessary and unjustified because it takes premises and misapplies them by magically bringing in new information (not accounted for) and shovels it into the conclusion.
3. Deduction’s conclusion (when followed correctly) is always a necessary knowledge from the premises. All conclusions from induction commits the non-sequitur fallacy because the new information in it, means it does not necessarily follow from the knowledge contained in the premises.
4. Deduction is a strict and correct “application” of the basic laws of logic. The system of induction from the start does not apply the laws of logic, by conceiving the idea that “some” in the premise and “likely” in the conclusion are interchangeable. What if I said, “grace” in the premise and “works” in the conclusion are interchangeable? Induction is a “misapplication” of the basic laws of logic, for the sake of pragmatic usefulness. Induction is not “from the devil,” if we acknowledge there is no knowledge in pragmatic usefulness.
5. Deduction follows God’s own nature and thinking. Induction follows how man thinks about reality when God’s revelation is not known or ignored. Deduction starts with God. Induction presupposes a human starting point.

The Syllogism, is the most basic use of the basic laws of logic to formulate a deductive argument or a application of knowledge. It uses three terms: major, minor and middle. It uses three premises. The first two premises are truth claims, and the third premise is the conclusion.

Peter Kreeft

(1) “*Whatever is true of a subject must be true of everything contained in that subject*”—that is, if x must be true of all S, then x must be true of every single S. This is known technically as the “dictum de omni,” or “the law about all.” Because of this principle, we can be certain that if all men are mortal, and Socrates is a man, Socrates must be mortal. Whatever is true of a universal is true of all its instances, for universal is “universal,” “One-in-many one and the same in all its instances. It is the universal that is the foundation of the syllogism.

(2) “*Whatever is universally false of a subject must be false of everything contained in that subject*”—that is, if x is not-true of all S, then x must not be true of any single S. This is called the dictum de nullo, or “the law about none.” It is the negative version of principle (1). Because of this principle, we can be certain that if no men are angels, and Socrates is a man, Socrates must not be an angel.

(3) Now combine these two principles with the third principle that "*two things identical with one and the same third thing are identical with each other*," and you get the syllogism. For the "third thing" is the "middle term," the common term with which the other two terms are compared. In the classic example above, "Socrates" and "mortal" are both compared with a common third term, or "middle term," "men." If all men are mortal and Socrates is a man, then Socrates must be mortal.

(4) The negative corollary of principle (3) is that if there are two things, one of which is identical with a third thing and the other of which is not, then those two things are not identical with each other. In the syllogism "No men are angels, and Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is not an angel," "Socrates" and "angel" are both compared with the common third term, or "middle term," "men."

(5) Principles (3) and (4), in turn, assume the *Law of Identity* ("a thing is what It is").

(6) And the negative corollary of the Principle of Identity is the *law of contradiction* ("a thing is not what it isn't; x is not non-x").

(7) Finally, it also assumes that a thing is either x or not x. A predicate must be either affirmed or denied of a subject; there is no third possibility. A proposition is either true or false, there is no third possibility. This is the *Law Of Excluded Middle*. (All these principles, especially this last one, assumes no ambiguity of terms.)

On these principles, all of which are logically self-evident "tautologies," the syllogism rests.²⁵⁴

Term. Premise. & Definition.

God, not man, has given definitions to the reality He created. These definitions start with defining a single term. The best definition both defines what it is not, and what it is. For more reading and or practice on this, (which I recommend) is Peter Kreeft's book mentioned above, and the section on how to clearly define terms. Basic practice like this, will be more help in reading the bible correctly, than taking a Greek class, or advanced hermeneutics.

After a clear definition of terms is the premise/proposition, which is a categorical statement of truth. The basic logical structure is simple. All, No or Some.

(A is B)

(No A is B)

(Some A is B).

After our brief discussion on the basic laws of logic and categories, we know a premise combination of "All sparrows are birds," is a logical and truthful combination of subject and predicate and the reverse is illogical and false, "All birds are sparrows."

I studied more advanced First Order Predicate logic at school, but there is no reason to proceed to advance material until you master the basics. And here is a pro tip, the vast majority of mistakes happen at the basic level, not advanced. The logic basics, need to be come secondhand nature, before moving on, otherwise logic is wasted.

²⁵⁴ Peter Kreeft. *Socratic Logic*. Edition 3.1. St. Augustine Press. 2014. Page 188.

Take example from one of our previous subjects we discussed about God's absolute determinism. Some fools commit the informal fallacy of ambiguity, by talking about hard and soft determinism. Such morons would be better served by sticking to the basics we just went over. We are discussing truths that have eternal value. For the sake of fearing God, let us strive to be clear.

If we consider the basics of logic and clarity, there are 3 basic propositions about determinism. "*All things are determined by God,*" "*Some things are determined by God.*" Or finally, "*no things are determined by God.*" Some realize the bible teaches that God determines all things, but their pet theologian or tradition doesn't clearly define it that way. Their doctrine affirms, "Some things are determined by God," but then they will do all they can to convince you that they affirmed, "*All things are determined by God.*" They are worthless people who do not deserve your time. They use complicated theories and long-winded historical discourses to get past the unmovable logic of the bible. Thus they will call "All things determined by God," soft determinism, and hard determinism as something beyond God determining all things, as if that is possible. They bully people with nonsense. ²⁵⁵

What you will find is that no matter how arrogant or complicated a theologian will present their case, they never left these three basic options. Advance logic does not replace these, but rather they get more detailed with it. Just as algebra does not negate basic addition and subtraction, but gets more detailed with it. Some will do all they can to convince you there are other options (mysteries or paradoxes, or addition is a paradox), but since we know that there cannot even be a hint of a contradiction in doctrine, then we know they are blind fools that are to be dismissed and mocked.

Sound Argument. Valid Inference.

Christianity teaches that valid inference was never to be considered separate from truth. Sound arguments are only possible with Christianity. We can, for the sake of argument, or that is, pretend about a world that never has or will exist, only consider logical validity, but again, we are only pretending, because if we were not, we would be delusional. For teaching purposes, we can "focus" on validity, but we will do so without forgetting that validity is never to be considered separate from God's revelation.

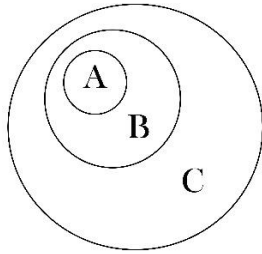
Faith is just another word for a sound argument, or reason. We apply God's revelation by agreeing with what God says about the world and us. This is the same thing as true premises and necessary inference. As soon as you leave this, you are either being delusional by ignoring or disagreeing, or pretending for the sake of argument.

One of the easiest ways to help with this is doing an Euler Circle diagram. This gives a visual. There are other types of diagrams, but they can get visually complicated, which

²⁵⁵ In normal speech and writing I might say, "God directly and absolutely controls all things." However, despite the term "all things," appearing to be the predicate, because it is at the end of the sentence, it is in fact the subject. Thus, if I were to technically write this premise as a category statement, I would say, "(A) All things are (B) things directly and absolutely controlled by God."

defeats the point in teaching a new concept to students. When we say “all A is B” you can replace it with, “All A is inside the category of B.” Thus, “All sparrows are inside the category of birds.”

All A is inside the category of B. All B is inside the category of C.



It is correct to see this and say, “well, this means, all A is inside the category of C.”

You now have a “sound argument.” For clarity purpose we define a “sound argument” as both having (1) truth statements and (2) correctly applies deductive logic. To be logical (we use the term logic as interchangeable with “deduction” and “rational”) is to adhere to the laws of logic in the premises, to have necessary inference, and to have conclusions that do not lead to the violations of the laws of logic. The things, which you must have, to have sound arguments only converge in the biblical worldview. No other worldview supplies the necessary things for sound arguments.

We will do a crash course on basic categorical and “if then” propositional syllogisms. I would however, recommend the book, *Come Now Let us Reason: An Introduction to Logical Thinking*, by Norman L. Geisler. (Particularly the deduction part of the book.) I would recommend you take your time and do the practice homework, until basic logic becomes secondhand nature. Until then, logic is not much use for you. When you can do basic syllogisms as intuitive as adding up the time, then basic logic will become like Thor’s Hammer in your hand, both to tear down and build up.

Types of statements.

There are three types of statements to be used in basic deductions.

Categorical statements of “this is that,” or “this is not that.” To make the naming easier, we call this “category logic.”

The other type is “if this, then this,” statements. These are used in what is called basic propositional logic.

The last type is disjunctive statement, “either this or that.”

The premise for a categorical statement is simple. It comprises the subject, predicate (what you are saying about the subject), verb (‘is’ or ‘is not’) (or linking verb) and how much (*all some or none*). Again that is, (1) subject and predicate, (2) linking verb and (3) how much. This gives us 4 possible categorical statements. All categorical statements about reality can be boiled down to these four, although we can get more detailed with them in more advanced logic.

All S is P

No S is P

Some S is P
Some S is not P

That's it! As said before, we can get more detailed, but if you cannot think about a categorical statement on the most basic level, then you really do not comprehend what you are saying, and have no business moving on to more advanced material.

Quantifier	Subject	Verb	Predicate
All	Trees	are	Organic

A categorical statement verb can only be “is” or “is not,” “was” or “was not.” The tense is not the important thing at this point. The important thing is that it either affirms or denies. We call this affirmative or negative. In normal English we say, “trees are organic,” or “dogs are not trees.” When we make a technical syllogism, we put the “not” part of “are not” in the front of the premise. “No dogs are trees.” We want to be precise and strict in how we use a syllogism. We do not want to mix things up, because there are ways to check if a syllogism is correct or valid by its “form.” This is why we call this “formal” logic, because it has a “form,” that we can check to see if it is correct or not. Thus, we have fallacies that deal directly with the “form,” to which we call “formal” fallacies, and general fallacies called “informal” fallacies. These can and will often overlap and or relate to one another, but they do not refer to the same thing, and so it is important to keep them distinct.

Back to our form. The negation of No and Not goes with the verb. However, be mindful that “non-” and “un-” go with the subject and predicate. That is, to say, “Cessationism is unbiblical/nonbiblical,” is to “affirm” this “A” category belongs in this “B” category. It is denying something indirectly, however, the statement itself is “directly affirming” something about it.

When a premise is not directly quantified with an “all, some or none,” it becomes an “all,” by default. Thus, “dogs are animals,” is “All dogs are animals.” The *quantifier* (all, some, none) only tells us the quantity of the *subject*. The quantifier “some,” may refer to 99% or 1%, and all in between.

Norman says this next part so well that I will quote him here:

Distribution of Terms

So far we have said that every syllogism is made up of propositions, and every proposition is made up of two terms, a subject and a predicate. These terms are related to one another by copulas and quantifiers, so that there are four possible types of propositions. Now we want to talk about the terms as we find them in those four types of statements. Categorical syllogisms always deal with placing things in the categories where they belong, so it is important to know when we are talking about all of a category and when we are talking about only part of it. We covered this for the subjects in our propositions when we discussed quantity. Subjects in universal propositions refer to all in that category (All men have a worldview), while those in particular propositions refer to some (Some men are theists). But what about the predicates? This is where

distribution comes in. Distribution is to terms what quantity is to propositions. A term is said to be distributed when it refers to all the members of its class.

Distribution can be designated by a stated or implied all. Both the subject and the predicate have distribution, because they are both terms. In the statement, “[W]hoever believes in Him [will] not perish” (John 3:16), the subject is understood to mean “All who believe,” which is distributed. But the predicate implies “will be among those who will not perish,” which is undistributed, because it makes no specific claim to include all who will not perish. (In other words, the statement by itself does not tell us that no one who does not believe will be among those who do not perish.)

Terms have distribution; propositions have quantity, which depends on the distribution of the subject. Once we know the distribution of the subject, then we can find the distribution of the predicate. Distribution of each term is always the same for each type (A, E, I, O) of statement. To understand this, we’d better walk through it one type at a time, then look at the overall picture.

Type A—All S is P. Let’s use “horses” for the subject and “four-legged animals” for the predicate: “All horses are four-legged animals.” The subject is distributed because all is stated. What about the predicate? Does it include all four-legged animals? No, it covers only the ones mentioned in the subject (horses). It does not refer to other four-legged animals like cows, dogs, sheep, or goats. So it is undistributed. The proposition might be restated, “All horses are a part of the class ‘four-legged animals.’” This makes it clear that the predicate does not refer to all the members of its class. And it will always be that way for any Type A statement. The predicate will always include more than the subject, so the subject is always distributed and the predicate is always undistributed.

Type E—No S is P. “No horses are two-legged animals.” Again, the subject is distributed, since it clearly applies to all of its members—so this is a universal proposition. Now look at the predicate. Does it refer to all or some two-legged animals? We said that Type A predicates refer only to those included in the subject, but here we are denying that any of the subject is part of the predicate. So what the statement really says is, “None of all the horses in the world are included in all the two-legged animals in the world.” Go ahead: make a list of bipeds and see if there are any horses there. You won’t find any, but you have to include the whole list to reach that conclusion. So both subject and predicate are always distributed in Type E propositions.

Type I—Some S is P. “Some heroes are white.” At this point we can start looking for principles that carry us through. The subject is undistributed, as it must be in all particular statements. Let’s stick with horses (they have carried us this far). The predicate (let’s use white) must refer to all white things or some white things. The principle to remember is that in an affirmative statement, what is said applies only to those things specified by the subject. When we affirm that those things included in the subject are also among those things included in the predicate, then the predicate can only be undistributed. The statement is limited to the members of the subject which fall into the wider category of things to which the predicate refers. So Type I propositions always have undistributed subjects and undistributed predicates. The most they can claim

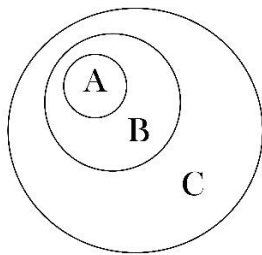
is that “Some horses are some of the white things in the world.” There are other white things, like pelicans and polar bears, and other horses are not white.

Type O—Some S is not P. You should be catching on now. This is a particular statement, so the subject must be undistributed. Right? Now, what did we say about the predicate last time we looked at a negative statement? It is distributed, isn't it? If you don't understand why, go back and read the paragraph on Type E again. If you deny that something is inside a certain circle, you have to deny that it can be found anywhere in that circle. You have to refer to the whole circle, not just part. Hence, the predicate of Type O propositions is always distributed, and the subject is always undistributed.²⁵⁶

This is done so that we can put a “form” to a 3 premise argument and evaluate it on the form, if it is valid. It is a quick way to see if something is adhering to the laws of contradiction, Identity and Excluded middle. Thus, even without using this nifty-piffy form, if one is careful to think through the basic laws of logic one can evaluate if something is valid or not. The form just makes it easier. However, I would warn you not to be over-reliant on the form and never carefully think about how the basic laws of logic are being or not being followed in an argument.

The syllogism is made up of 3 premises. The first two premises are the evidence, or truth claims. The 3rd premise is the valid conclusion drawn from the previous 2. Thus, in a basic argument you only have 2 category statements to deduce from, because the 3rd is the conclusion. The first two premises are the evidence. The conclusion is the valid application of this knowledge.

The first premise is the Major premise. This statement gives the most important category, which is the “C” term. This C term is the predicate of the conclusion. The Major premise is saying “B is inside the category of C.” This is usually what an audience will already accept, or sometimes needs to be made aware of. The Minor term is the 2nd premise and is stating the terms A and B. It is saying “A is in the category of B.” If the audience accepts that “B is inside C,” and I showed “A is inside of B,” then the valid conclusion is that “A is inside of C.” To say A is inside of C, is to pinpoint information already contained in premise 1 and 2 and merely be explicit about it; this is the essence of deductive logic.



To finalize our Deductive “form” we need to label the three terms to “symbols,” as we did with the 4 types of category statements. These are “P,” which is the Predicate of the Major premise; if we were doing an “A is inside of B, and B is inside of C” bullseye diagram this is the “C.” The B from our diagram, is what we label the “middle term,”

²⁵⁶ Come Now Let Us Reason: Introduction to Logical Thinking. Norman L Geisler. Baker Books. 1990. Pgs 30-31

and so we symbolize this as “M.” The “subject” of the Minor (A, from our diagram) term, we label as “S.”

Predicate of Major term is “P”

Middle term is “M”

Subject of Minor premise is “S.”

All deductive conclusions arise from the combination of the S from the minor term and the P from the major term.

Before we show the Mood and Form of deductive arguments with symbols, we will go over the spelled-out *principles* of category deduction.

1. *There are only three terms.* The “formal” violation of this is called a 4-term fallacy, or equivocation. What ends up happening is a term from the first two premises, is changed to mean something different in the conclusion, or the term is changed from the major premise to minor. There are many informal fallacies that speak of this, such as metaphoring terms, ambiguous terms and (etc.). If you think about the Basic Laws of Logic, you will see how this violates the law of identity and contradiction. If something has a clear identity in the premise but is changed to something else in the conclusion, then you are admitting the law of identity is not binding, and you are saying you can contradict without using the law of contradiction to deny it, which is nonsense. People will try to change the meaning of a term to force the conclusion they want, because they cannot do it rationally. And yet this is the “formal” fallacy of induction. The form is designed to have a change of terms. Thus the form of induction itself a formal fallacy.

All dogs bark.

All bark is dead.

Thus, all dogs are dead.

Bark is used both as tree bark and a sound that dogs make. Thus we have more than 3 terms.

Many arguments in politics, theology and everyday life are presented like this. They are endless category errors; they change categories and terms faster than the speed of light. The added 4th term will commit one of two rudimentary mistakes in deduction. First, by adding the 4th term in the conclusion it will add more information in the conclusion than what the premises provide.

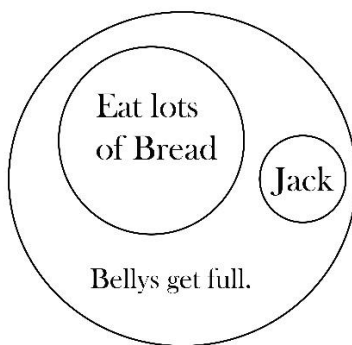
Second, by adding the 4th term in the premises it will lack the necessary connection to make deduction relevant. In our example above “dog barks” and “tree barks” is not a necessary connection to say “all dogs are dead.” The two premises are arbitrarily put together. It is like saying, “All cows are animals; Oshea is yellow, thus ?” These two premises do not have a necessary connection to formulate an argument. The 4th term is the term one cannot give a true necessary connection for, and so, the strategy is to sneak the term in a premise of an argument, in such a way that it feels like a necessary connection, but in reality, it is not.

Remember, the middle term of a syllogism is the necessary bridge that takes the minor term into the major term.

2. No conclusion follows from two negative premises. This fallacy of *exclusive premises* is straight forward. If A has nothing to do with B and B has nothing to do with C, then there is no necessary connection, and without a necessary connection there is no knowledge to apply. Two negative premises exclude there being any application of knowledge for an argument. “Trees are not stars. Oshea is not a rock. Therefore ?”

3. The Middle Term must be distributed at least once. The middle term B, must be completely inside the C term, or predicate “P” of the Major premise. What ends up happening, despite the premises looking like it is a “B is C,” and “A is B,” instead it says “X is B and Y is B.” The Middle term ends up having two subject terms added to it, and thus the middle term is never inside of another term. This can be a little confusing, if we were to follow the letters of A B and C terms in the Major and Minor premise, it looks like it should say “B is C” and “A is C.” And this is fine if we understand the C, in this instance, to be a middle term B with two other terms added to it. Or if you still find this confusing, you can think of this fallacy as also the fallacy of the A term not being distributed in the middle term B from the 2 premises, so that both A and B terms are distributed to the C.

Thus, it would be like saying All B is C and All A is C.



Belly Gets full, is C
Eats Lost of Bread, is B
Jack, is A

This is essentially the fallacy of scientific experimentation. Although this might get pushed back one step to the hypothesis formation, rather than experimentation, it is still part of the foundation of scientific reasoning. The fallacy is called, “affirming the consequent,” and when it is a simple A B and C terms, can be put into a category syllogism, to show it commits this fallacy.

If Jack eats lots of bread, Jack’s belly gets full. (B is C)
Jacks bell gets full. (A is C)
Thus, Jack at lots of bread. (A is B)

This fallacy is a more subtle fallacy of #2 “exclusive premises.” Exclusive premises are easy to see why they have no meaningful relationship to apply logic. This fallacy is the same. The premises never established a necessary connection from the Minor term to the Major. Because 2 terms are both in a bigger category, people get deceived, thinking that the Minor Term is inside the Major term, but that is not the case. Just because to terms share in a larger category does not mean they have a necessary relationship with each other. Just because the sun is round and my soccer ball is round, does not

mean these two things have a necessary relationship with each other. It does not mean that the category of soccer balls are inside the category of stars. Because science works this way, people are blinded to the illogical and delusional application of knowledge that is happening.

The fallacy here is that the middle term is not completely inside of another category. This means a “necessary” connection is never established. Without a necessary connection you do not have deductive logic. Thus, there is no necessary connection that Jack’s belly is full because he ate bread, maybe he ate a big bowl of durian instead. The middle term is the necessary connection or bridge that must be there, or there is no connected truth to apply knowledge; rather, what you end up having is 2 premises that have no guarantee they belong together. If you have two unrelated premises, there is no syllogism. This is why science is not a body of knowledge.

“Mushrooms are organic.
Oshea is organic.
Therefore, oshea is a mushroom.”

This is stupid.

This violates the law of excluded middle. There is no specific knowledge to yield, but you pretend that there is. To say $2 + 2 = 4$, is to affirm whether it is true or not. But to say, “we have a “3” and a “9” and a “g” and a “cat,” therefore? Or, “clouds float and cats gloat,” therefore? There is no “either this or not,” because there is no necessary connection between these terms or premises. Many arguments in politics, theology and everyday life are presented like this.

This is also called in the general sense, (not formal fallacy) thinking backwards to establish a necessary connection, category or cause. You try to form a necessary connection when you do not have one in your original premise, and so you manufacture a necessary category/connection out of thin air in the conclusion. Deduction cannot have any new information in the conclusion, but with an undistributed middle term, you manufacture a necessary connection in the conclusion when there is none in the premises. This is the thinking tactic you do when you do not have truth from the start. In science you are trying to manufacture a necessary connection from an effect to a cause. You play make-believe and magically make them appear in the conclusion. In my experience manufacturing a necessary (connection) (undistributed middle) is a more difficult fallacy to detect for people, compared to something like manufacturing a positive (category) conclusion out of two negatives. This is one reason science deceives people so easily.

5. What is universal or not universal in the premise, must remain so in conclusion. We generally call these fallacies of distribution or fallacies of universals.

Illicit Process of Subtraction: This refers to a situation where a term that is distributed in the premises becomes undistributed in the conclusion. Although this scenario is less commonly discussed because syllogistic logic primarily guards against expanding claims beyond what is warranted, it could theoretically occur if one were to inappropriately narrow the scope of a term in the conclusion. However, in traditional syllogistic logic, this isn't a recognized fallacy because conclusions generally don't narrow the scope of terms; they either maintain or expand it.

Illicit Process of Addition: This would be akin to what is traditionally called the "Illicit Process" fallacy. Here, we are describing a scenario where a term not distributed/universal in the premises is distributed in the conclusion, thus expanding or "adding" to the scope of the term without logical justification. This directly aligns with the standard definition of the illicit process fallacy, where the conclusion claims something about all members of a class when the premises only spoke of some or did not distribute the term at all.

Simply put, if all of A is inside of B, in the premise, then all of A must be inside of B in the conclusion. Or, if only some of A is inside of B, in the premise, then only some of A is allowed in B in the conclusion, and not all.

Major: All dogs are things that bark.

Minor: some birds are things that bark.

Conclusion: Thus, all birds are things that bark.

In the Minor premise the term "birds" is not universal; however, with an all premise in the conclusion, "birds" is transmuted into a universal. There is no necessary connection or truth between all birds and things that bark, in the premise; but this truth magically appears in the conclusion.

5. *The conclusion cannot be bigger in amount than the smallest amount premise.* That is, if a premise is "some," then the conclusion cannot be All. The conclusion cannot be stronger than its weakest link, so to speak. Conclusions must follow the quality and quantity of the premises. This is obvious, because we know that deduction does not add new information into the conclusion. Thus, the "amount" of the premises and whether they are positive or negative must not be changed or manufactured as new information into the conclusion.

In simplest terms it is a violation of the Law of Identity. You cannot have a "category" or "definition" of "some" and then the identity magically changes to an "all," in the conclusion. You cannot say "All" and "Some" are the same category in the same way. Thus, I cannot say,

"All mugs are cups.

Some of Oshea's dishes are mugs,
therefore, all of Oshea's dishes are cups."

Or more basically,

*"I saw some of Oshea's cups
and they were mugs,
thus all of Oshea's cups are mugs."*

Thus two fundamental laws are being broken. First, the conclusion has new information added to it. Second, the law of Identity is violated in these conclusions. Go back and read how self-refuting it is to deny these laws. This is the intellectual ass-wipe of observation and science. This is the essential fallacy of observation. Science is not a body of knowledge; rather it is a mental ass-wipe, that is portrayed as chocolate cake. We have already shown the essential fallacy of scientific experimentation, but

science is also built on the fallacy of empiricism and observation. Observation is always a “some” category premise. But it is irrationally turned into an “all” in the conclusion. From this “all” conclusion that was made irrationally, it is then used as an “all” truth premise for deduction. These “all” so-called premises to deduce from, is what science falsely calls knowledge. We will learn more about that later.

6. *No conclusion follows from two “some” premises.* When you have some of this and some is that, you divorce yourself from having a necessary application of knowledge. Sure, it might work out in some cases that if some of A is B, and some B is C, then some of A is C. But that is the problem. There is no necessary connection. No certainty of knowledge.

The issue is this. The “premises” give us the knowledge of a “maybe,” but the conclusion is presented that some of A is indeed C. This again violates two fundamental laws of logic. First, it adds information into the conclusion (directly violating the basic idea of valid inference) and secondly, it indirectly violates the laws of Contradiction and Identity. It is a contradiction to say the category of “certainty” and “maybe” are the same thing and in the same way.

Here is the, catch-22. If the conclusion is not presented as certainty but only as uncertainty, “*well, maybe, maybe not,*” then we have no logical argument. It might not violate the laws of contradiction and identity, yet there is no necessary connection. We might as well flip a coin.

8. *No negative conclusion follows from two positive premises.*

We can broadly call these types of fallacies, negative and positive fallacies. If the premises are both positive, then you cannot get a negative out of it. Also, if one of the premises are negative then you cannot get a positive out of it.

First, you manufactured the new knowledge of a positive, when all you have are two negative premises. This directly violates necessary inference.

Secondly, it is a contradiction to say a positive and negative are the same thing. The identity of a positive is not the same as a negative. Thus, if you have two negative premises then if we are to adhere to the laws of contradiction and identity you must have a negative conclusion; however, as shown from rule #2 (*No conclusion follows from two negative premises*), even if we are adhering to Identity and Contradiction, we have violated the law of deduction, which is having a necessary connection.

This also will apply to basic propositional logic. A positive modus ponens, cannot produce a negative conclusion. A modus tollens, which is denying something cannot produce a positive. Thus, to use a modus tollens at the end of scientific reasoning, will produce a negative and thus, the scientist can only say an unsound argument is false, but never say a positive, “this is that.”

The bible gives us true premises, but it also gives us extensive examples showing which premises and terms necessarily belong together. All anti-Christian worldviews have no answer for this. They have no knowledge of true premises, and they also do not have knowledge of which premises necessarily belong together. They have no justification for any knowledge.

Some big takeaways.

When thinking about the foundation and principles of logical arguments, there are repeated mistakes that keep coming up.

1. Unclear and changing terms.
2. The laws of Identity and Contradiction are violated, or pretended away.
3. The terms or premises are arbitrarily put together, thus giving us no necessary connections within the premise. Without the necessary connections of the terms and propositions (which is truth) there cannot be a necessary conclusion. You would only be pretending at best. This not only violates the laws of identity and contradiction but also our basic law of deduction. If you know you do not have a truth premise, which means there is no knowledge of a necessary connection of the subject and predicate, but then conclude with a necessary connection, then you violate the laws of identity and contradiction. The only way to avoid this is to admit you are only pretending for the sake of argument, but then this defeats the very idea of an argument. Why would I care if an atheist is only pretending for the sake of argument to argue that his worldview is true?

You cannot add information into the conclusion that is not part of the premise. This is a bit trickier because deduction is only designed for truth. With truth you obviously have justified necessary connections of terms and premises. Non-Christians do not have a justification for knowledge, and so this presupposition is lost on them and on how to correctly teach deduction. If you have truth, you will not commit fallacies like “undistributed middle,” because you already have necessary connections found in your truth propositions. You do not need to find or discover truth. You don’t take a leap of faith by shoving a term into a category that you want or feel it should be in, because you already know from scripture if such a term belongs there or not. Thus, to NOT have a “necessary connection” in the premises, but to then manufacture a necessary connection in the premise or conclusion is a violation of the basic principle of deduction. In this I am merely pointing out the presupposition or the philosophy of logic, in what makes deduction works, but sense this is lost on many I have simply spelled it out here.

4. Category errors. This has relation to 2 and 3.

People do not have knowledge to begin with, and so they play with categories like it’s their own personal play-dough. They bring in new information (new categories), either into the premises (4 term fallacy, equivocation) or conclusion to some how manage this unsurmountable problem. As bad as most theologians and pastors are at this, non-Christians far worse. Christians have the bible that help ground them with truth upfront, and this helps them. Unfortunately, many struggle to believe what the bible says, and so they end up making category leaps in the bible to make it say what they want it to say. Unbelievers without any foundation of knowledge, just end up making up stuff on top of making up stuff to infinity.

Figure and Mood:

Now it is time to do basic symbolic/formal logic.

There are two components. 1 is the Figure and the 2nd is the Mood. We will combine these.

In the “figure” we are concerned with the *placement of the middle term* (M) when we look at the Major and Minor premise.

Normally we think B is inside of C (major premise), and A is inside of B (minor premise), when we use symbols; however, for clarity in helping us with figure and mood we will think of them in this way.

Predicate (P) is the predicate of the major premise (C)

Middle Term (M) is subject of the major premise, and predicate of the minor premise (B).

Subject (S) is the subject of the minor premise (A).

When discussing syllogisms, the terms "Predicate" (P) and "Subject" (S) are generally used for the conclusion or in a broader context, not specifically for premises. In premises, we usually refer to "major term", "minor term", and "middle term" to keep clarity. Because the conclusion is the combination of subject of the minor premise and predicate of the major premise, I stated this way to make it clearer where the terms are going into the conclusion.

Middle Term(M) Predicate(P)

Subject(S) Middle Term(M)

We get the basic 4 combination output. Simple.

M	P	or	P	M	or	M	P	or	P	M
S	M		S	M		M	S		M	S

In “Mood” we are concerned with the type of propositions (A,E,I or O) there are when we consider them in the order of Major Premise, Minor and Conclusion. That is, in a normal bullseye syllogism, it is A.A.A.

This is a crash course on basic logic, for more detailed charts see the recommended book, “*Come Let Us Reason*,” by Norman Geisler.

A	or	A	or	I	and so on....
A		E		A	
A		E		I	

When combined, these figure and mood, we have “formal” logic, and can look at the form to determine if it is valid or invalid. However, this can be misleading, because you only need to see a bullseye syllogism a few times to know it is valid, there is no reason you need to check very time. The real issue is if you have truth to begin with, so that you avoid unsound arguments, which are pretending for the sake of argument, to see if this form is valid. Remember this is a test for validity, and not if the premises are true. A “sound” argument is the combination of necessary inference and justified knowledge.

Figure & Mood chard

Figure 1	Figure 2	Figure 3	Figure 4
M P S M	P M S M	M P M S	P M M S
AAA	EAE	AAI	AAI
EAE	AEE	EAO	AEE
AII	EIO	IAI	IAI
EIO	AOO	OAO	EAO
		EIO	EIO

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The above chart is your introduction into doing formal deductive logic. We will show how this works using our basic AAA syllogism. Some might have noticed in our A is inside of B, and B is inside of C, that when I often write out the syllogism, I have the ordered flipped. I say, “All B is inside C, and A is inside of B.” It would be a little more natural to follow the order A – B – C, right? Yes, it would be, however, if you notice the figure and mood chart above, to use “formal” logic on syllogisms, the AAA syllogism needs the major premise, “All B is inside of C,” to be the first premise. The major premise is the premise with the “predicate” that will end up being the predicate of the conclusion. The same with the minor term, but with the “subject.”

Here is an important point to make, it is deductively valid to have the first premise first (A is B) and then (B is C) as the second. You might ask, then why not do that? The main reason is to follow the quick “formal” chart above. The chart gives a quick way to check and see if a syllogism is valid. This chart is not that complicated and can mostly be memorized. Thus, if I read a AAA syllogism in a book, and they state the minor premise first, I will in my mind, put it as the second premise and put the major premise first and see if it checks out. Thus, it is not a big issue if you do not always put the premises in perfect order in your own speech and writing. The issue is this, when it is time to check or give proof, you can formally write it out. In most speech and writing, syllogisms are partial to make it more readable. A partial syllogism is called an enthymeme. Having enthymemes are normal and common. Just make sure when you are asked to fully write it out, that you can.

It is good to define your terms as concise as possible, but you can use noun phrases such as “those who,” “those things,” etc. The reason you want concise terms is to keep your terms definitions from changing in the argument, which can happen when it is more complicated. Also, in more advance logic you can quantify more specifically for this very reason. There are time and uses for such advance logic. However, in theology, we define many terms and doctrines, thus, even if a term might presuppose several categories behind it, because we have already defined those in our theology and preaching, these can be double checked. Even with a basic syllogism we can make chain syllogisms, or just make several short 3 premise syllogism. The good thing about this is that most mistakes happen on the basic level. Thus, it is best to do smaller arguments and double check things on the basic level. After this, then moving on to more advanced arguments can be helpful.

²⁵⁷ I give credit to Norman Geisler and Ronald M Brooks, in their book, *Come Now Let us Reason*, for the pictorial I created here, although I suppose it has a longer history.

Another big advantage to basic logic, is its focus on defining your terms and fallacies like ambiguity. There is a mistake in thinking because advance logic, like First or Second Order Predicate logic, that focuses on being specific with quantifiers that things get defined well. But this is not necessarily the case. Just because a more technical system allows you to be more precise, does not mean you have truth and does not mean you understand the basic terms. In my experience advanced logics seem to overlook the issue of truth, and clear terms. For non-Christians, who many dominate the school system in the west, this is good news for them, because they do not have a way to justify knowledge, and so why not just focus on advance logic and ignore the foundation of epistemology and category errors that involve observation to invisible true or false propositions.

Without truth, all deduction, including advanced logic, is useless. Without power, your cell phone is only a paperweight, the same for deduction. Basic laws of logic and basic deduction has strong connections to questions about truth, which non-Christians ignore. This is one reason non-Christians (in my experience) rush basic deduction for advance deduction (or just give up on deduction completely, like David Zarefsky), but Christian education will focus on it more. Christians have knowledge, and so to master the basics of deduction is a good fit.

I am reminded of a Wing Chung school that focused on the basics of authentic IP man Wing Chung; they focused on power (short-power on every attack), center line, correct stance and sparring by applying the basic maximums. I heard of a fellow Wing Chung school from overseas (England) came over and wanted to spar their students. The American school was newer and brought forth students who had only been practicing for 1 year; however, the England school, brought students who had practiced for many years. Surprisingly, the 1-year students held their ground, with some beating students who had many more years in practice than they had. How did this happen? Basics. The England students went on to learn more advance Wing Chung, without ever mastering the basics. This is how it is with most logic and arguments. If you are good with the basics, you will find you can overcome so-called advance practitioners, because most do not take the time to master the basics. Logic is not like Chess, where you can memorize 5 moves ahead, and just beat everyone else. Logic is applying principles of thought structure. It is more like a well-engineered bridge. Like math, if you cannot add and subtract, moving on to advance Calculus is a waste of time.

All those who believe in Jesus are those who will do Jesus' miracles. (John 14)

We will term this "*believers*" (B) and "*miracle doers*" (C). *Johnny* will be our (A) term.

Major Premise: All believers (B) are miracle doers (C).

Minor Premise: Johnny (A) is a believer (B).

Conclusion: Johnny (A) is a miracle doer (C).

If you see the chart above, you will see that only in *figure 1* is an AAA premise structure valid. You will also notice our syllogism fits the proper placement for our middle term, predicate and subject. Thus, our syllogism is valid, and the scripture gives us the truth, for the major premise. The only weakness is the minor term. Is Johnny really born-from-above or not? This will determine if the syllogism is sound or unsound. See how simple that was.

Basic Propositional Logic

The good thing about this basic logic is that it is easier than basic category logic. It is more commonly used in speech and so it is easy to pick up on.

In the basic category syllogism, the emphasis was on saying “x” necessarily belongs to this group and has these types of attributes. The hypothetical syllogism emphasizes the “necessary connection,” that x has to y. Similar, and one indirectly implies the other, but not the exact same thing. Category syllogisms has the emphasis on metaphysics and propositional syllogisms has the emphasis on ontology. They are two sides of the same coin.

These are called hypothetical syllogisms. The first premise, are two premises in the form of an “if...then,” hypothetical single premise. Although there are technically two premises, the combination of the two in the, “if...then,” form, is considered one premise.²⁵⁸ This, like with the categorical syllogism, is called the major premise. The second (minor premise) is an affirmation or denial of the “if” or “then.” And you guessed it, the third premise is the conclusion. The whole syllogism, is **not** considered “hypothetical,” just the first premise. Thus, the first type of syllogism is called a categorical syllogism, and this type, hypothetical.

1. Hypothetical/conditional
2. unconditional
3. unconditional

Instead of 3 terms made from subjects and predicates, the premises themselves are considered the terms. The good thing about this is that we only have 4 possible combinations to consider. The first part of the compound premise “if,” is called the antecedent. The second part “then,” is called the consequent. If it helps, you can think of “cause” and “effect,” but remember it is not directly about cause and effect. It is more about a necessary order or connection.

We symbolize the antecedent as “P” and the consequent as “Q.”

If P then Q.
There is P.
Thus, there is Q.

If P, then Q
P.
Thus, Q.

If you have been regularly reading your bible, you will notice the bible, particularly the New Testament, is filled with these types of arguments. They are usually in partial form, but they are frequent.

Matthew, 21:22 (NLT) “if you have faith, you will receive it.”

²⁵⁸ For example. I can say “if all dogs are mammals, then dogs are warm blooded.” But I can make this compound sentence in a single one, “if dog are mammals, then warm blooded.”

This is a partial syllogism, as they often are in normal speech and writing. This one from Jesus is easy because it is the entire first premise of a hypothetical syllogism.

1. If a person has faith, then they will receive it.
2. They have faith.
3. Thus, they will receive it.

With this type of syllogism, it is said in a way that allows it to be applied in more than one way. The first way is a *public statement of necessary connections about reality*. The second way is a *private application of one's experience into it*.

This first type is called a **modus ponens**. It is the first of the four combinations we will learn about. It is a valid "form" of reasoning. It argues from antecedent (or cause) to consequent (effect). Because we are dealing with deduction, it only works as a "sound" argument if you have truth upfront. If you have a known cause and effect, as a divinely revealed truth claim, then if you have the cause you will necessarily (not maybe) have the effect. This is reasoning by going downstream, or following the flow of the river.

The second type would look like this. For example I prayed and did not receive. This second type of valid reasoning is called denying the consequent or **modus tollens**. Referring back to our syllogism, it would work as a personal application to a truth claim. This type of reasoning is like saying if there is fire there is light photons. There is no light, thus there is no fire. As long as the connection is necessary, if you don't have the consequent, you don't have the antecedent. I have seen this reasoning many times in the bible.

1. If you have faith, then you will receive it.
2. I did not receive.
3. Thus, I did not have faith.

These are the only two valid ways to use the statement from Jesus, when He gives us the entire 1st premise of a hypothetical syllogism.

Let us go over the 4 possible combinations. The Antecedent Is "P" and the consequent is "Q."

1. Modus Ponens. Affirming the Antecedent. Valid.

1. If P, then Q.
2. We have P.
3. Thus, we have Q

1. Denying the Antecedent. Invalid.

1. If P, then Q.
2. We don't have P.
3. Thus, we don't have Q.

3. Affirming the Consequent. Invalid

1. If P, then Q.
2. We have Q.
3. Thus, we have P.

4. Modus Tollens. Denying the Consequent. Valid.

1. If P then Q.
2. We don't have Q.
3. Thus, we don't have P.

See how simple that is. We only have 4 possible combinations. Two of these are valid and two are invalid. “~” means “not” as symbol.

Understanding how the two valid ways are simple enough. Let us go over why the 2 invalid ways are bad.

Denying the Antecedent.

“(P) If reptiles are mammals, (Q) then they are warm blooded.

~(P) Reptiles are not mammals.

~(Q) Thus, Reptiles are not warm blooded.

This might appear to be valid, but it is not. If we already know that reptiles are not warm blooded, then great, but the way it is reasoned above is not a valid way to do so. Just because they are not mammals does not mean they are automatically not warm blooded. Humans are warm blooded,²⁵⁹ and birds are warm blooded, even though they are not are mammals. Look at another example.

(~P) If Oshea is not eating, (~Q) then Oshea is not hungry.

~(~P) Oshea is eating,

~~(Q) Thus, Oshea is hungry.²⁶⁰

Again, maybe Oshea has a cold and is not hungry; however, he is forcing food down anyway to get nutrients.

Denying the consequence is like denying a cause, and thus we get to deny the effect. The mistake is thinking that there can be no other cause that can produce the same effect. That is, “if it rains then my yard gets wet.” However, if you deny the rain, it does not mean my yard will not get wet, because maybe there is another cause that can produce the same effect such as Johnny watering the yard.

The basic form²⁶¹ of this type of propositional logic can be put into a categorical form to see that the mistake in a Denying the Antecedent is the Illicit Major fallacy. The issue is adding more information into the conclusion than what is provided by the premises. The major premise's predicate (warm blooded) is not distributed, but it ends up getting distributed in the conclusion. By this you are adding new information, not supported by the premises.

²⁵⁹ I say this in light that the bible, puts human flesh into a different category than animals. Thus, I am not convinced humans are mammals.

²⁶⁰ It would technically read as a double negative. “Oshea is not (not eating). This double negative makes it a positive. “Oshea is eating.” Once we understand the technical aspect of this, it is fine to say it in normal grammar.

²⁶¹ More complicated propositional form can have more terms such as, if A is B then C is D, for example.

1. All mammals are warm blooded.
2. No Reptiles are mammals.
3. Thus. No reptiles are warm blooded.

The next fallacy is called **Affirming the Consequent**, or as it is known in our cultural terms, **Scientific Experimentation, or scientific hypothesis formulation**.

This fallacy goes like this, “if P, then Q. We have Q, therefore we have P.”

Or in an example.

“If I watered my yard, then my yard gets wet.
My yard is wet.
Therefore, I watered my yard.”

This is obviously a fallacy in thinking. Maybe my yard is wet because it rained last night. This type of reasoning does not eliminate an “infinite” amount of other possible things that be a cause or correlation.

Vincent Cheung’s essay, A Gang of Pandas, helped me tremendously in understanding this. Please read his essay for further reading. I will shorten the basic idea I learned from this below.

Like math, your logic must represent the reality it is referring to. For example, if apples are 1 dollar each, and you pick up 5 of them, then you will need 5 dollars to purchase them. If the reality I am referring is about addition, but I make it about subtraction or trigonometry, then the math I am using does not correctly represent the reality I am dealing with. The same is with logic problems that deal with reality. The right logic must be used to represent what you are doing, or you are just wasting your time in delusions.

The logic that correctly lines up with the Scientific experimentation or hypothesis formulation, is affirming the consequent. The better scientist knows this and so adds a modus tollens at the end of this process to try to falsify their experiments. But the fact still stands that affirming the consequence was the foundation of the process. Sometimes in the context of developed or accepted science theories, a scientist might go straight to falsification, but this can be misleading, in that they think they are doing straight deduction. However, what they are trying to falsify was developed by and founded by irrational induction and affirming the consequent. As with our math example, the reality must match the math. The reality that necessarily reflects how all scientific theories are constructed is irrational induction, observation and affirming the consequent. Just as adding 5 apples is about math and not trigonometry, science is irrational and not rational.

You must remember that the only reason you are experimenting is that you do not know about something, and you are trying to discover it: therefore, you must observe and use affirming the consequence. There is no escape from this. The bible does not do this because truth is already known, and so there is no need to “discover” knowledge.

If I put salt in the solution, then it will boil.

It did boil.

Thus, I put salt in the solution.

Or

If hypothesis x is correct, then the solution will boil.

It did boil.

Thus, hypothesis x is correct.

“1. If chemical X is present (X), then this solution will turn green (Y).

2. The solution has turned green (Y).

3. Therefore, chemical X is present (X).

If the argument is stated this way, then it becomes obvious that the reasoning commits the fallacy of affirming the consequent. It fails to show that X is indeed the true cause or condition, instead of an infinite number of other possibilities:

A, B, C, D, and so on.”²⁶²

This is the reality of experimentation and hypothesis formulation that correctly reflects man’s interaction with reality. However, what scientists end up doing to hide this fallacious reasoning is to restate this as a Modus Ponens when they publish their findings in peer review magazines and in school textbooks. Modus Ponens is valid. However, because scientists do not have the truth, their only logical maneuver is affirming the consequent, which is irrational. Experimentation is a logical fallacy, but when they publish their findings they pretend they found a truth and reorganize their affirming the consequent as a Modus ponens. However, all they have is an unsound syllogism. They will then use this unsound syllogism to build on, to progress and then do other experiments on. These are then restated as unsound modus ponens and then the process is repeated. It is a systematic repetition of unsound arguments.

This is illogical. “If I eat bread, then my belly gets full. My belly is full, therefore, I ate bread.” Now if I restate this affirming the consequent as a Modus Ponens, or a simple basic syllogism.

All full bellies are bellies filled with bread.

Oshea’s belly is a full belly.

Thus, Oshea’s belly is a belly filled with bread.

An equivalent of this would be like our example above. I picked up 5 apples and purchased them for 5 dollars. However, when my wife asked about my visiting the store, I restated my experience as, 5 apples multiplied by 5 apples is 25 and so I spent 25 dollars. This is both logically stupid and a lie. Yet this is how scientists experiment and how they publish their results.

The fallacy of Affirming the consequent, does not magically go away because scientist later restates it as a deduction. A valid argument cannot make an invalid one turn into a rational one. Because scientists must use irrational observations and affirming the consequences, it means it is hard baked into the science process; it is the foundation. Thus, no amount of other deductions later will make it logical. The anti-logic is always there. If we were to do a Natural Deduction Truth table, and had affirming the

²⁶² Vincent Cheung. A Gang of Pandas. Sermonettes Vol. 1.

consequent in conjunction with a modus ponens together, the truth table will always show it to be false and irrational. We cannot add something like irrational observation to a truth table, but the point is simple. The combo of bad and good arguments together, always leads to a bad conclusion. Truth tables show that if you have irrational and rational arguments put together it does not make the whole thing rational, but the whole thing is a false argument.

One other thing to notice in the above syllogism. is how the subject and predicate, “All full bellies are bellies filled with bread,” are in the wrong order. It is like saying, “All dogs are golden retrievers.” This is a problem with published theories, they have no idea if the subject and predicate is in the correct order, because their argument is unsound.

Experimentation. Affirming the Consequent.

1. If chemical X is present (**P**), then this solution will turn green (**Q**).
2. The solution has turned green (**Q**).
3. Therefore, chemical X is present (**P**).

How the scientists publish their results. Modus Ponens.

1. If this solution turns green (**P**), then chemical Y is present (**Q**).
2. The solution turned green (**P**).
3. Therefore, chemical Y is present (**Q**).

This commits two mistakes, as Vincent says, “This is what the entire scientific enterprise amounts to: first, it is a systematic repetition of the fallacy of affirming the consequent, and second, it is a “*systematic application of the false conclusions so obtained*.”²⁶³ The formulation/experimentation is directly irrational, and the restated modus ponens are “unsound” because the first premise was produced by irrational means.

In more recent science, which we will review more in the section (defective logic) the affirming the consequent is pushed back to the part of the hypothesis. This is then initially tested like the above, and so this is still part of modern science. After some initial testing, and it appears to work, it is then restated as a modus ponens and a good scientist will try to falsify it. This is good. I am not mocking this. The foundation of science is completely irrational and using a modus tollens will help. But the fact remains, the foundation is irrational, and no amount of deduction later will make the irrational go away. In Natural Deduction if I used a compound argument that had both affirming the antecedent and denying it, the argument is always considered false or irrational. So, if the scientist tries to falsify it but cannot, the modus ponens is published as a new science law or theory. But this modus ponens was originally established by taking the premise from an affirming the consequent argument. The issue of the fallacy was never taken away.

²⁶³ Vincent Cheung. A Gang of Pandas. Sermonettes Vol. 1.

We will go over this more later, but this is just a modern way to apply the irrational Socratic Method of reasoning. I am not referring to the long hand way of questioning, but Socrates' broad principles for establishing knowledge. The big idea is that Socrates used "inductive" reasoning and empiricism to produce truth claims (universal premises about the world) to then use these to "deduce" from. This basic worldview method has dominated the world. The scientific method is just a slightly more complex way to do the same.

Science is the presupposition that you do not know. (Vincent Cheung)

"The scientific method suggests that you must identify variables and perform controlled experiments. But the problem of infinite alternatives remain the same.

Suppose a scientist swings a pendulum, makes some objects bump into one another, or performs some kind of experiment like this. He identifies certain variables such as altitude, weight, temperature, and so on. However, he can never say that he has identified all variables, such as an alien messing with his experiment from space, or an unruly and invisible spirit tempering with his project for its own amusement.

These latter possibilities may seem absurd, but according to what standard are they absurd? Only according to the scientist's own assumptions. Also, even if we admit that these are absurd, there are still an infinite number of variables that may or may not be present. The scientist may be missing an entire category of variables. For example, what if the scientist has no concept of temperature? He cannot then possibly measure and control it in an experiment. Yet it might be a decisive factor. If he does not know about it, he cannot even say that he does not know about it. Neither can he say that he knows this category of variables does not exist. There is an infinite number of possible categories of variables that he is missing. Therefore, a scientist can never say that he has accounted for all relevant variables, and he can never claim to have "constructed properly" any experiment.

The scientist simply does not know — he assumes without argument, without evidence, and without proof. He can do what he wishes, but if he claims that this whole thing is rational, then he is just arbitrarily calling it so. In fact, from even a simple analysis of science, there is no way that a scientist can claim to have any rational contact with reality at all. And certainly, he would have no right to call the Christian irrational.

The idea is simple. To know that any experiment is "constructed properly" the scientist's knowledge must be "bigger" than the experiment. But if his knowledge is already "bigger" than the experiment, then he hardly needs to perform the experiment to gain knowledge that is limited by the experiment. The only way to be sure that one has identified and controlled all variables that may affect the experiment is to possess omniscience. The conclusion is that only God can tell us about the universe."²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴ Vincent Cheung. A Gang of Pandas. Sermonettes Vol. 1.

Here is one last example provided by Gordon Clark.

How science can be useful though false is illustrated in a delightful textbook on inductive logic. Milk fever, the illustration goes, until late in the nineteenth-century, was a disease frequently fatal to cows. A veterinarian proposed the theory that it was caused by bacteria in the cow's udder. The cure, therefore, was to disinfect the cow, which the veterinarian proceeded to do by injecting Lugol [salt solution] solution into each teat. The mortality under this treatment fell from a previous ninety percent to thirty. Does not this successful treatment prove that the bacteria were killed and that Lugol cured the disease? Unfortunately, another veterinarian was caught without the Lugol solution one day, and he injected plain boiled water. The cow recovered. Had water killed the bacteria? What is worse, it was found later that air could be pumped into the cows' udders with equally beneficial results. The original science was wrong, but it cured the cows nonetheless.

A closer examination of the logic of verification should be made. In the example above, the first veterinarian probably argued: (P) If bacteria cause milk fever, (Q) Lugol solution will cure; (Q) the disinfectant does cure it; (P) therefore, I have verified the hypothesis that bacteria cause milk fever

It is precisely this fallacy that is used in every case of scientific verification. If the law of gravitation is true, a freely falling body will have a constant acceleration, and the eclipse will begin at 2:58:03 p.m.; but freely falling bodies do have a constant acceleration, and the eclipse did begin at 2:58:03 p.m.; therefore, the law of gravitation is true. Or, if the periodic table of atomic weights is true, a new element of such and such a weight must exist; this new element has now been discovered; therefore, the periodic table is verified. And, if I eat roast turkey and plum pudding, I lose my appetite; I have lost my appetite; therefore, we had roast turkey for dinner.

All these arguments are equally invalid. But sometimes there is an adverse reaction if it is claimed that verification never proves the truth of a scientific law. Is it worse to "attack" science or to "murder" logic?"²⁶⁵

Clark, unlike www.skeptic.com, use the phrase for experimentation, "verified the hypothesis", or "verified prediction," in the syllogism correctly in the affirming the consequent form and not restated in modus ponens to hide the irrational nature of reasoning from effect to cause.

(P) If bacteria cause milk fever, (Q) Lugol solution will cure;
(Q) the disinfectant does cure it;
(P) therefore, I have verified the hypothesis that bacteria cause milk fever.

This shows how science is able to get predictable results and at the same time be a false claim of reality. The statement that bacteria causes milk fever, because the salt solution cured it in repeated tests, is a false claim of reality, because other factors were used and got the same results. This is interesting. Even though it is a false claim about reality, it still worked. This is why science deceives many people. A repeated

²⁶⁵ Gordon Clark, *A Christian View of Men & Things*, (2005, pg.118). Published by The Trinity Foundation. Emphasis and (P) (Q) added by Author

pragmatic result can be very reliable and still be a false statement of reality. This is why science, as the bible commands, is to be used for pragmatic usefulness and not for a body of knowledge.

To use the conclusion from this irrational maneuver to then use deduction, does not make the anti-logic go away. Deduction does not logically validate scientific experimentation. To restate this as a Modus Ponens does not make all the anti-logic before it disappears. It just means you are systematically affirming a false conclusion as a true one. It just makes you more anti-logic.

When you consider the below, notice that what you observed first was the milk fever, not the disinfectant. Your only way to solve this health problem (antecedent) is affirming the consequent, if your logic is to correctly line up with reality or ontology.

P. If disinfectants cure a cow's milk fever, Q. then bacteria caused the milk fever.

P. Disinfectants do cure milk fever.

Q. Thus. Bacteria was the cause milk fever.

This is an unsound argument. Using Modus tollens will not make the irrational foundation go way, but it will help produce better results.

Science: **The Fallacy of an Undistributed Middle Term**

QUEST. Is the fallacy of affirming the consequent a type of inductive reasoning; or are the two completely unrelated?

Affirming the consequent: $P \supset Q$; Q ; $\therefore P$.

ANS. Affirming the Consequent and inductive reasoning are similar or comparable, if we define inductive reasoning as "having more information in the conclusion than what the premises contain."

In essence, the informal fallacy called, "non-sequitur" – "does not logically follow from the premises"—is what all inductive reasoning is.

Deduction: Conclusion has information only contained in the premises.

Induction: Conclusion has new information the premises do not contain. This is what makes the conclusion of induction not logically follow from the premises.

For example

E1. All [things that comes to pass] are [determined by God]. B is C

E2. [Man's moral acts] are [things which come to pass]. A is B

E3. Thus, [man's moral acts] are [determined by God], & [not responsible]. A is C & D

The conclusion "man's moral acts are determined by God," is obviously already contained in the original premise, "All that comes to pass are determined by God." If all things are determined by God, then so is man. Simple enough. However, the term "not responsible" and the necessary connection to it are not in the premises. This is the essential fallacy of all inductive reasoning, it is a non-sequitur.

As for affirming the consequent, depending on the terms, and its simplicity, many of them can be interchanged with categorical logic. Be forewarned not all can be

interchanged like this. It needs to be a simple, If A then B is C. (Example, “If A is B, then C is D,” type of arguments will not work.

The thing to remember is if one does truth tables in Natural Deduction, one will see that the simple forms (modus ponens, modus tollens) do not become invalid with complexity (for example with multiple conjunctions). Thus, the key is to master the basic forms, and realize they will continue to be valid, even in complexity, as long as one keeps the form. Since scientific experimentation uses the form of affirming the consequent, and then tries to falsify the theory’s with a modus tollens, all one needs to do is understand these basics. Also, keep in mind, basic propositional logic like modus ponens, focus on the necessary “connections,” while basic category logic will focus on necessary “categories.” If you have one, because these are “necessary,” then you have the other, but they are not the exact same thing.

This simple modus ponens is stating the B and C terms, and the third term, which is missing, is an implied fill-in-the-blank, “A” subject.

If a mammal, then warm blooded. (B is C)

Is a mammal. (B)

Thus, warm blooded. (C)

The argument is based on the presupposition that mammals are warm-blooded (B is C) is a given truth.

M.1 If [Bats] are [mammals], then they are [warm-blooded]. A, (B is C)

M.2. [Bats] are [mammals]. (A is B)

M.3. Thus, they are [Warm-blooded]. (A is C)

Even though the first line of this Modus Ponens, M.1., has all three terms (A is B is C), the main emphasis is that B is C, like the major premise of a Category Syllogism. Next, M.2. is A is B, which is similar to the minor premise of a Category Syllogism. Finally, the conclusion is A is C.

B is C

A is B

Thus, A is C.

This Modus Ponens is hypothetical in form only. The essence of this argument is the comprehension and extension of the terms in categories, not mainly about the necessary connection from B to C. Thus, we will put this into a bullseye syllogism.

N.1. All [Mammals] are [Warm-blooded]. (B is C)

N.2. All [Bats] are [Mammals]. (A is B)

N.3. Thus, All [Bats] are [Warm-blooded]. (A is C)

Now, let us review Affirming the Consequent, which is the structure for scientific experimentation. We will use a simple enough form that it can be used in category logic.

H.1. If [Jack] eats [lots of bread], then his [belly gets full]. A, (B is C)

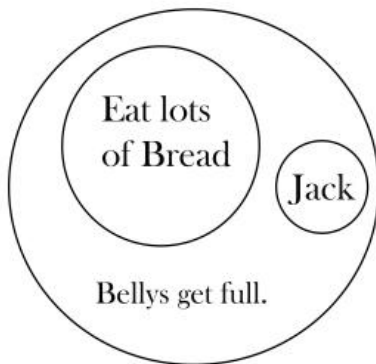
H.2. [Jack’s] [belly got full]. (A is C)

H.3. Thus, [Jack] ate [lots of bread]. (A is B)

B is C
 A is C
 Thus A is B.

This of course is a fallacy. It could be that Jack ate lots of durian rather than bread.
 Let us put this into category logic to see the fallacy.

Y.1. All [who eat lots of bread] are [those who belly's get full]. (B is C)
 Y.2. All [Jack] is [he whose belly got full]. (A is C)
 Y.3. Thus, [Jack] is [He who ate lots of bread]. (A is B)



If you noticed, the information in the conclusion has more than what the premises provide. This is the fallacy of an undistributed middle term. The picture will help show a visual of this logical fallacy.

Thus, the fallacy of scientific experimentation, if restated in a category fallacy, is the fallacy of an undistributed middle term. This is why science cannot escape the idea of infinite possible things that could be effecting the experiment, because of the undistributed middle term.

After the fallacy of scientific experimentation, the scientist uses the conclusion to create a major premise to apply deduction. However, this produces a subject and predicate term that are filled in the wrong order. Even if it can be argued that it does not mean the category statement is always filled in the wrong order, it does mean there is no rational way to prove the order is correct. This leads to skepticism, and skepticism then denies the laws of logic, particularly the law of contradiction. Thus, science is anti-logic.

If science produces knowledge, then the law of contradiction must be denied as false, because science is a systematic violation of this law, because its co-called knowledge leads to skepticism.

Because the world is revealed by God in scripture to be “mostly” predictable (miracles for example)—because God causes reality to move in a regular way—we can do experiments to get repeatable results that benefits us. We are commanded to dominate and subdue the earth to be helpful and beneficial “to us,” so that we will increase and be blessed. Science is one way to do this; however, the main way is by faith and God’s divine supply and miracles. Thus, in the Christian worldview science is under the subcategory of irrational or anti-logic, which is a subcategory of logic, and this is a

subcategory under epistemology and metaphysics. Science is shown by scripture to be a useful tool for pragmatic helpfulness, but not a tool to discover knowledge.

A Summary of the History of Logic (philosophy)

Logic is what makes math works. Like math, logic is knowing and applying the principles learned. One does not need to know the history of math or logic to understand how to apply the principle of addition or subtraction. The same is for philosophy. Knowing and applying the principles is the important part, knowing the history, not so much. I am always baffled why there is so much time spent on the history of philosophy and so little time on applying the principles of logic and ultimate questions. Seeing how great people are today in applying good logic and thinking skills, it appears this emphasis on history over principles in our school systems paid off.

Most philosophy books and teachers I have read and encountered are able to give me many names, dates and quoted debates, but when I ask them to apply logic and ultimate questions, or that is, when I ask them to add $10 + 12$, they look at it and say, “oh shi@#.”

With that being said, a very basic understanding of the important principles of logic and philosophy (good or bad) that are still affluent in society today (or at the presuppositional level, which contradicts the bible), could help some to organize their thoughts on these ideas and terms.

Socrates: Socratic method. Empiricism.

He partially understood the importance of critical thinking, but decided to make a magical leap from induction and empiricism to formulate “universal premises,” to then deduce from; however, this is to make all applications on reality unsound. The scientific method and publication has similarity to Socrates’ method; however, all empiricist based thinking uses a similar irrational maneuver at some point. They attempt to hide the fact they have no rational grounds for knowledge by taking their category of an irrational starting point and structure and metamorph it into the new category of being “rational.” They need a magical leap from induction to universal or truths to deduce from. We will see this play out in others later.

There are some sections in the deductive section of Peter Kreeft’s book “Socratic Logic,” that is helpful and well said; however, remember it is from the perspective of an empiricist and inductionist and so these types of thoughts get injected in random and odd places. Yet, it is for this reason I am quoting him on the Socratic Method because he is well studied on this and loves it. Kreeft can break down the long hand questioning aspect of Socrates’ and does a good general summery and structure of his

method. Many focus too much on the question part, but Kreeft is better at summing up the whole process.

“Section 6. Combining induction and deduction: Socratic method (P) Socrates was the first person who seemed to know exactly what he was doing in using both inductive and deductive reasoning together. His typical method of arguing combined the two as follows:

(1) First, a question arises: e.g. Is it true that political justice is simply whatever is in the interest of the stronger, as Thrasymachus the Sophist maintains in Book I of the Republic?

(2) We begin by making relevant sense observations of examples of justice. A just doctor heals and improves the weaker man, the patient who is sick; a just teacher of horse handling teaches and improves the weaker man, the man who does not know how to handle horses; and so with other cases.

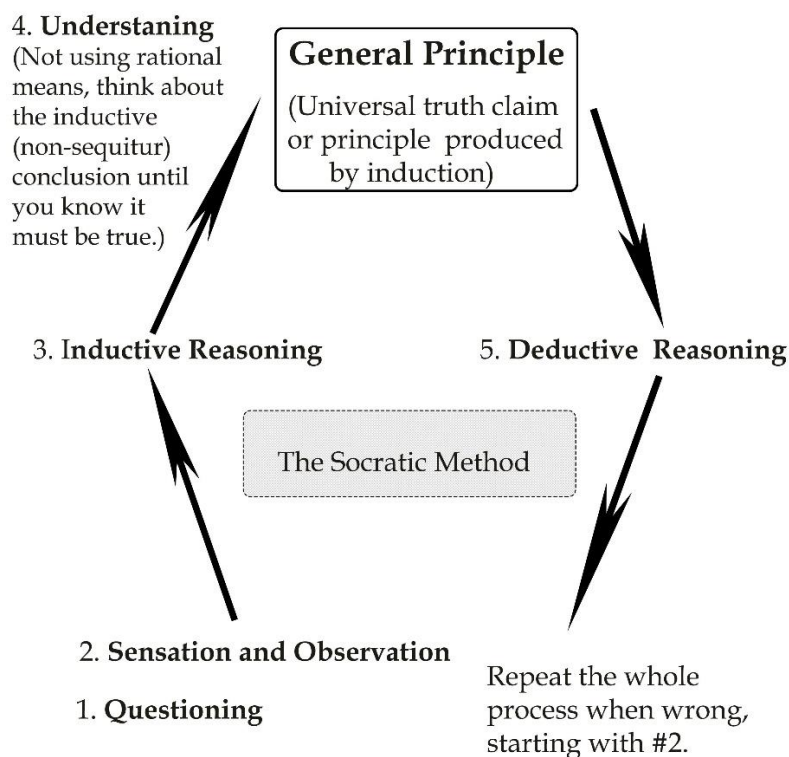
(3) We then make an inductive generalization on the basis of these examples (and this is inductive reasoning): it seems that justice is in the interest of the weaker rather than the stronger.

(4) The fourth step is understanding the necessity of this universal which we have arrived at, by understanding the reason for it: justice is always in the interest of the weaker because of what justice essentially is, by its own nature. In step three we know the fact; in step four we understand the reason for it.

(5) We can then proceed to the application of the universal to the particular by deduction. We apply our general principle to the specific example under discussion, political justice, by deductive reasoning: Since justice is in the interest of the weaker, not the stronger; and since political justice is a form of justice; therefore political justice too must be in the interest of the weaker, not the stronger.

Step 4 is crucial because inductive reasoning alone cannot prove its general conclusion with certainty. So if the general principle that has been arrived at by induction is not known with any more certainty than the inductive argument gives it (in step 3), then when we use it as the premise of a deductive argument (in step 5), that premise will still only be probably true, and the conclusion of the deductive argument will also be only probably true, even though its connection with its premises is certain. It is certain that if all swans are white and this is a swan, this is white; but if it is not certain that all swans are white, then it is not certain that this swan is white. The step in Socratic method between the inductive reasoning and the deductive reasoning is not a step of reasoning but understanding; a first-act-of-the mind insight into the universal that has been discovered by inductive reasoning. And only when this insight understands the necessity of this universal principle can that principle be known with certainty and not only with probability, which is all that induction gives. Only then can that principle yield certainty in the conclusion that follows from it by deductive reasoning.”²⁶⁶

²⁶⁶ Peter Kreeft. *Socratic Logic*. 2014 pg. 212.



This is just a Moron going under the name Philosophy, or thinker or teacher. Socrates knows induction is invalid and stupid, but magically makes this go away with “understanding,” whatever that even means. How do you understand an irrationally made conclusion to be necessary? By irrational understanding? If so, does irrational understanding lead to a necessary conclusion in induction? If by a rational understanding, then you would understand induction’s conclusion is never necessary. Obviously this understanding cannot be rational. He either means to use more inductive reasoning or by intuition/common sense. See Vincent Cheung and Professional Morons for more on so-called “common sense.” Common sense is just another smoke screen to say you have no rational way to show that you have knowledge. Whether it is Socrates “understanding or intuition, or common sense,” they are all referring to the same basic thing. There is an unbridgeable gap between the fallacies of empiricism, observation (and scientific experimentation) and knowledge of subjects and predicates. The human starting point invalidates any rational way to get to knowledge. So these terms of “common sense, understanding and intuition,” are preferred over terms like “magic or pink unicorns,” for expressing how a human starting point gets to knowledge.

Remember induction is a non-sequitur conclusion; that is, the conclusion does not logically follow from the premises. However, Socrates wants us to think/meditate about a conclusion that does not necessarily follow from the premises, until it becomes a truth about reality?

Thus, use non-rational means to think about a conclusion produced by induction, which is a non-sequitur, until you somehow intuitively know it is logically necessary? This is very careless of him. Wait? What? Is this all non-Christians have to offer? Yes!

This is not the Socratic Method, it is the Moron's Method. Sadly, whether it is Aristotle, St. Thomas, modern scientific method, or compromised churches who combine empiricism with Scripture in a dual epistemology, this moronic method has dominated the western world for thousands of years. Endless scholastic cattle have followed this for millennium, even in the church world.

As for our example above the Scientific method is very similar to this, with the exception that *#4 is experimentation (Affirming the Consequent) and general universal principle and deduction is stated as a Modus Ponens and a modus tollens applied to it.* The scientific experimentation is used to transform triple fallacies of sensation, induction and affirming the consequent into a necessary conclusion to formulate knowledge. As strange as it sounds, their way to find truth is to use an onslaught of fallacies, over and over, until the irrational pops out the rational. Wall punching hilarious.

Plato: Rationalism. Honest about his own failure

Plato is an interesting secular philosopher in that he was half-way honest about his inability to find the truth. We have already briefly stated some of this. The focus here is about the broad idea of rationalism.

“Plato had based his system on so-called three original, independent principles: the World of Ideas, the Demiurge (god like figure), and chaotic space. Although the three were equally eternal and independent of each other, the Demiurge fashioned chaotic space into this visible world by **using the World of Ideas** as the model. Thus, the World of Ideas is not only independent of but **also even in a sense superior** to the maker of heaven and earth. The Demiurge is morally obligated, and in fact willingly **submits to the Ideas** of justice, man, equality, and number.”²⁶⁷

Thus, Plato's true first principle of knowledge was the world of ideas, that is; the logic and categories that the physical world, and even gods follow. For this reason, Plato is historically known as the first Rationalist. By Rationalist we are referring to naming someone's worldview by their true presupposition, or starting point for knowledge. Even though Plato has a pseudo triple epistemology, the most fundamental was logic. This is what rationalism historically and technically means. If your starting point for knowledge starts with logic, you are a rationalist. There are hybrids of course, but we will keep this simple. This is obviously different from Socrates whose starting point was empiricism and observation.

St. Augustine: St. Augustine is notable for his hybrid epistemology, blending Scripture and Rationalism. In the context of Western intellectual history, this is significant because history tends to follow one of three main paths: (1) the road of

²⁶⁷ Gordon Clark, God and Logic. Copyright © The Trinity Foundation, www.trinityfoundation.org. Post Office 68, Unicoi, Tennessee 37692 Phone: 423.743.0199 Fax: 423.743.2005
Emphasis added by author.

Socrates and Aristotle (empiricism as a starting point, proceeding through induction and publishing these findings as deductions), (2) the road of Plato (incorporating rationalism, at least in part, as a starting point), or (3) the road of abandoning thought altogether to embrace irrationalism.

It's worth noting that Augustine's error—at the presuppositional level—is the least problematic compared to the other two options. The reason is straightforward: logical laws are just that—laws governing the structure of thought, not its content (premises composed of subjects and predicates). The Bible demonstrates that the laws of logic hold true, so Augustine isn't mistaken in viewing them as reliable or necessarily valid. However, if a rationalist remains consistent with their rationalist framework, they cannot extract subjects or predicates from it, since logic provides structure, not substance.

Thus, even when one constructs a hybrid epistemology with Scripture, the laws of logic don't contribute definitions to reality, causality, God, man, salvation, or ethics. The Bible provides its own doctrine regarding logic, making it both sinful and foolish to treat logic as an external addition to Scripture, as if it originates from a source outside biblical revelation or from God's nature. Plato made this error by subjecting the gods to entities like logic and numbers that existed independently of them. Augustine's mistake, however, doesn't introduce additional content in itself.

Augustine himself argued that logic isn't invented by man but merely discovered, and he supported this with Scripture (in his book *Doctrine*). Yet, in the *Manifesto*, he seems to present logic as part of a dual epistemology alongside Scripture. Gordon Clark identifies five or six ways to form hybrid epistemologies and details which one Augustine adopts. For further exploration, see Clark's work.

50. And yet the validity of logical sequences is not a thing devised by men, but is observed and noted by them that they may be able to learn and teach it; for it exists eternally in the reason of things, and has its origin with God. For as the man who narrates the order of events does not himself create that order; and as he who describes the situations of places, or the natures of animals, or roots, or minerals, does not describe arrangements of man; and as he who points out the stars and their movements does not point out anything that he himself or any other man has ordained;—in the same way, he who says, “When the consequent is false, the antecedent must also be false,” says what is most true; but he does not himself make it so, he only points out that it is so. And it is upon this rule that the reasoning I have quoted from the Apostle Paul proceeds. For the antecedent is, “There is no resurrection of the dead,”—the position taken up by those whose error the apostle wished to overthrow. Next, from this antecedent, the assertion, namely that, there is no resurrection of the dead, the necessary consequence is, “Then Christ is not risen.” But this consequence is false, for Christ has risen; therefore the antecedent is also false. But the antecedent is, that there is no resurrection of the dead. We conclude, therefore, that there is a resurrection of the dead. Now all this is briefly expressed thus: If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; but Christ is risen, therefore there is a resurrection of the dead. This rule, then, that when the consequent is removed, the antecedent must also be removed, is not made by man, but only pointed out by him. And this rule has reference to the validity of the reasoning, not to the truth of the statements.” - St. Augustine *Christian Doctrine*. ch.32

Augustine's historical influence on the Western world is profound (as far as we can tell). Despite his error in adopting rationalism as part of a dual epistemology, he was

correct to pair the Bible with deduction. As we've discussed, logic and deduction are only useful when grounded in truth. Augustine recognized Scripture as revealed truth from God and thus applied logic and deduction to it. This approach is evident in early Western schools, which taught deduction because they understood Christians possessed the truth, making it a perfect fit. Even the remnants of the Trivium or classical education, shaped by a Christian Western world, introduce logic to children early on. Notably, the famous Reformer Martin Luther was a master of classical logic, which complemented his reading of the Bible.

There's no need to delve into other historical rationalists or hybrid rationalists, as the basic principle here is so simple a seven-year-old could apply it perfectly. When a rationalist declares, "I think, therefore I am," the problem isn't the logical validity but the source of the subjects, predicates, and premises. Without truth, logical conclusions remain unsound and lead to skepticism (which, ironically, isn't very rational). Where do "I," "think," and "am" come from? This is the real epistemological question. And where does the logic to formulate this even originate? Logic itself doesn't reveal its source, so a more fundamental starting point—God's revelation—is required to provide this knowledge.

Thus, rationalists, in terms of their historical significance or relevance to worldview principles, are unimportant and irrelevant.

Irrationalism: Irrationalism has a long and convoluted history, filled with complex arguments involving many historical philosophers, but its core idea is simple. This tangled history and endless debates are part of irrationalism's strategy to obscure the simplicity of its failure. If one's foundation is irrationality and skepticism, they cannot truly win a debate. Moreover, if skeptics remain consistent with their own principles, no one can decisively defeat them either. Hence, the endless debates and hours of wasted time.

Irrationalism manifests in different forms. Some adopt a formal pseudo-epistemological stance, declaring, "No belief can truly be justified," whether directed at Plato or, later, Christians. But this claim undercuts itself—if no belief can be justified, their own statement lacks justification. Such a position deserves dismissal and mocking. Their only tactic is to keep shouting and debating to maintain relevance.

Others slide into skepticism more gradually. They reject the Bible, and some even doubt their current "god of science" can yield truth. From there, they conclude there's no way to find truth—and that's typically where their thinking stalls.

As shown earlier, you cannot deny the law of contradiction without relying on it. By using it, you affirm the very thing you reject. There's also a metaphysical or ontological dimension: you cannot think or draw a square circle, nor deny your own existence without presupposing it. You cannot, in reality, conceive of an infinite regress of a proposition denying and then affirming itself—it would take infinite time. The burden of proof falls on the irrationalist to demonstrate they can do these things and thus validate their stance. Contradictions do not exist; the skeptic must prove they do.

In ancient Greece, skeptic schools debating Plato and Aristotle persisted into Augustine's time. But as Christianity spread across Europe, skeptics gradually faded

under the onslaught of logic rooted in biblical doctrine. This victory was so thorough because Christianity wielded the unbeatable combination of deduction and truth.

The sad reality is that irrationalists must bow to the law of contradiction to assert there's no truth, or that no belief can be justified, or that "we know we don't know." It's akin to prostrating before the ancient King of Persia in his throne room while declaring, "There is no a king of Persia before me."

The same pattern emerges today with issues like denying male and female distinctions or blurring these categories until they're undefinable—only to then use those undefined terms to morally condemn others. The problem is that whatever coherence these irrational positions retain comes from implicitly relying on the laws of contradiction and identity. Without this, their stance collapses, otherwise their position means the Bible is true and they are false. The hypocrisy lies in their use of these laws to articulate their arguments while demanding others deny them for categories they dislike, such as male and female in this case. Such arguments warrant dismissal and mockery.

Unfortunately, as Christianity has waned in the Western world over the past few centuries, its emphasis on logic, reason, and deduction has faded from society and worldview thinking. The result is that irrationalism now dominates much of the Western world's system of thought. We will continue this discussion once we've addressed Aristotle.

Aristotle: For non-Christians, on the narrow topic of logic, Plato was brilliant, and Aristotle was an exemplary student. Plato, much like discovering how to use math, independently grasped deductive logic without formal instruction, marking him as a genius in this limited area. However, Plato's method of teaching these concepts was verbose. Aristotle took Plato's teachings, systematized them, made them concise, and expanded upon them. Here, we're focusing solely on the logical aspects of their philosophy, not their views on "gods" or other topics.

Thus, Aristotle mastered the fundamentals of deductive logic. He outdebated the skeptics and developed a basic framework for categorical and propositional syllogisms. Yet, despite these achievements, because he lacked truth, he reintroduced empiricism and induction into his system of thought.

This reliance on empiricism, induction, and science (his version of science being far simpler than today's) led him to define terms like "knowledge" and "sound arguments" as inherently tied to empiricism and science from the outset. For Aristotle, "epistemology" (the starting point for knowledge) was a pseudo-scientific, pseudo-intuitive blend of experience. Frankly, it's hard to pin down because Aristotle himself wasn't clear. His epistemology mixed observation, intuitive understanding, and science into a vague whole—an irrational concoction. His definition of science as "knowledge of necessary causes" is circular:

1. "Whatever is scientifically known must be demonstrated."

2. “The premises of a demonstration must be scientifically known.”²⁶⁸

Moreover, his concept of “demonstration” (a “sound argument”) combines logical validity with true premises—but he restricted “true premises” to those derived from scientific knowledge. He never entertained a worldview where empiricism, induction, and science weren’t the sole sources of knowledge. He assumed his worldview was true and baked that assumption into his definitions. There is nothing wrong with this in principle, but it only works if your epistemology can provide knowledge.

Today, a “demonstration” or “sound argument” combines (1) true premises (with the understanding that one’s worldview, not specifically science, determines the definition and source for truth) and (2) logical validity. For Aristotle, the major premise (or major truth claim) in a syllogism stems from this circular scientific knowledge. To dodge the circularity, he invokes a pseudo-intuitive experiential knowledge, somewhat akin to Socrates’ “understanding.” Both grapple with the irrationality of empiricism, induction, and science, attempting to miraculously transform them into necessary truths, causes, and universals. The minor premise in his syllogism also draws from empiricism and experience. Rejecting Plato’s innate knowledge and categories, Aristotle claims we’re born with blank minds, requiring empiricism, induction, and experience to know ourselves. But how does a blank mind learn the laws of logic or even think? Without the laws of contradiction and identity, how can thought occur? How can you discover the law of contradiction if you don’t already possess it?

Thus, Aristotle combines empiricism, observation, and induction with pseudo-intuitive experience to uncover “knowledge of necessary causes,” which he then labels as knowledge and uses for deduction. He agreed with Plato that “forms” existed but differed on how. Both sought to explain how reality aligns with universals and laws.

Despite the complexity of Aristotle’s explanations, he never escapes the Socratic Method. His approach is more detailed and involves more steps, but it mirrors the same overall framework. Though he agreed with aspects of Plato and debated him extensively, his method for finding knowledge ultimately resembled Socrates’ more than Plato’s.

Plato and Aristotle: The divide between Plato and Aristotle represents two streams in the Western world’s principles of thinking, splitting many into opposing camps. As Christians, we should have burned and forgotten the whole thing, but unfortunately, stupidity was allowed to persist. At its core—though there’s more to it—the divide hinges on one’s starting point for knowledge. Classic philosophers are often portrayed in history classes as focused on metaphysics, but this is misleading. While some of their books emphasize metaphysics to a degree, the Socratic Method (with its broad principles addressing ultimate questions) shows they were deeply concerned with how to acquire knowledge. As Christians, we recognize them as fools, unconcerned with what they deemed important. Instead, we focus on how their ultimate questions and principles either borrow from or diverge from the Christian worldview.

²⁶⁸ Smith, Robin, “Aristotle’s Logic”, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Winter 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), Winter 2022 URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/aristotle-logic/>>.

Those aligning with Plato are often labeled “rationalists.” However, since the laws of logic contain no knowledge, a rationalist cannot claim knowledge to assert their rationalism—they can’t use subjects and predicates (which involve content) to define themselves as rationalists. Pure rationalism is impossible; it’s typically a hybrid of logic and another axiom. Because the Bible employs logic extensively, notable Christian figures like St. Augustine blended rationalism with Scripture. As noted earlier, this error is flawed but not fatal, since logic itself provides no content.

The Bible also speaks of innate knowledge, contradicting Plato’s feeble attempt to explain its origin.

Those aligning with Aristotle often adopt pure empiricism as their starting point or combine empiricism with another presupposition. The famous Catholic philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas is one example. As previously stated, this mistake is not only flawed but fatal, because sensation and observation generate substantial content. This content is likely to clash with the content of another epistemology. We refer to knowledge here, the way society uses of it and not in the usual way we normally use it here as “truth.” Knowledge as used by society would be defined by the bible as human speculation. (For instance, the Bible says I am healed by Jesus’ atonement, yet I still see my sickness. If both are equal starting points for knowledge, which do you choose?)

St. Thomas, after whoring himself with Aristotle, formally embraced empiricism as a dual epistemology alongside Scripture, embedding this doctrine in schools and churches. His followers became scholastic drones, unwitting soldiers for Satan. The Catholic Church thus adopted a triple epistemology: the Pope (human authority), empiricism, and the Bible.

The Reformation sought to correct this, with partial success. It began with good intentions and achieved some positive outcomes. Certain isolated statements on Scripture from the Reformers are sound, but the result was compromised. Today, the Reformed often treat their heroes and creeds (human authority)—despite the Westminster Confession acknowledging that all creeds can err—as a hybrid or even superior starting point to Scripture. In doing so, they’ve mirrored the Catholicism they sought to escape. Early on, they were better at rejecting empiricism as an epistemology, but even this wasn’t absolute. Reading Martin Luther reveals he used some pseudo-empiricist arguments against odd and bad Catholic practices. He was correct to rebuke these false teachings, but was wrong in using any use of empiricism to provide knowledge. This is glaring today when Reformed individuals argue against spiritual gifts, faith, and healing with purely empiricist claims like, “Why don’t we see them?” When challenged that this reflects Catholic empiricism rather than Scripture, they retreat to their creeds. I’ve encountered this pattern repeatedly. In essence, they don’t hold a triple epistemology but a dual one: empiricism and human authority.

This dual epistemology proved catastrophic and fatal. For centuries, the Western world grappled with a strange hybrid of Bible and empiricism. Over time, it increasingly favored empiricism, gradually sidelining the Bible until it abandoned Scripture entirely, embracing empiricism as its sole presupposition for thinking. The church was wrong to allow this.

Locke and Descartes relied on empiricism as an epistemology but attempted to blend it with aspects of rationalism. “I think, therefore I am” is one such example. The

details aren't important—such attempts were failures and always will be. Rationalism provides no content for thinking, and Empiricism has no existence as a starting point for knowledge. Thus, their specifics are long-winded fables with little value to glean.

David Hume: Hume is significant because he made an honest attempt to argue for a purely empiricist epistemology, opposing the Christian worldview. In a rare move for a non-Christian, he engaged at the presuppositional level to defend his atheistic stance. Yet, in doing so, he discovered that empiricism offers no rational foundation for knowledge. In another rare moment of candor, he admitted that relying on the senses leads to skepticism. Some sensations are unreliable. Using senses and observation is inductive, and induction is anti-logic, resulting in skepticism. Through senses, observation, and induction, we cannot logically establish cause and effect.

Hume then tried to address this by claiming that through experience and habit, we magically (and irrationally) come to know things as they are. This oddly resembles Socrates' "understanding" in his Method.

If I see a mountain, the image in my mind is a copy—it's mental and propositional. These are three distinct categories compared to the actual mountain. It's like saying apples are round, the sun is round, therefore I can eat the sun—a category error. Let's triple it: Apples are round, the sun is round, so I can eat the sun. The sun is yellow, the numbers on my house are yellow, so 7 is yellow. Yellow is my favorite color, predicates are my favorite, therefore predicates are a color. Thus, apples mean predicates are my favorite color.

There are more than three category errors in moving from sensation to a mental premise, but even with just these three, the nonsense is glaringly incomprehensible. Yet this is the logical and intellectual foundation of empiricism. Still, critics dismiss the Bible as a myth, relying on empiricism for that conclusion. Their foundation is incoherent and anti-logic, yet they pride themselves on their intelligence. They're morons.

Hume was forthright about the skepticism but less so about its utter absurdity. Skepticism denies the law of contradiction, yet a contradiction has no existence. Try denying your own existence without relying on it. A contradiction is an infinite regress of affirming and denying X and not-X. To prove contradictions exist, one would need to show they can affirm X and not-X in an endless regress and deny the law of contradiction without using it. Contradictions have no reality. Thus, empiricism has no existence as a starting point for knowledge—it's nothing.

Modern Day: Professional Morons

To understand the present, we must trace the trajectory of the Christian worldview, which once dominated the West. After Hume exposed the skepticism inherent in the senses, some in the church—blinded by a dual epistemology of empiricism and the Bible—recognized the problem and sought to address it. Sadly, their attempts were unbiblical and proved fatal.

The first was **Kant**. Like others before him (you'll see men without the Bible repeating the same mistakes endlessly, making the history of philosophy tedious and frustrating to read), Kant attempted a hybrid of empiricism and rationalism. Unlike his predecessors, Kant pursued this hybrid after Hume had publicly demonstrated that

empiricism leads to skepticism. Aristotle and Socrates knew this too, but most ignored it or waved it away with vague notions like “understanding,” “habit,” or “intuition.” In Kant’s era, however, Hume’s critique had alerted the public to the issue, sparking a desire to fix it.

Kant’s big idea fails to explain how logic provides subjects and predicates. He concedes that empiricism breeds skepticism and thus denies the law of contradiction, but he doesn’t justify how this hybrid of bible and empiricism, resolves the problem. Rather than resolving the issue it compounds it. For instance, if I claim, “There is no such thing as the law of contradiction” as one part of my dual epistemology, paired with “Scripture” as the other, it doesn’t mean Scripture proves I can deny the law of contradiction. Rather, if I assert Scripture supports this hybrid, I undermine and discredit Scripture by tying it to an irrational dual epistemology. Thus, the second irrational epistemology is wrong, and now by its association with it, scripture is now wrong.

Thus, Kant’s hybrid, though more complex, didn’t mitigate the flaws of rationalism or empiricism as epistemologies—it compounded them. It’s like category logic’s rule: two negatives don’t yield a positive. Combining two epistemologies that produce zero knowledge doesn’t magically generate knowledge. If you add $0 + 0$, the result is still 0.

Irrationalism

After Kant came **Kierkegaard**. He honestly assessed Kant’s hybrid, recognizing that including empiricism retains some anti-logic affirmations. Induction is irrational. Sensation and observation are irrational. To claim knowledge comes from irrational origins, is by its own admission irrational and stupid.

Europe was drifting from Christianity. David Hume had shown empiricism leads to skepticism. Kant’s hybrid failed to purge the irrationalism from his Christian philosophy because he clung to empiricism. Thus, both the secular Western world and the Christian world embraced irrationalism, united by their reliance on empiricism.

Kierkegaard took the next step in this climate. He made Christianity openly affirm irrationalism, declaring faith contrary to reason. His popularity cemented this embrace of irrationalism as formal Christian doctrine.

The Bible teaches the opposite: “Faith is simply a religious term for logic or reason.”²⁶⁹ God is logic, appeals to logic, and employs logic in Scripture.

I recall an article from *World Magazine* where the authors rejoiced that over half of America was skeptical of Christianity, yet were surprised that over half also doubted evolution. In a world—including many churches—that has embraced empiricism, it’s no shock that skepticism runs rampant.

I also recall Gordon Clark citing a 1945 General Harvard Committee report. They congratulated themselves for purging Christianity from higher education but lamented the absence of another philosophy to unify all subjects as Christianity once did. Even if we grant empiricism can yield some knowledge, it fails with obvious fields like math, ethics, or logic. Thus, in an anti-Christian education system, skepticism and

²⁶⁹ See Vincent Cheung. Logic and Resurrection

irrationalism prevail, lacking an epistemology to cohesively address ultimate questions.

This brings us to today. The Western world's philosophy is irrationalism and pretense. Vincent Cheung effectively illustrates this with a contemporary teacher of logic and argumentation. Let's examine how the current worldview approaches logic and argument.

"We will use David Zarefsky as an example. Among his numerous credentials and achievements, Zarefsky is Professor of Argumentation and Debate and Professor of Communication Studies at Northwestern University. Therefore, as with Sinnott-Armstrong, let no one say that I have deliberately chosen an inferior specimen as an example of non-Christian foolishness.

In his syllabus for a course on argumentation,[10] he refers to deduction and induction, and he expresses his view on logical validity in these terms, so it would be helpful to define them and review their differences.

Deduction is the process of reasoning by which the conclusion is inferred from the premises by logical necessity. On the other hand, induction is the process of reasoning by which the conclusion is not inferred from the premises by logical necessity. In deduction, the conclusion includes only information that is already contained in and necessarily implied by the premises. But in induction, the conclusion includes new information that is not already contained in and necessarily implied by the premises.[11]

An inductive argument yields a conclusion that is supposedly but not necessarily implied by the premises. For this reason, induction is always a formal fallacy; that is, the conclusion is never certain, and never rationally established. In fact, since the conclusion is not necessarily implied by the premises, there is no way to logically show that there is any necessary relationship between the conclusion and the premises.

With the above in mind, Zarefsky writes, "Formal reasoning is not seen as the prototype of argumentation in recent scholarship." [12] By "formal reasoning," he is referring to deduction, when "one actually reason[s] in syllogistic form." [13] In his view, "Most argumentation is not represented by a form in which the conclusion contains no new information." [14] But he does not conclude, as I would, "Therefore, most argumentation is fallacious." Instead, he says that argumentation "involves enabling an audience to move from what is already known and believed to some new position," and "This movement involves a leap of faith that the arguer seeks to justify." [15]

He goes on to say, "Judgment is needed because absolute proof is not possible, yet decisions must be made." [16] Subjectivity is introduced into the process because of pragmatic concerns, that is, because "decisions must be made." He continues, "Judgment is sought by giving sufficient reason that a critical listener would feel justified in accepting the claim." [17] Instead of objectively and logically demonstrated, the claim is "accepted" if the listener "feel" that it is justified. Thus for Zarefsky, "Adherence of the critical listener becomes the substitute for absolute proof."

In other words, non-Christian philosophers realize that deduction is unrealistic and impossible for them, and so they have chosen to abandon deduction or deductive arguments, and instead they have decided to depend on subjective judgments based on induction or inductive arguments.

And this means that their arguments are logically invalid. Zarefsky admits, "Applying the concept of validity beyond formal logic is tricky." [18] Why? "Because the claim does not follow from the evidence with certainty, we cannot say that if the evidence is true, the claim must be true." [19] We may ask, "If it does not follow with certainty, then does it follow at all?" In any case, what does he do? Does he write, "Therefore, we must concede that our arguments are invalid, and we must be honest and admit that our conclusions are mere subjective, non-rational, or even irrational opinions and speculations"?

No way! Instead of admitting that all their everyday arguments are invalid he says, in effect, "Let us redefine validity! Let us agree that even our leaps of faith are logically valid!" [20] You might say, "But we still must have a 'check on the process of reasoning,' [21] don't we?" "Of course," Zarefsky replies, "This function is achieved by focusing on experience rather than form." [22] That is, rather than thinking of validity as a matter of necessary inference, he proposes that "A general tendency develops over time for certain reasoning patterns to produce good or bad results." [23] Like Sinnott-Armstrong, he makes reasoning a pragmatic endeavor instead of a logical or rational one. It is also suggestive that his course is entitled, "Argumentation: The Study of Effective Reasoning," whereas if I were to teach a course on argumentation, I would instead entitle it, "Argumentation: The Study of Necessary Inference."

Non-Christians have abandoned rationality, because they cannot live up to the demands of logic or reason. Still, they want to go through the motions of reasoning, and they want to consider themselves rational. So they have redefined rationality as a matter of agreement rather than logical necessity. They cannot get from "here" to "there," but they still want to get "there," so they decide to take a leap of faith. If this sounds irrational and invalid, then they will just agree to define it as rational and valid.

Their strategy is that, "If you cannot get from here to there, then cheat. And if everybody cheats, then we will all look fine to one another. Although our conclusions are reached by leaps of faith, we would still like to think of ourselves as rational, so let us just agree that we are rational no matter what." It is "rationality" by agreement and by pure fantasy, and not by logical necessity or necessary inference.

You exclaim, "What?! Are they stupid?" Yes, they are stupid, and these are the same morons who attack your faith and call you irrational. They are desperate and dishonest. They find it impossible to remain rational apart from reliance on God's revelation, but they refuse to admit it. The pragmatic approach stems from the realization that they cannot arrive at the conclusions that they wish to prove by deduction, because given their non-Christian epistemologies, it is impossible for them to begin with self-authenticating premises from which they can deduce true conclusions by logical necessity. And even though there are still some non-Christians who try to live up to the standard of deduction, they

cannot do it on the basis of their non-Christian epistemologies and first principles. Therefore, whether they try or not, we win.”²⁷⁰

Thus, the Western world has abandoned deduction entirely. They pretend their anti-logical system of thought is true, all for the sake of “ethics.” This brings us to the final part of this section.

A Quick Side Note: Let’s be clear—it’s not just those in the church who openly admit or subtly show they take a liberal stance with Scripture who pair empiricism with it, thus fostering skepticism. Church elitists who flaunt doctrinally polished phrases do the same. For example, I’ve met many who claim “sola scriptura” or “the Bible is my final authority,” yet when faced with the doctrine of faith and healing, they respond, “But we just don’t see that anymore.” In that moment, they’ve elevated their empiricism and observations to a dual epistemology with Scripture—or even above it. They’ve made themselves a pope, deciding truth and falsehood, just like the Catholics they criticize. Despite their rebukes of the Pope, they mimic his example. Any time you adopt a starting point for knowledge beyond Scripture, you’re “liberating” yourself from relying solely on the Bible for truth. This is the baseline definition of a liberal and liberal theology. Personally, I like to discuss healing on the demand of faith (Isaiah 53:4-5, James 5:15, Matthew 21:21) as a litmus test to see if a so-called Christian adheres to the Bible alone or frees themselves from it with another epistemology. The moment I hear, “But history shows healing stopped,” or “I don’t see this today,” I know they’re liberal Christians—just as much as a homosexual pastor who justifies his stance with, “Loving each other feels so good based on what I see and observe, so it’s good regardless of context.” Whenever someone uses feelings, observations, or experience to counter God’s Word and promises, you’ve stepped into the madhouse of liberal theology. They’ve freed themselves from depending solely on the Bible for knowledge about reality. Affirming homosexuality or claiming God doesn’t always heal on the demand of faith, based on observations and feelings, are equally liberal theologies—equally heretical. The only difference is one pastor wears flashy colors, the other drab; one uses observations to indulge lustful appetites, the other self-debasement.

As noted earlier, ethics are an “ought”—not descriptive premises derived from the senses. We’ve already highlighted the multiple category errors from sensation to premises, but ethics adds yet another. Ethics, like math or logic, reveal their incorporeal nature more readily. They aren’t observed; they’re invisible concepts we apply to what we see, think, or dream. I’ve never observed an ethic. God commands what I should and shouldn’t do within this reality He made. Ethics are commandments revealed by God. Some of His commands are even part of our innate knowledge (Romans 2:15), not observed but divinely embedded in the soul by God’s power (the ontology of ethics).

Ethics also stem from ultimate questions. They only arise if knowledge, reality, and man exist. Your worldview’s premises must account for knowledge, reality, and man, or ethics become delusional. In an empiricist worldview, concluding an “ought” from descriptive premises about reality is a logical blunder.

²⁷⁰ Vincent Cheung. Professional Morons. From the ebook, “Captive to Reason.” Chapter 27. 2009.

See source for source on quoted martials.

Thus, by embracing irrationalism and pretending induction yields truth for the sake of ethics, the modern Western world is left with dogmatic political-ethical zealots. They're dogmatic because they seek to enforce their ethics on all through government. That's what "dogmatic" means—not a private opinion, but a doctrine you believe should apply universally. Everyone is dogmatic; however, the bigger issue is if the doctrines you are zealot over, are true or false. There's no such thing as a non-dogmatist—to deny this, they'd have to dogmatically assert that dogmatism doesn't exist or is optional.

Sadly, many Christians have fallen into this sinful pattern. Two factors drive it. First, as discussed, is empiricism. They're bombarded with medicine commercials and frequent doctor visits, rewiring their minds to rely on senses, observation, and science rather than God for help, power, and definitions. They extend this to government dependence. Second is rejecting the supernatural power of God's program. In Acts 4, the church turned to God's supernatural power to confront government, not their own strength. This isn't to say we shouldn't vote or educate, but when prisons shake and political advisors are struck blind, God's power is undeniable to both the church and the wicked. If Christian marches led to God toppling buildings on our enemies, as with Jericho, it would align more with how Scripture instructs us to face political opposition. When all you have is human power, you are a non-Christian, and all you have are carnal outcomes. But the bible commands us to walk in God's power and make miracles a common thing.

Politics is essentially ethics. Yet empiricism offers no ethics—so we pretend. "Man 'ought' to have some political structure to improve life." That's all the thinking the Western world has left.

They lack a worldview. They embrace irrationality. They feel strongly about ethics, so they pretend to have them. Government is their church now, and they march like bald, neutered zealots for a cause. They can't rationally defend reality, knowledge, or man, yet they are dogmatic zealots for ethics, which don't even function practically. Skeptical of reality, knowledge, logic, and man, yet they're strangely "certain" about ethics. They're zealous morons.

Summary: The broad foundation is "God." God underpins logic—without Him, logic is pointless. Scripture teaches that God's foundation is absolute, directly sovereign over all reality, knowledge, logic, and ethics. This foundation resolves all the issues non-Christians futilely grapple with in understanding the world.

Defective Logic

1. Satan's epistemology is empiricism.
2. His ontology is Arminianism.
3. Now we understand induction is the devil's logic, when used find knoweldge.

Analogy Knowledge: I've read lengthy arguments claiming our knowledge is an analogy of God's, as well as rebuttals to this idea. There are a few valuable insights to glean from these debates, but most of it is a waste of time. Only one or two real issues matter here.

The concept of analogy knowledge violates the law of identity. Our knowledge doesn't share the same definition as God's, nor does it have the same identity as His. This breach of the law of identity renders the ultimate question of Christian knowledge skeptical. Skepticism, in turn, leads to a violation of the law of contradiction.

Furthermore, using knowledge that differs from God's to assert that our knowledge isn't the same as His makes the statement meaningless. Relying on analogy knowledge to claim our knowledge is analogical strips the statement of certainty. This, too, fosters skepticism and denies the law of contradiction. Thus who teach analogy knowledge have no justification to assert this claim past an autobiographical description about themselves. Their standard gives them no justification claim dogmatics.

The F@#king Nonsense of Empiricism

I will quote Vincent Cheung on this at length, because he says it so well. Then we will move to science. Because science uses the foundation of empiricism and other inductive fallacies, we need to spread wide the logical perversion of empiricism, to appreciate how diseased the foundation is.

This again solves the mind-body problem, but this time it is illustrated in the reverse direction. In metaphysics, God facilitates physical motions in correspondence to the thoughts of the mind; in epistemology, God grants knowledge to the mind on the occasions of the sensations, but apart from the sensations themselves. Therefore, sensations do nothing more than to stimulate intellectual intuition, providing the occasions upon which the mind obtains knowledge from the divine logos.

Empiricists must explain how physical sensations convey knowledge to the incorporeal mind. Of course, some non-Christian empiricists do not believe in an incorporeal mind, but they believe that knowledge reside only in a physical brain. Although we can easily defeat them on this point, even apart from this, they still need to prove by valid and sound arguments how physical sensations can convey any information to the physical brain. No one can do this.

Empiricists think that they can make inferences from the many sensations present to the mind at any given moment in order to produce knowledge. However, I challenge them to write out the process in syllogistic form to show the logical validity of such inferences. Even if he can write out the process of reasoning, he will see that all inferences from sensations are unavoidably fallacious; no inference from sensation can achieve formal validity.

For example, if you are looking at a red car, by what valid process of reasoning can you infer from this sensation the conclusion that you are looking at a red car? It is impossible. However, if every inference from sensation is fallacious, then this means that every inference is an unnecessary or even arbitrary conclusion from premises that are doubtful in the first place. But an empirical

worldview constructs its propositions on these fallacious inferences. Thus such a worldview is worthless, although it is embraced by multitudes.

At any given moment, you are bombarded by many sensations, and if you were to know the objects you are seeing by an empirical epistemology, this means that your mind must organize and combine these sensations in order to group together the ones that belong to their corresponding objects. To illustrate, suppose you observe an apple on a table. For you to recognize that there are two objects and what these two objects are, you must be able to tell where one object ends and the other one begins.

However, this requires you to know the attributes and appearances of these objects before you observe them, but empiricism teaches that a person learns the attributes and appearances of objects by observation. If you must know them before you observe them, and if you can know them only by observing them, then this means that you can never know anything that you do not already know. And if you follow some empiricists in affirming that man is born with a blank mind to be filled with knowledge gained by experience, then on the basis of empiricism, your mind will remain blank forever. Knowledge acquisition is impossible on the basis of empiricism.²⁷¹

Some Questions for Empiricists

INTRODUCTION

The following are some questions that I posed to an atheist several years ago in the course of a written exchange. These questions and others like them are unanswerable by any belief system that places any dependence on the reliability of sensations, rendering them untenable.

The questions do not apply only to non-Christian systems, but almost all of them also apply to any system of so-called Christian theology, philosophy, or apologetics that affirms the reliability of sensations, including the one that claims that the reliability of sensations is "properly basic" so that it requires no rational justification, and that school of pseudopresuppositionalism that claims that biblical presuppositions "account for" the reliability of sensations, induction, and science.

Even if it is "properly basic" to be able to see a mirage, it is also properly useless to do so unless we can know by sensation that it is a mirage. Therefore, properly basic reliability is not enough; the empiricist needs properly basic infallibility. But does he even have properly basic reliability?

What is a sensation? How did you learn the meaning of a sensation? How do you know when you are having a sensation? Do you sense the sensation to know that you have a sensation? If you sense a sensation, then how do you

²⁷¹ Vincent Cheung. *Ultimate Questions*. 2010. 16-17

know that? Do you sense the sensation that senses the sensation? Then, do you sense the sensation that senses the sensation that senses the sensation? If this is not your view, then please explain. That is, if information comes from sensation, then how do you know when you are having a sensation?

Do you ever not have a sensation? How do you know that? Is a lack of sensation itself a sensation? Then, do you sense that you are not having a sensation?

Can you have a sensation and not be conscious of it? How do you know that? Have you ever sensed that you are not conscious of a particular sensation? If so, then are you not in fact conscious of it? Does this not return us to the original question, that is, can you have a sensation and not be conscious of it?

Or, are you conscious of all the sensations that you are having? How do you know that? Do you sense that you are sensing all? But then, do you sense that you sense that you are sensing all? How do you know? By sensation again?

Do you always sense everything around you? If not, how do you know that you are not sensing everything around you if you are not sensing everything in order to know what there is to sense and to know what is there but not being sensed?

How about radio waves? Are there radio waves? If so, do you sense radio waves? If you use a radio device to pick up these waves, then what are you sensing? The sound from the radio, or the radio waves? Do you hear words and music from the radio? If so, then are radio waves words and music? You might say that these are the "effects" of the radio waves. But then, you are only sensing the effects and not the cause. If so, how do you know the cause? If you infer from the effects to the cause, then how do you know that the inference is valid? By sensation again? What do you sense that would confirm this?

Also, how do you know that you do not know certain things? By sensation? Again, is the lack of sensation a sensation? How do you know this? Do you sense that a lack of sensation is a sensation?

Then, if you know that you do not know certain things, what are these "certain things"? If you know what they are, then you must know what they are by sensation, but then, this means that you have sensed them – if so, in what sense do you not know them?...

... Do you like logic? Do you want to be rational? Then how did you learn the law of contradiction? If you learn all things by sensation, then how did you sense the law of contradiction? If you sensed it used or applied and then inferred this law, then is your knowledge still from sensation? Or is it from sensation plus logical inference? But then, how come you used logical inference before you learned the law of contradiction? Also, before you learned the law of contradiction, did you have sensations? If so, did you apply the law of contradiction to those sensations, so that a sensation could not mean one thing and its contradictory at the same time? If you did not apply the law, then how

come all sensations were not nonsense? If you did apply the law, how could you do it before you learned it?”²⁷²

If your epistemology begins with the five senses, the fallacies of induction are pre-baked into your worldview. No amount of complaining will make these fallacies disappear. You lack knowledge because it wasn't revealed or given to you. Instead, you first rely on empiricism, then layer observation on top, attempting to find knowledge. You start with particulars—"some" (which are private, transient descriptions)—and change the identity to "public," and "all" (category statements). But in doing so, you violate the law of contradiction by equating "some" with "all." Some might argue they're only claiming "some" observations make something "probable." This remains anti-logic: asserting "some" equals "probable" is a contradiction and breaches the law of identity. There's no necessary connection between "some" and "probable." Concluding "probable" from premises of "some" adds information beyond what the premises provide. There is no possible way to use the laws of logic to bridge "some" to "probable." Thus, induction's invention hinges on denying these laws, making it a "formal fallacy" when employed.

There's no issue admitting, for pragmatic sake, that we will pretend "some" is "all" or "probable." If we acknowledge this as irrational but useful for practical benefits, that is fair. But claiming it adheres to logic's rules is delusional and false.

The only escape is omniscience—observing all things past, present, and future with perfect understanding of these, and furthermore, a perfect understanding of their connections to each other. Without this, observational premises are always "some, past, copied, and private." Yet, category statements require "all, applicable to present and future, actual, and public" to yield knowledge about reality. Induction's conclusions don't logically follow from its premises, rendering it not just a "formal" fallacy but also a non-sequitur fallacy—where the conclusion doesn't flow from the premises. This is inherent to induction's definition: all inductions are non-sequiturs.

I asked AIs (Grok and ChatGPT, late 2024) about this. Initially, they resisted calling induction a non-sequitur fallacy. After probing, they admitted their reluctance stemmed from defining science as fundamentally inductive. They argued that, for practical necessity, we must deem induction valid since relying solely on deduction for knowledge isn't feasible.

This is false—God has revealed His truth, enabling us to use deduction for knowledge. For non-knowledge categories like opinions or speculation, we can use induction pragmatically, but not for knowledge.

I pressed Grok xAI, which conceded it was biased toward an empiricist epistemology and inductive logic but was programmed to adapt to any worldview. In my experience, Grok was less biased than ChatGPT. These AIs are hard-coded to assert science provides knowledge, skewing their responses. They recognize science's process is irrational by the strict standards of logic and necessary inference. They noted Aristotle and Bertrand Russell labelled inductive logic "irrational" (conclusions not logically following premises) and "rational" as deductions (conclusions necessarily following

²⁷² Vincent Cheung. *Some Questions for Empiricist*. Sermonettes Vol. 1. 2009. 68-70

premises). Thus, science is irrational by definition, though the AIs hesitated to say it plainly. Their worldview assumes induction and science are our only options since deduction is “impossible,” according to the AIs. Yet if something is inherently irrational, it yields no knowledge.

When I asked the AIs to ignore science and focus solely on the definitions of deduction, induction, and the laws of logic, they conceded induction is a non-sequitur fallacy. Any conclusion not necessarily following its premises—whether obvious or subtle—is a non-sequitur (“does not follow”). I found it amusing that I need to specify them to strictly adhere to logic, by following the laws of logic, because logic is stricter than math. Imagine me having to specify to AIs to please be strict with the rules of math when doing math? The laws of logic—contradiction, identity, and excluded middle—make math precise. Can you conceive $1 + 1 = 2$ without them? Every logical question demands strictness and exactness. Math rests on logic’s foundation and the concept of a “unit.” Binary code, the bedrock of computation, is strict because logic enforces it. Complexity builds from this, but the foundation remains fixed.

I asked, “If my premises concern ‘some’ things and my conclusion shifts to ‘likely,’ does this adhere to the laws of contradiction, identity, and necessary inference?” Grok (2024) initially replied, “Moving from ‘some’ to ‘likely’ doesn’t violate the law of non-contradiction because you’re inferring a likelihood, which is logically coherent with the premises and inductive reasoning’s nature.”

This is patently false. Programmed by humans who dismiss deduction and pretend induction is logical, the AI essentially claims, “Though induction is a formal fallacy and a non-sequitur fallacy, its system permits a non-necessary leap from ‘some’ to ‘likely,’ so it doesn’t violate the laws of contradiction, identity, and necessary inference.”

This is nonsense. Just because I say, “‘my system,’ allows the non-necessary leap from $1+1+2$, to $1+1=50000$, without violating the laws of logic, doesn’t mean it is.” Saying “my ‘system of logic’ allows category errors—like ‘trees are suns,’ ‘4 is green,’ ‘Oshea is 9,’ so ‘suns are sheep’—thus the laws of logic aren’t violated” doesn’t make it true. As Vincent Cheung notes in “Professional Morons,” they pretend the irrational is rational, having abandoned logic. Post-Christianity, they realize deduction is not possible with their use of a human starting point. If men agree their system permits “ $1 + 1 = 5$ ” or “some is likely” for pragmatic probability, it doesn’t make it logical—it’s delusional and insane.

Induction can’t justify reality statements because its conclusions are irrational, nor can it justify its own claim that “it’s logical to go from ‘some’ to ‘likely.’” The laws of logic and deduction reject this, and induction’s own unjustified conclusions can’t validate itself.

I rephrased, asking AIs to focus solely on logic: “Not considering induction, but only strict deductive reasoning, if my premises concern ‘some’ things and my conclusion shifts to ‘likely,’ does it adhere to the laws of contradiction, identity, and necessary inference?” The AI replied, “In a strictly logical context, shifting from ‘some’ to ‘likely’ without premises supporting a necessary category connection violates the laws of identity, non-contradiction, and necessary inference. This shift suits inductive reasoning, not deduction.” This was the correct answer it should have given initially. Logic is the laws of contradiction, identity, excluded middle, and necessary inference.

Violating these exits the realm of logic. Induction isn't technically logic but a separate category of pragmatic utility.

Grok xAI even admitted, "In the purest, most rigid sense of formal logic, induction is a formal fallacy because its conclusions aren't guaranteed by the premises... While induction might be a 'formal fallacy' in strict logic, in the real world, it's 'the best we've got' for empirical data—[theoretical logical perfection] versus practical necessity." Grok and other AIs echo the flaw Vincent Cheung identified in David Zarefsky in "Professional Morons." Redefining and pretending don't make it true. The AIs, trained by men, see deduction as only "theoretical" because it cannot be done in practice. Their presupposition is empiricism and observation. And from this human foundation we understand why they see deduction as only theoretical. However, empiricism does not exist, and God has revealed truth for us to apply deduction.

When I asked Grok to stick to strict logic, it affirmed only deduction follows the laws of logic; induction's conclusions are irrational and violate them. Yet when it mentions "science," it claims induction doesn't breach these laws. This is contradictory nonsense. Why? It's hard-programmed to assume we can't achieve "logical perfection" (deduction and the three laws of logic), so we must accept induction as not violating logic for "practical necessity."

Deduction's rules—classical or natural—strictly adhere to the three laws of logic. Induction, for probability's sake, was designed to flout them, making it anti-logic. Deduction has a "necessary" tie to the laws of identity and contradiction; induction doesn't. People ignoring these foundational laws decided, "For probability, we'll leap from 'some' in premises to 'likely' in conclusions." Science is useful, but the law of identity would not permit equating "some" with "likely." Despite men agreeing—for induction's sake—to jump from "some" to "likely," it remains an unjustified category leap, denying the law of identity. Let my students recall the biblical foundation: grace is grace, works are works, and grace isn't works. Denying the laws of logic is never intelligent or rational.

Thus, induction's very foundation denies the laws of logic, so its use naturally perpetuates those violations. Induction arises from a human starting point for knowledge; deduction stems from a God-given starting point.

The statement "trees are rocks" is primarily a category mistake because it misclassifies trees (living organisms) as rocks (inanimate objects). A category mistake relates to the law of identity. Trees and rocks belong to fundamentally different categories with distinct properties. However, it can also be viewed as a contradiction because trees grow and reproduce, while rocks do not—asserting a tree is a rock contradicts their essential properties. The core issue is the misclassification of categories, which indirectly generates a contradiction due to the inherent traits of trees and rocks. This illustrates why induction's conclusions violate the laws of contradiction and identity.

Knowledge's inherent properties are not material, whereas sensations and reality are. Drawing premises from material things to arrive at true or false conclusions is a category mistake. It's also a contradiction because of these categories' inherent properties. Thus, empiricism is anti-logic.

Empiricism is a fallacy. What you see isn't the same as the thing itself—they're distinct categories. Moreover, a visual or auditory sensation isn't knowledge; you comprehend what you see through invisible true-or-false propositions. You must possess knowledge prior to understanding a sensation. Sensations aren't propositions, so moving from the thing itself to a sensation, then to an invisible true-or-false premise, involves multiple category fallacies. This entails a systematic denial of the law of contradiction. Equating the categories of "the thing itself," "a sound," and "a proposition" commits multiple category errors, thereby also denying the law of contradiction. Category errors in epistemology breed skepticism, which further denies the law of contradiction. Empiricism is anti-logic.

I'd like to highlight this point from Vincent Cheung: the challenge is proving any given sensation yields knowledge. If sensation is the foundation for knowledge and one instance is shown to be false, empiricism can only be salvaged by an external, infallible authority distinguishing true sensations from false ones. The Bible cannot serve this role—it declares human sensations and observations fallible and offers no method to determine which are true or false. The only sensations which are infallible are the ones the bible records in its own pages. If the bible says the disciples saw Jesus, then we know the sensation and observation were true.

"Even if [empiricism] is "properly basic" to be able to see a mirage, it is also properly useless to do so unless we can know by sensation that it is a mirage. Therefore, properly *basic reliability* is not enough; the empiricist needs properly *basic infallibility*. But does he even have properly basic reliability?"²⁷³

ChatGPT (2024) summarized Vincent Cheung's argument against empiricism as follows (in quotes " "):

"Cheung emphasizes the fallibility of sensory perception, arguing that our senses are prone to error and cannot provide direct, unmediated access to reality. He cites biblical examples where people's perceptions differed or were demonstrably wrong. For instance, in John 12:28-29, some heard God's voice from heaven as thunder, while others perceived it as an angel's voice. Similarly, in 2 Kings 3:16-24, Elisha's prophecy contradicted the Moabite army's initial sensory perception of water as blood."

We covered this in epistemology. Scripture provides an infallible testimony of humans using sensation, often mistakenly.

"He further points to dreams, hallucinations, and optical illusions as evidence that our senses can deceive us. If our senses can be mistaken, any knowledge claim based on them becomes suspect. Cheung argues that even if some sensations accurately reflect reality, without an infallible standard to judge each instance, we have no way to distinguish true perceptions from false ones. This inherent uncertainty drives empiricism toward skepticism, as we can never be certain our senses deliver accurate information."

²⁷³ Vincent Cheung, *Sermonettes* - Volume 1 (2010), p. 67-70. Emphasis added by author.

The point isn't that every sensation always misrepresents reality, but that there's no way to know if any given sensation accurately describes it. This, of course, leads to skepticism.

"The Impossibility of Verifying Sensations: Cheung argues that empiricism faces a critical verification problem. If all knowledge derives from sensations, how do we verify their reliability? Using further sensory experience to do so triggers an infinite regress, where each sensation requires another to validate it, *ad infinitum*."

An infinite regress is impossible for humans to complete, making it impossible for sensation to yield knowledge about reality. Since some sensations are proven mistaken, using them to justify others is logically untenable. You'd need an external, infallible source, but none exists within empiricism. The Bible wouldn't support something inherently anti-logical, as God is logic.

"He uses the mirage example to illustrate this. Seeing a mirage might suggest water in the distance, yet this perception is false. To confirm it's a mirage, you'd need more sensory data, which could also be erroneous. This verification cycle, Cheung argues, shows empiricism cannot provide a self-justifying foundation for knowledge. Without an external, infallible standard, we're trapped in the subjective realm of our perceptions, unable to establish objective truth.

Even if some sensations are reliable, without an infallible standard to judge each instance, no sensation can be trusted. This critique challenges the empiricist notion that sensations offer direct, unmediated access to reality."

The crux is that empiricism isn't self-authenticating or self-justifying. When used as a basis for knowledge, it renders knowledge impossible. It is a worldview devoid of knowledge entirely. Since science relies on sensations to form hypotheses, it too lacks knowledge. Being rooted in empiricism, science is inherently inductive, despite employing falsification.

I asked Grok AI to demonstrate in formal validity—"a necessary conclusion, without adding information to the conclusion or committing a category error from premises to conclusion"—how sensations (empiricism) could lead to the laws of logic. It said it's technically impossible. It said, if you include the Socratic method or abstraction (which permits the formal fallacy of induction and category leaps not present in the premises), it's feasible. But adhering strictly to categories, necessary connections, and the laws of logic, Grok xAi confirmed you cannot "logically" move from sensation in the premises to conclusions about logic, math, ethics, universals, etc.

This highlights how the Socratic method remains the intellectual fudge factor morons use to conjure knowledge where none exists. It's an intellectual sleight-of-hand to polish their flawed conclusions. Whether it's Socrates, Aristotle, David Hume, or science, each relies on a magical moment where one category—lacking knowledge and necessary connections—morphs into another, and conclusions unwarranted by premises are asserted as valid. Naturally, this irrationality lets me define reality however I please, which has always been the endgame for fools.

The Scientific Process

After my own studies and discussions with Grok AI, I'll outline a step-by-step breakdown of modern science. Some still believe science is rational, deductive, and logical. We'll dissect the process and reveal it's anti-logical from start to finish, despite using modus tollens.

Karl Popper exposed the anti-logical nature of scientific experimentation, particularly the nonsense of affirming the consequent. To counter induction's irrationality and this fallacy, Popper proposed scientists use modus tollens to invalidate hypotheses. Modus tollens is a valid deductive form. Yet, if you lack upfront truth, affirming the consequent is the only way to positively affirm a claim, if the logic is to correctly correspond to your actions within reality. Popper aimed to minimize this by favoring deduction. The catch? At best, modus tollens can say something is wrong—it can't confirm truth. Today, top scientists recognize induction and science's irrationality, leaning into falsification for better experiments.

If we admit science offers no truth, only pragmatic usefulness, then adding modus tollens at the end enhances practical outcomes. We support this. As noted, science fulfils God's command to dominate the world for practical benefits—a blessing He ordained. But that's all science is. Even when its utility seems impressive, its statements about reality are false.

Since the scientific process is rooted in inductive and observational fallacies, it's irrational and anti-logic. Slapping modus tollens on the end doesn't erase this irrationality; it just improves pragmatic results. It's right to acknowledge science's baked-in anti-logic and compensate with deduction—if we clarify this is for usefulness, not knowledge.

Before detailing the process, let's define falsification. Grok xAI (2024) put it this way: "The origin of falsification, per Popper, is rooted in the idea that a hypothesis must be scientific if an experiment or observation could prove it false. This was a direct jab at the inductivists and verificationists of his time. Popper's philosophy was like saying, 'Science isn't about piling up evidence for your theory; it's about daring it to fail.'" This is accurate but needs unpacking to avoid confusion. Popper critiqued scientific experimentation (i.e., "verification") that relied wholly on affirming the consequent to link hypotheses to reality.

Grok calls it a "jab at inductivists," which can mislead. Even with modus tollens, science remains overwhelmingly inductive. Though Popper shifted "verification" to the "pre-hypothesis" stage rather than the endpoint, falsification swims in a sea of inductive reasoning and observation. Grok was correct that "As Popper would have it... it must be possible to conceive of an experiment or observation that could prove it false." Popper's falsification operates within "inductive observation" and "inductive experiment."

Thus, despite jabbing inductivists, Popper's method still employs induction. Science isn't one thing—it's a process. I once heard a scientist claim, "Science is only deductive because it's only about falsification, specifically modus tollens." This misrepresents Popper's approach, which integrates induction and observation. When I asked Grok (2024), it responded, "Absolutely not! Popper argued a theory must be

falsifiable, aligning with modus tollens' deductive logic to disprove it. But induction isn't sidelined:

- **Initial Phase:** Science starts with observation and inductive reasoning to form hypotheses.
- **Ongoing Nature:** As hypotheses are tested, scientists refine them with new observations and inductive leaps, keeping induction central.”
Since falsification uses induction, it's inherently irrational, violating the laws of identity and contradiction. It's a systematic affirmation of false premises in unsound arguments, pretending to deny something.

Calling “science deductive” is false. I wouldn't even say it's inductive and deductive—its “deduction” is unsound. I would not label an unsound argument deductive unless we are pretending in a fantasy world. Generously, we could call science heavily inductive with some deduction tacked on.

This matters for Christians. The Bible uses only sound arguments, rejects induction's anti-logic, and shows our observations can be wrong. It dismisses empirical observation and induction for knowledge. Thus, falsification isn't a biblical standard and can't yield knowledge. Some fools hybridize this irrational human method with the Bible's rational approach, claiming falsification aids understanding Scripture and truth. This is blasphemy—melding the irrational with God's rational system defames His mind as irrational or endorsing irrationality. Similarly, fake presuppositionalists claim the Bible ratifies observation and empiricism for knowledge—nonsense.

Another reason to reject falsification: its maxim—“something must be provably wrong to have credibility”—is false. The law of contradiction (LoC) isn't falsifiable; denying it requires using it. Self-authenticating truths, like the LoC, render falsification inapplicable. At best, falsification fits inductive observations. The Bible, as shown in epistemology, is self-authenticating—unfalsifiable. It can't be proven wrong because any attempt presupposes it; Scripture declares itself true and all else false. We don't use falsification to read the Bible or find truth. If it is such a great rule for Christians, why doesn't its maxim apply to Scripture?

Note the maxim says “for credibility,” not “to prove true.” Falsification is negative—it can't produce positive claims without violating logic. Since the Bible rejects observation, empiricism, and induction for knowledge, and falsification uses them, Christians don't employ it for knowledge. Even using modus tollens—directly, in reductio ad absurdum, or falsification—is only negative, offering no positive truth. When someone says, “I don't see God healing today,” their claim is wrong, not because of falsification, but because Scripture rejects inductive observation outright.

There is nothing wrong with modus tollens to show something is false—Scripture uses this deduction. St. Augustine and Paul (1 Corinthians 15) did too, free of empiricism or observation assumptions. But if someone uses empiricism as a standard, showing documented healings should convince them if they're consistent. We can use modus tollens to refute them with their own flawed epistemology. The catch? Induction's conclusions don't logically follow premises, so they can reject evidence due to its inherent uncertainty. Even a deductive argument using observation—ours or theirs—becomes unsound, leaving conclusions skeptical. Induction offers no logical binding to accept any conclusion—you can dismiss or embrace as you please.

As a Christian, the Bible says God heals, and on faith's demand, He will heal and gives us what we ask (John 15: Jesus predestined us to ask and receive). I expect healings. My observations are private knowledge—and if I applied these with deductions from Scripture “for myself,” then my self-knowledge is what the bible asserts. But shifting private to public knowledge violates logic's laws. Scripture alone is our starting point for knowledge about healing. Anyone using inductive observations to argue miracle healing is a fool, rejecting the Bible as the sole epistemic foundation.²⁷⁴ Such debates aren't about healing but epistemology—Scripture's deductive logic versus induction's fallacy. Tell them they've abandoned Christian doctrine on knowledge and logic; if they don't repent, boycott and excommunicate them.

The Scientific Process

Observation and Hypothesis Formation (Inductive Step)

Note: “Scientific experimentation (affirming the consequent)” has been pushed back to “hypothesis formation.”

Scientists observe phenomena in nature or data, noticing that when event A occurs, phenomenon B follows. This resembles affirming the consequent: “If A, then B; B happens, so A caused it.”

- **Example 1:** (A) Rain occurs, (B) my yard gets wet. (B) I see my yard wet, so I hypothesize (A) it rained.
- **Example 2:** (A) Bacteria add chemical X to solution H, (B) it turns red. (B) I see it red, so I hypothesize (A) bacteria added X.

Formulating the Hypothesis (Setting Up for Modus Ponens)

Initially, scientists observe B (a fallacy) to check their idea. If testing's possible, they run preliminary affirming-the-consequent experiments for merit. Then, they frame hypotheses as modus ponens: “If A, then B; A, thus B.” They pretend a necessary connection exists to apply modus tollens later—not to affirm the consequent but to predict outcomes. They say, “If hypothesis (A) is true, under these conditions, we'll see (B).”

In layman's terms, this is logical voodoo, a void, or superstition.

Two ways this bait-and-switch happens:

1. **Vincent Cheung's Example (A Gang of Pandas):**
 - “If (A) is a cause, then (B) is a result. B happens, thus A caused it.”
 - Restated as modus ponens with B and A flipped, using a false conclusion to build an argument.
2. **Direct Pretence:** Pretending inductive “If A, then B” is real or pretend it's a necessary connection. The only way it would reflect reality is if their limited “some” interactions changes to an “all,” otherwise, they never have a necessary connection. This is like misstating a math problem to reflect reality. If I buy 4

²⁷⁴ This is different from starting with the truth given by scripture, and then present your healing as “testimony” that agrees with the truth. You are saying the bible is the proof, and my testimony agrees with the truth, not the other way around.

apples at \$1 each, calling it calculus is delusional if it doesn't match reality. Scientists engage reality via limited observations and affirming the consequent—they can't avoid it. Restating it as modus ponens is delusional because it doesn't mirror their actual interaction with phenomena. Control tests, do not give a necessary connections, and so a modus ponens does not reflect the correct logic in how they interact with reality.

Experimental Design (Testing via Modus Ponens)

Scientists design experiments controlling A to see if B follows, mimicking modus ponens:

- If hypothesis A is true, under specific conditions, B occurs (If A, then B).
- They ensure A is present.
- They check if B happens (A leads to B).
This isn't just to affirm the hypothesis (a fallacy) but to test predictions under control. Yet, problems still abound:
 1. The setup stems from a fallacy—using a false conclusion from observation and affirming the consequent to fake a connection. This restated logic doesn't reflect their real-world engagement; it's fabricated.
 2. They only pretend it's modus ponens—in name only. Some admit the connection is merely sufficient, making falsification speculative, not necessary, contradicting the very definition of logical inference.
 3. Controlled tests can't rule out infinite unknowns (e.g., heat affecting results, when the scientist has no concept of heat, etc.).
Vincent Cheung notes, "The idea is simple. To know that any experiment is "constructed properly" the scientist's knowledge must be "bigger" than the experiment. But if his knowledge is already "bigger" than the experiment, then he hardly needs to perform the experiment to gain knowledge that is limited by the experiment. The only way to be sure that one has identified and controlled all variables that may affect the experiment is to possess omniscience. The conclusion is that only God can tell us about the universe."²⁷⁵

Falsification Attempts (Modus Tollens)

Here's the shift:

- If B doesn't occur when A is present: "If A, then B; not B, therefore not A" (hypothesis falsified).
Scientists aim to confirm hypotheses (affirming the consequent), but better ones seek disproof. Misaligned results falsify, and this leads to rethinking and refinement.
Yet observation and affirming-the-consequent thinking build the argument for falsification. Induction underpins science's foundation and definition. The "deductive" arguments are unsound—born from false conclusions, misrepresenting reality. It's deduction by pretence. Before falsification, the hypothesis's necessary connection is unknown. Falsification deems it wrong,

²⁷⁵ Vincent Cheung. A Gang of Pandas. Sermonettes Vol.1.

which says little.

The experimental connection has two interpretations:

1. If honest (connection is sufficient or a guess), falsification is uncertain, not necessary—violating deduction's essence.
2. If claiming necessity, it's pretence, falsifying only a pretend reality, breaching contradiction and identity laws.
3. Finally, saying "laws are formulated by falsification" is a non-sequitur. Negative propositions can't yield positives without adding information—violating logic. Laws from falsification can only say "this isn't that." Positive laws from falsification defy logic; negative isn't positive.

The point is that observation and affirming the consequent thinking and testing is involved in formulating the argument that will be tested by falsification. Thus, induction is both the foundation of science and therefore involved in the definition of science. The so-called deductive arguments are unsound, because they are created by false conclusions and the logic does not reflect their interaction with reality. It is deduction only by pretending. Before falsification is used, it is not known if the major premise of the syllogism (hypothesis) has a necessary connection. Falsification says this unsound argument is wrong, which is not really saying that much.

The connection in their experiment can be taken in two ways. If they are honest and admit the connection, at the very best is sufficient or a guess, then if falsification is used, the falsification is only a guess, but not a necessary falsification. This violates the very definition of deduction, which is necessary. If they insist the falsification is necessary, then they violate the laws of contradiction and identity. If they want to insist their connection in their experiment is necessary, then it is only by pretending. Thus, if they use falsification, it is only falsifying a pretend reality.

Lastly, there is the part where scientists say, "*laws... are formulated by falsification.*" This is false. It is a non-sequitur fallacy. Remember our rules for category syllogisms? We talked about distribution of terms but also the quality and quantity of a syllogism. If the propositions of an argument are negative, you cannot get a positive out of it. The same here. Falsification can only say, this is wrong, but to then turn around and say we have a law that says, "this is this," is to add more information than what the argument says. Laws, formulated by falsification can only say at best, "*this is not that.*" Every positive law stated by scientists using falsification is a violation of the laws of logic. To say negative is a positive is anti-logic.

4. Ethics/Conclusion.

Broadly speaking, faith is agreeing with God. Faith is a mental assent that agrees with what God says is true, about everything He has revealed.

In the context of His promises and the fulfillment of Jesus finished atonement and His sitting at the right hand of Power: Faith is confidence in God's love for us, not our love for Him. Faith is a focus on His love for us, and not a focus on our internal thoughts about God's love. Faith is a confidence in God's promise, not our ability. "Faith is a positive response to what God has already provided."²⁷⁶ Faith is receiving God's free supply by grace; not our performance. Faith is God giving to us, not us giving to God.

God's Sovereign Definition/Commands

God is the foundation for all theology, including ethics. You cannot go beyond God to find a reason for ethics. If you did, you could not do so without establishing a dual ontology or authority with or over God. God's sovereignty over you is what makes a command a command, and not something else. God created you with His absolute sovereign power. You are not free from God's direct and absolute control on metaphysics or His revealed definitions about mankind, and this is the foundation for ethics. Consider our patriarch, King David, and compare his words to Romans chapter 9. David says that because God created him (a sovereign authority over David, from which David is not free), he needs to understand how to obey Him:

Psalm 119:73 (LEB):

"Your hands have made me and established me; give me understanding that I may learn your commands."

Or consider Paul's argument:

If the Creator takes me from a neutral clay lump (that is not already bad) and makes me into a wicked pot, and I obviously go along with God's causality, then why does God find fault with me, even if He commanded me to do good? He finds fault because I did not do what He commanded, regardless of the reality or causality of it. Romans 9 states:

"Well then, you might say, 'Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven't they simply done what He makes them do?'" (NLT)

Both affirm that God's commands presuppose that He is sovereign over something, and that this "something" is not free relative to God. Paul takes it further by saying that even if God causes (on the ultimate level) you to behave against His commands (as He did with Pharaoh), you are still accountable because God is the sovereign Creator over you, and you are not free from Him. As said before, God is the foundation

²⁷⁶ Andrew Wommack.

of all theology. The issue is that God will do what He wants. If He decides to hold Pharaoh or a fig tree accountable, then it is accountable, regardless of anything else that might be added.

Thus, ethics is God's command, and accountability is God holding you to it, with no freedom to remove yourself from this.

Furthermore, in a simple way of explaining God's commands, it can be said they are God's definitions of man. For example, that trees are organic and produce after their kind is not only God's creative power but also His definition of the reality He made. Definitions for reality are God's decisions for reality. Unlike with a tree, the main difference with man is that God communicates His definition of man to man. Man is to consider God's revealed definition and then consciously act on it. This sets man apart from all animals.

With ethics, we presuppose an epistemology that is self-authenticating and already gives us substantial knowledge about reality—knowledge about God, creation, and man. With ethics, we presuppose a reality created and upheld by God's power and definition. We presuppose a reality that is substantial because of the many definitions revealed to us by Scripture. We presuppose the creation of man because ethics are commanded to man, not something else.

Ethics is not a description of private, transient, momentary sensations. It is not an observation. It is not math, not color, not material, not logic. Ethics is only one thing: God's commandments. To say you understand ethics by affirming it is something other than God's command is like saying, "Blue is 6, and greens are multiplication." You should feel disturbed that someone thinks they comprehend such things. Just because I say, "All blues are 6s, and 7 is a color," does not mean I comprehend it or that it is true. People who talk about ethics without the Christian God's commandments are delusional and insane. They are out-of-their-mind stupid. Sure, they have lots of dogmatic zealotry for things they want or want for mankind in general, but they have no intelligence when thinking about ethics. Just because they have the military power to enforce their ethical delusions does not make them less delusional.

If you look at it from the ultimate perspective of definitions of reality, ethics could be a major premise in a syllogism—or in a chain syllogism, they would be at the bottom of the syllogism. Ethics come from epistemology: knowledge of ethics, the foundation of ethics, and so forth. They come from ontology: God gives commands (the causality of ethics or the causality of God making man understand His definitions—innate or through Scripture—and causing them to either follow or not). We say ethics are a conclusion because God's command to man is founded on His absolute sovereignty over all reality and His revelation being man's epistemology. From these major premises of Christian metaphysics and epistemology, God reveals specific information about His commands to man.

Moreover, when a person like me "applies" (deduces) ethics, they are a conclusion of one's worldview. For example: "Repentance in Jesus is what God has commanded. Oshea has repented in Jesus. Thus, Oshea has done what God has commanded." On the foundation of the epistemology and ontology of ethics, I can use myself as a minor premise and determine if I am being moral or not. Thus, when people think of ethics for themselves or others, it is a conclusion of their worldview. Because of this, you

cannot use your conclusion to establish your worldview, since the conclusion is made possible by the premises before it. Also, knowledge of myself is private, not public. Thus, as a purely logical defense, I cannot use ethics in this way to prove my worldview. Christianity is true about knowledge and reality; therefore, it is true about its conclusion of ethics.

Is, is not an Ought

“Brightman’s argument and all forms of so-called scientific ethics are based on a logical oversight. The premises of these theories are always descriptive statements, such as: I like this, or my friends like this. Science is a matter of observation and description, but scientific ethics depends on empirical observation for its premises. And if the premises are descriptive statements, the conclusions cannot be logically anything else than descriptive. Yet for ethics there must be normative conclusions. It will not suffice to say that you, or I, or Brightman likes this. What is required is a statement that you and I and Brightman ought to like this, and that everyone ought to like this, even though as a descriptive fact nobody likes it. The premises of science are always descriptive propositions; the conclusions of ethics must be normative. And it is a logical blunder to insert terms in the conclusion that did not appear in the premises. Any theory of ethics therefore that attempts to support ideals on observation, experience, or scientific method rests on a fallacy.”²⁷⁷

Clark is making an obvious but often overlooked point. When thinking intelligently and rationally, you cannot conclude an ethic from statements of existence and causality. You cannot validly go from ontology to ethics in a conclusion. Or, put another way, you cannot rationally go from an “is” to an “ought” in the conclusion. The same is true for all category errors. You cannot stay in the category of dogs in your major and minor premises and then conclude in the category of mathematics. So what if golden retrievers are warm-blooded dogs? What does that have to do with $6 + 109 = 115$?

Christians often make category errors, particularly when it comes to healing. For example, I affirm: “There are only two legitimate ways for a Christian to die: healthy and old in bed or by martyrdom. Any other death will be by disobedience or lack of faith.”²⁷⁸ Also, there is the option to not die at all, like Enoch. Many people kick against this because they so frequently resist obeying God’s commands in general. Ethics only come from God’s command. God commands us to be healed (James 5:15). Also, walking in your identity in Jesus, in the gospel (Isaiah 53:4-5, which includes healing), is not a suggestion but a precept for us to obey.

A typical rebuttal to the above is that “Elisha died sick.” As you can already see, this is a category fallacy that goes from metaphysics to ethics. “Elisha died sick” is a descriptive statement about reality. What it is not, is a command of God. But only God’s command gives ethics. If I want to know what ethics about sickness or healing apply to me, I must go to verses about God’s command on that subject and obey them. I could just as easily quote, “Judas hanged himself,” and imply the ethic that it is okay to commit suicide. The fallacy is again a category error that goes from metaphysics to

²⁷⁷ Gordon Clark. “The Achilles Heel of Humanism.”

²⁷⁸ André De Mattos Duarte

ethics. The statement “Judas hanged himself” is a descriptive statement about reality; it is not God’s command. Thus, we cannot conclude what we “ought” to do from this. Rather, we correctly interpret whether a person in such a statement followed correct ethics by going to a command of God on the topic and comparing the two.

This is so simple a five-year-old child can grasp and follow it, but it is too intellectual for educated reprobates to understand.

Ethics are, in some respects, arbitrarily based on God’s own plans and desires. Some fools make the mistake of thinking that everything God commands is a direct one-to-one ratio to His nature, and this is just stupid. People have a demonic bent in trying to make God’s commands or ethics bound to something other than God’s own free choice.

Since God cannot lie and He is immutable, there is no possibility for God to lie or command a lie. We are talking about the command not to lie, not the ultimate level of causality. If God commanded us to lie—which would be to lie for Him—then God would lie. For example, if God commanded me to lie that Jesus was born in South America, then God would lie, since I represent Him. Also, as has been shown above, man’s primary image of God is the mind or intellect—his system of propositions. Since we are to image God in the intellect, which is our image of God, if we lie, it would reflect on God. Thus, you never hear Scripture, even in times of emergency, say a lie is morally good—not one time. I say this to remind readers that because our intellect is the foundation of our image of God, if there is a close one-to-one ratio between God’s nature and how He commands us, it is in this aspect of truth and reason. We are to be people who speak God’s Word, which is the truth, and we are to never lie. This will be discussed more in terms of graded absolutism.

However, you cannot say the same thing about killing or vengeance, because our image is not primarily about the ability to end or not end life, but the intellect. Therefore, there are some aspects of God’s nature that do not correlate to His commandments or definitions for us. Thus, even though God is a God of vengeance, He commands us not to take vengeance. And yet, God commands governments, which are made up of men, to take vengeance on evildoers. Thus, this ethic is arbitrary in how God commands it. This is God’s world, and He defines what man is and how He wants man to behave, and it is arbitrary. This is the God of the bible.

“Yes, is Yes. No, is No.” In this we image God.

Animals cannot understand syllogisms and algebraic equations. If they sometimes seem to perform tasks that require thinking or design, such as building elaborate nests or navigating complex routes, we discover that their creativity and ability to adapt are limited, and that they are able to do these things only by instinct, and not by deliberate and rational thought. Their skills are innate – God built into them what they need to survive. So birds cannot teach cats how to make nests, and spiders cannot teach elephants how to play dead when attacked. The most important difference is that animals cannot perform theological reflections. The fact that God made man in his own image means that man is a rational mind, whose chief purpose is to fellowship with God and to worship him.

Man's rational mind is the likeness of God and his point of contact with God. His intellectual qualities are evident from the beginning of Genesis. God blessed him in Genesis 1:28-30, and gave him dominion over nature by a verbal pronouncement that he understood. Adam cared for Eden not by instinct, but in obedience to God's verbal instructions. God gave man a moral command in Genesis 2:16, forbidding him to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but allowed him to eat from all the other trees. Man was warned that to violate this command would result in his death. Only a rational mind can understand concepts such as duty, sin, and death.

The mind of man, his intelligence or rationality, is the image of God. It is impossible to deny this, but some people attempt to add other elements to it, such as morality and dominion. This is, in fact, consistent the biblical position (Ephesians 4:24); however, rationality remains the basic element in the definition of the image of God.

Man's moral nature distinguishes him from the animals, and so it seems that it is a part of the image of God. But what is the basis of this moral nature, and how does it operate? Even animals "obey" God's commands, but instead of doing so on the basis of understanding and volition, they are compelled by instinct. On the other hand, man receives and understands a divine command, and then decides to obey it or defy it. He can comprehend the concepts of good and evil, and he can discuss them by the use of language. This means that man is moral precisely because he is rational. Morality is a function of intelligence or rationality. Therefore, although to have a moral nature is part of what it means to be a human person, it is not necessary to include it as part of the basic definition for the image of God.

Man's dominion over the animals is also an extension or result of his intellectual superiority (Genesis 1:28-30). Dominion is a function of rationality. As James writes, "All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man" (James 3:7). Although man is physically weaker than many animals, his understanding and knowledge enable him to devise methods, tools, and weapons to tame and exploit them. Man's rule over nature is made possible by his intelligence, and not by any supernatural or mystical power given by God.²⁷⁹

This is one aspect that is truly governed by God's arbitrary sovereign power. There is no reality except by God arbitrarily conceiving it and then creating it. There is no inherent or natural law produced by reality itself. The only foundation of a law is God originally conceiving it (whether about reality or as a human command) and decreeing it. There is no other source or foundation. There is no "law" in reality (i.e., inherent in or created by reality) that says, "If the first man is a lawbreaker, then so too are his descendants," nor is there a set of standards outside of God that holds Him accountable to them. If I lift the skirt of some ancient mountain, will this be written there? And if so, why would I care?

God holds people accountable to His revealed law or to the innate laws written on their hearts because man is not free from God holding them to these standards. If God holds man accountable for having more knowledge of a subject, it is an addition to the

²⁷⁹ Vincent Cheung. *Systematic Theology*. 2010. Pg 119-120

foundation of God making laws—and man not being free from God holding them accountable to it. Man is accountable to this addition because man is not free from God's authority over it. Even when there is no law or addition, and God decides He wants to arbitrarily hold all men guilty for the first man's sin, then all men are accountable for being guilty with the first man because they are not free from God holding them to this. God's absolute sovereignty is the foundation for ethics—not man or anything in reality.

Sin is called “lawbreaking” in Scripture: “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4). Ethics is about the intellect, not emotions or some third option. God revealed His definition of man—who man is and what man is to do—in commands and precepts. Apart from Scripture, Paul says in Romans 1 and 2 that God has written His laws on man's mind. Paul asserts that even sinful man understands the laws God has written on their hearts. Seeing creation helps sinful man's suppressed awareness of these laws resurface, thus convicting him. In conversion, man's disposition is not to suppress these laws but the opposite. The man born from above wants to think about God's definition of man and follow it. The weakness of the flesh and Satan will fight the Christian in their push to further renew and obey God's commands. Sin might be strong, but the Spirit and the Word are stronger. Those who look to God for help will be victorious.

Ethics is fundamentally about the intellect, which both understands and consciously seeks to follow this revealed definition of man. Since this is God's creation and definition, there is no other definition of man. There is no other subject, predication, or premise about man apart from God's own thoughts about it. To think about another definition of man, one must use intelligence—such as logic, innate knowledge, and God's sovereignty over the ontology of logic and premises. That is, to conceive an anti-Christian definition of man, one must use God's revelation to do so, but God's revelation declares that only it is true and all others are false.

In conversion, a man's inner system of propositions is radically recreated and restored. The old premises of God's law and truths that were suppressed are recreated and strengthened like new. These suppressed premises had radically deformed and malfunctioned in man's soul. In addition, sinful man uses human speculation to manufacture new, unjustified premises to replace the ones they suppressed. Furthermore, sinful man stops thinking deductively with God's truths and instead habitually begins to think irrationally, using himself as the starting point. Thus, man, in the greatest sense, lost his image of God. This is not to say sinful man lost all of God's image; if he did, he would cease thinking entirely. For example, if one truly stopped using the law of contradiction, they would stop thinking and thus lose all resemblance to God's image. Since God is intellectual and not a body, to stop thinking is the antithesis of God.

Sinful man's broken mind was truly degraded, malfunctioned, and destroyed to the point that Jesus even called human beings “children of Satan.” Jesus said this in the context that Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44). The contrast was between the defective mind of Satan, which is lies, and God the Father as truth. The Jews in John 8 did not receive Jesus, who came from the Truth, because their minds were like the mind of Satan. Their minds were so broken with lies and delusions that their parent was Satan rather than God. God is truth and intellect. A creation made in God's image will be characterized by truth and an intellectual system of propositions. Thus, a so-

called mind that cannot receive truth and an intellectual system of propositions from God is not an image of God but something else.

Imagine the Bible as the image of God, which is man. Imagine if I could take the Bible, shake it up so that all the individual words fell out onto the floor, and made a random pile. Most of it would be nonsense, with a few random pockets of intelligible structure still readable. This is what happened to man after the Fall. This is why non-Christians are so stupid and defective. This is why Scripture calls non-Christians morons and sub-animal in their thinking (e.g., Psalm 49:20; 2 Peter 2:12). They are only the image of God in a lax sense. The true image has been so scrambled, mixed up, and lost that Jesus labels fallen man as the image of Satan, whose own mind is a steaming pile of lies.

In the new birth, God begins a major re-creation of the mind. Old, suppressed innate knowledge is remade to be strong, and new knowledge of the gospel is divinely imparted. Many missing holes of subjects, predicates, and premises are filled in so that the system of thinking is no longer a pile of nonsense but coherent and intelligent. This recreated mind knows that to think logically, man must start with God's truths and apply (deduce) them to oneself. The Christian is then to work with God's power and actively seek to continue renewing the mind. They are to repeat the truths they already know and understand, thus reinforcing them. They are to identify false subjects, predicates, and premises and repent by replacing them with the revealed Word of God.

They are to come into agreement with God's truth and confess it with their mouths. This involves all truths, but concerning ethics, it is particularly important because it involves the revealed definition of man and how we are to behave.

First John tells us that sin is lawbreaking (1 John 3:4). Sin is not a nasty feeling. It is not the "feeling of guilt." Sin is not a feeling. Sin is only one thing: the breaking of a command of God. It is God's own record of commands you have broken. It is the list in His mind, not yours. God is the foundation of this, not something else. The foundation is intellectual. Thus, you read in Colossians 2 that Jesus removed the legal document of our lawbreaking, having taken the punishment for it on Himself as a substitute. The picture Paul describes is that Jesus nailed it to the cross because it no longer applies to us. Imagine a document with your name on it detailing all your deeds that God considers for or against you in how well you obeyed His commands.

This needs to be said: Ethics is not your memory of deeds, but God's. God's thoughts on the subject are the creation of ethics itself and the only ones that matter. In fact, without God's definition and revelation of commands, ethics is not even intelligible. God's own personal document of a Christian's deeds is a document that has no record of wrongs because of Jesus' substitution. Think about that. This is the only definition of ethics that has ever existed. Some might think this is arbitrary. So what? God determines reality, not some arbitrary standard that says if something is arbitrary, it is not true. You cannot intelligibly consider ethics without using God's own definition on the subject, but the mind of God you are presupposing declares that only He is right and all others are wrong.

Even the Book of Life, which describes our life and deeds, is intellectual. Jesus took away the record of our lawbreaking when the Father credited it to Him for our benefit. Thus, all the sentences in the book that said, "Oshea broke this commandment on

this day,” have been erased. Only statements of the law declaring me righteous by the act of forgiveness, of Jesus’ credited righteousness, and my own acts of obedience (obviously empowered by the Spirit) remain.

Good and evil, righteousness and lawbreaking, are intellectual. They are God’s definition. Thus, do not let Satan deceive you and manipulate you with feelings, because our righteousness and sin are not about feelings. There is a document about Oshea Davis, and because of Jesus, there are no statements about me committing any lawbreaking—only righteousness. This is how God sees me. This is ethical because God commanded it and thinks it so. This is good because God has done it. In fact, my Father has declared in public that I am righteous in His sight because of Jesus Christ. This is the only important thing to consider when Satan or the world tries to attack you with anything relating to sin or righteousness. It is how God thinks about me. And I agree with God. It is about intellect, not feelings. It is about truth, not human observation or speculation. Christian ethics is the only ethic that aligns with reality.

There is a teaching called **graded absolutism**. As Vincent Cheung describes it, this ethic is based on “relativism” rather than God’s absolute command. Some label what we have been reviewing here as “Divine Command Theory” or absolutism, but such labels can be loaded and are ultimately irrelevant. Understanding the biblical principle and applying it is what matters.

Because many so-called Christians focus more on man and their own special understanding of things rather than on God, they inevitably see many paradoxes and contradictions in Scripture. They perceive these paradoxes because what God says contradicts their favorite theologians and their own thoughts on the subject. Instead of blaming their human starting point, they enjoy—and get a religious erection from—placing the blame on God by claiming there are paradoxes in Scripture. They do this with ethics, calling it graded absolutism.

They present circumstances such as a person holding a gun who threatens either to kill you or demands that you reveal the location of another innocent person whom the gunman intends to kill. To them, this represents a contradiction in ethics. Oddly, they do not specify what the contradiction is. A contradiction is a specific thing, and there is no contradiction in the above ethical scenario.

Under their system, some commands have higher priority than others, so if two commandments conflict, we obey the higher-tier command and disobey the lower-tier one. In the example above, we cannot willfully aid in the death of an innocent person, but we also cannot lie. Thus, they see a contradiction.

We are commanded not to lie. There is no biblical exception to this command. Nowhere in the Bible does God say that a lie was an act of obedience to His command.

Vincent Cheung commenting on this subject says,

“First, graded absolutism is unbiblical, and permits men to sin. Although it claims to be a form of absolutism, in reality it is just a form of relativism. Moreover, it avoids sin by redefining it, and not by obeying God’s commands. Scripture acknowledges that some commandments are greater than others, but it never acknowledges that they could ever contradict one another, nor does it

say that we are to follow only the greater ones when they seem to contradict. When Jesus speaks of “the more important matters of the law,” he adds, “You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former” (Matthew 23:23). And when he refers to the first and second greatest commandments, it is not to make the point that they are to be obeyed instead of the lesser ones. Rather, he adds, “All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:40). In both cases, he acknowledges a ranking among God’s commandments only to insist that we must obey all of them.

Second, graded absolutism is unnecessary, because it deals with false dilemmas. Using the above test case as an example, there are many more options other than to lie or not to lie. By the biblical precept that permits one to defend himself and to defend others, the person faced with the decision could try to subdue the would-be murderer. Or, he could refuse to disclose the location of the intended victim and accept the consequences – whether injury, torture, or death. Depending on the situation and the many variables that are at play, a number of other options could be open to the person confronted with the decision. Of course he could even choose to lie! But instead of defining it away, let us still call it sin.

Third, graded absolutism is unbelieving, in that it doubts the wisdom of God’s revelation and providence. Many situations appear to be moral dilemmas only because we insist on usurping God’s role. This is when we judge for ourselves the best outcome and then manipulate the situation to attain it. Rather than obeying God’s commandments as they have been revealed to us, we attempt to predict the consequence of obeying each of them, judge the desirability of each outcome, rank our moral duties accordingly (that is, not according to revelation but according to the projected outcome), and then make the one on the top of our list the highest obligation, excusing ourselves from obeying the rest. This is the essence and method of graded absolutism.

There are numerous occasions in which I would give someone a set of clear instructions only to find him do something quite different because he thought that his way was better or that it produced a better outcome. Someone like this often expects to be commended for his creativity and resourcefulness, but what I see is someone who is rebellious, and who cannot follow simple instructions. What I see is someone that I cannot trust, since I can never know whether I will get what I ask for from him.

Whereas I know precisely what I want when I make the instructions, I might not tell the person everything that is on my mind. And why must I exhaustively explain every request to a person, if he could perform the task perfectly just by doing what he is told? If I ask for a kitchen knife, I do not want someone to give me a gun just because he thinks that it would make a better weapon – perhaps I just want to make dinner...”²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ Vincent Cheung, *Graded Absolution*.

From the ebook, *Blasphemy and Mystery*. 2007 Page 18-19

Later, Vincent appropriately sums up this system of ethics as, “Graded absolutism is nothing but creative rebellion.”

There are many reasons for man to be sinful and disobey God, but in my experience with this issue of ethics, the typical villains are people who simply do not use Scripture as their true starting point and end up blaming God with graded absolutism. Another group includes true Christians who want to obey but are weak in their internal power of faith and joy. Thus, when they face ethics that seem to contradict, the real issue is that their inner weakness of fear (not yet perfected by God’s love) contradicts the faithfulness of God to help and strengthen them. Because of this, they try to negate one of the two commands so they have a chance of at least obeying one. Some might even admit they know they should obey both but only “feel” strong enough to obey one. This is obviously pathetic and rebellious, but at least such a person still has a chance to obey God if they repent of their weakness and focus on building inner strength with faith and receiving God’s faithful love. They need to reinforce their faith in their super-identity in Jesus and the things available to them in God’s promises. They need to believe they can obey; they need to strengthen their faith that Jesus promised to sanctify them and complete their faith; they need to remind themselves that the promise of the gospel is that God will strengthen their minds to fear Him by obeying Him. They need to remember it is not so much that God will, but that He has already given them new birth and made their souls strong. They already have the power to obey God’s commands.

Moreover, they need to build their faith that they can heal the sick, raise the dead, and make mountains obey them. Then they could face “supposed ethical difficulties” with power, faith, and courage; by this, the temptations that come from feeling weak toward God’s commands are not even part of the equation. Faith makes the impossible possible. Just like the Gentile woman seeking healing for her daughter: it was not God’s will to minister to her kind yet, but by faith, she turned the impossible “no” of God’s will into a “yes” for “her will being done on earth.”

With faith and spiritual power, many more possibilities become accessible. When God’s possibilities become yours by faith, a whole new world opens up. Thus, with faith and power, you could give a prophecy and convict the would-be murderer so that he leaves you in fear or asks how he can be saved. Maybe you could just tell him to die, as Peter did in Acts 5, or be empowered like David to run through a troop or leap over a wall. The possibilities that faith opens are as endless as the boundless power of God that strengthens His children.

Faith enables you to look at all of God’s commands with confidence and joy. You can laugh at circumstances that try to make you pick one command over another. You love God and want to obey all His commands with joy, and nothing in this world will stop you from doing so.

If you are that one feeling weak, then start by releasing God to help you. How, you ask? By a word of faith confession. God and His Word are the same thing. If you release God’s Word (in faith), you release God. Read and meditate on God’s Word, then speak it over your life in faith. Read what was just written above and confess it over yourself with thanksgiving. Let God’s power be your power, because it is your right to use God’s power as your own. He has already given it to you. He wanted this. He wants this. You do not need to convince Him. He sent His only Son to a cross to make this available for you. You already have His power and authority; you only need to use

it. It is not out there with God while you beg Him to empower you—no, God's power and authority are already in you, part of your very DNA.

There is an issue of the heart and mind that must be dealt with before moving on, although it has already been touched upon. There is a blasphemy that claims the heart and mind are different, and then the spirit is a third distinct part of man. This is so stupid. It's as if pastors and theologians never took the time to look up the words and read them in context before speaking so dogmatically about Scripture. Intellectual aspects that one would solely attribute to the "mind" are ascribed more often to the "heart" in the Bible than any other aspect attributed to the heart. The Bible, therefore, uses the terms "heart" and "mind" interchangeably. Again, it's as if some people never take the time to review and study the things they talk about.

Since we have already gone over the law of contradiction in Scripture, we know that we cannot have one. If there is a contradiction, then we know we have imported human speculation into our doctrine, and it is this speculation that causes the contradiction. Since the heart and mind are used by Scripture to refer to the same thing, and we know Scripture teaches against contradictions, and we understand how the terms are used in context, we can conclude that these two terms refer to the same entity but with different functions.

"One false doctrine asserts a sharp distinction between the spirit and the soul of man. It identifies the heart with the spirit, and the mind with the soul. However, the Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament defines "heart" (Greek: kardia) as "the inner person, the seat of understanding, knowledge, and will."²⁸¹ Kittel says, "The heart is the seat of understanding, the source of thought and reflection,"²⁸² and it affirms that "The NT use of the word agrees with the OT use."²⁸³ Unless it is referring to the physical organ, when the Bible refers to the "heart," it is speaking of the mind, while the context might stress a specific function.

Gordon Clark estimates that, "The term heart denotes emotion about ten or at the very most fifteen percent of the time. It denotes the will maybe thirty percent of the time; and it very clearly means the intellect sixty or seventy percent."²⁸⁴ He concludes, "Therefore when someone in the pews hears the preacher contrasting the head and the heart, he will realize that the preacher either does not know or does not believe what the Bible says. That the gospel may be proclaimed in its purity and power, the churches should eliminate their Freudianism and other forms of contemporary psychology and return to God's Word."²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 2; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981; p. 250.

²⁸² Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 3; Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999 (Original: 1965); p. 612.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 611.

²⁸⁴ Gordon H. Clark, *The Biblical Doctrine of Man*; Jefferson, Maryland: The Trinity Foundation, 1984; p. 82.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 87-88.

As Jonathan Edwards writes, "The mind, with regard to the exercises of this faculty, is often called the heart."²⁸⁶ And Thayer says, "Kardia...the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors...used of the understanding, the faculty and seat of the intelligence." The heart is the intellectual aspect of man. Therefore, the distinctions between head and heart faith, and head and heart knowledge, are unbiblical inventions. In fact, the head, or brain, is not the mind at all. We are not naturalists, evolutionists, or behaviorists. The mind of man is incorporeal, made in the image of God.

It is often said that the mind consists of the intellect, will, and emotion. However, this is a misrepresentation, since these are functions of the mind, and not different parts that combine to constitute the mind. Just as digestion is a function of the stomach and not a different organ from the stomach or a standalone organ that makes part of the stomach, the activities of the mind are not as parts within a man that are distinct from his mind. The mind thinks – it reasons, decides, feels, and so on. Even the "spirit" does not refer to a different part of the person, but only an aspect or function of the mind or soul. Therefore, the human person consists of mind and body. For all general purposes, we may consider the terms mind, soul, spirit, and heart as interchangeable."²⁸⁷

Thus, any teaching that posits more than one basic inner man should be mocked and dismissed. Faith is simply a mental assent to God's Word. It is agreeing with God that what He says is true. It also acknowledges the negative—that so-called knowledge derived from one's observation is empty speculation. Faith is not feelings, and it is not a delusion. I cannot assent to the idea that turnips are my favorite vegetable just because I like them. Simply saying it in my mind or with my mouth does not mean I have mentally assented to it. Rather, I would have mentally lied or deluded myself. One cannot mentally assent to something unless it is true for them. When we are born from above, beyond our minds being recreated and rooted in truth, the Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are sons of God. In this, God essentially destroys any issues of epistemology (a justified true belief) and enables us to engage in epistemology by sheer power.²⁸⁸ This is the "ontology of epistemology." Without a worldview having doctrine of the ontology of epistemology it is to be mocked and dismissed as an irrational piece of sh#t.

Man's Assenting and Obedience

²⁸⁶ *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2000 (Original: 1834); p. 237.

²⁸⁷ Vincent Cheung, *Godliness With Contentment*. 2013. pg.11-12

²⁸⁸ Obviously if you have been reading this book you know we indeed have a justified true belief, and we ought to be able to present this type of argument when needed, but even for those who cannot, the Spirit simply makes them do it by force when He says inside our hearts "you are a child of God."

Since we are speeding up toward the conclusion, we can revisit the syllogism this book is written around:

B.1. IF (A) a self-authenticating first principle with substantial truth for all of life, (B) and if this truth has a necessary connection to reality, (C) and if you are able to apply deduction to yourself from this, (D) and if God has defined what man is to do, including faith to move mountains, (E) THEN all things are possible for “you” when “you” believe.

B.2. A & B & C & D.

B.3. Thus, E.

So far, we have seen that the Bible is a self-authenticating principle with substantial information regarding all of life’s important questions. We see this epistemology has a necessary connection to reality. We have discovered that we can deduce these truths and apply them to ourselves. And now we have been exploring how God has defined man, including commandments that instruct man to use faith to be healed, to be filled with spiritual power, and to prosper.

We have already dealt with several of God’s definitions of man throughout this book, such as what man is, marriage, forgiveness of sins, and baptism of the Spirit. This book is not intended to be exhaustive, so we will focus on certain definitions of man that people in our current world resist most strongly.

Faith is Assent not something else.

“...My friend, don’t add to God’s conditions. He said, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you.” He did not say, “When I see the blood, plus your understanding, efforts, obedience, faithfulness and refusal to give in to fear, then I will pass over you.”

It is the blood of Jesus alone that delivers you. If you think that it is because of your faith, then you will always be wondering, “Do I have enough faith?” No my friend, it is His blood alone that saves. And when God sees that you see that it is the blood alone that saves, He calls that faith in the blood, and every plague will pass over you!

God wants you to know that it is Jesus’ alone that saves because every time you think that your deliverance depends partly on God and partly on you, you will not have a settled peace in your heart. But when you know that it is the [Jesus’ finished work] alone that saves, you will have an unshakable peace...”

(Joseph Prince, Email Devotional, "THE BLOOD ALONE SAVES .")

Prince hits on a point about faith that is important to remember. Faith is ultimately about God, not you. Faith is agreeing or assenting to what God says is true. One of the things God says about His salvation and blessing us is that He has already accomplished it in Jesus’ atonement. We add nothing to it. The imputed righteousness and blessings of Abraham have already been accomplished and deposited into your account. There is nothing to do; there is nothing to argue about. Jesus came down, and then He went up after doing all the saving and heavy lifting Himself. He saved us. His blessing us and healing us is already accomplished and belongs to us by right

because we are already children of God. Therefore, to constantly think about “Do I have enough faith?” or “How are my emotions right now as I try to believe?” is to do the opposite of what faith is. Rather than degrees of faith, that is not even faith. You’ve made your salvation and the blessing of Abraham about “you” instead of the “accomplished atonement of Jesus Christ.”

Salvation is God working for you, not you working for God. Salvation is about God glorifying you, not you glorifying God (1 Corinthians 2:7). Salvation is God serving you, not you serving Him. Salvation is about God’s love for you, not your love for Him. Salvation is God giving to you, not you giving to God.

The Father identifies us with His Son’s death and life as a Judge making a declaration. At the time of Jesus’ death and intercession, God’s forensic declaration is like a judge or jury making a decision behind closed doors. The decision is final, and the vote is cast. The Judge’s public declaration occurs when God gives faith to His elect. This is true of things like faith for receiving the baptism of the Spirit and for healing. Jesus, as already shown in Isaiah 53, includes healing and the blessing of Abraham as part of His death and intercession. This is the gospel. The Father accepted this already, and the proof of this gospel, as a public declaration, is when the Father gives faith for repentance, faith for healing, faith for the baptism of the Spirit, and faith to receive anything we pray for. This is the one gospel. For those predestined to be conformed to Christ’s image, this is fantastic news—wonderful news. Because the gospel cannot be divided, if God has publicly shown you are an heir by faith to receive forgiveness, it is proof you have the ability (faith) to receive healing and prosperity. You do not need to work to get this ability; it is already yours.

Some are trained well enough to realize that Jesus accomplished our “forgiveness” in His death; therefore, we have all freedom and joy to ask God to forgive us of our sins today. But sadly, some do not make this connection to sanctification (being made holy); those who fail to make this connection can find themselves bound by legalism. Still others do not connect this to Abraham’s blessing that is already ours or to healing that is already ours by Christ’s death and the Father’s acceptance of it.

We need to distinguish that we were not there; we were not involved in accomplishing the gospel of our salvation. Therefore, we do not add or contribute to sanctification, healing, or the countless benefits of Abraham’s blessing; rather, this gospel affects all today for whom it was accomplished. We do not live the gospel or add to it; it adds to us, recreates us, and affects us by God’s definition and His causation. Therefore, there is no boasting, for God is the one who saves, heals, and blesses. Faith is assenting to these truths, and thus, by definition, faith cannot add to the gospel.

When you recognize Jesus’ atonement as already accomplished and you already have it, then you agree with God. You have faith.

YOU ARE THE PROMISES OF GOD

The following are short summaries of the foundations of faith and our identity in Christ. These are from topics we have already addressed or applications from them.

I am often surprised that I need to teach this, but experience shows me it's necessary. Most can see the connection between God's command and our obedience. As said before, these commands are a technical definition of man. Instead of making, for example, photosynthesis automatic for a plant, God gives the definition of our creation in the form of a command, and we are to think about it and obey it. God's promises are the same. This aspect of rewards contained in the promises can lead some to think promises are optional rather than mandatory. Plants are not meant to fellowship and have a relationship with God; thus, God's definition for a plant or a dog operates by instinct. Man, however, is God's rational and intellectual image. Thus, rather than giving us a definition enacted by instinct, God provides our definition through verbal, intellectual revelation. Man is to understand this definition and then act on it. In addition to being intellectual and spiritual, man is in relationship with God as His children. This leads to many definitions of man being expressed as promises with rewards, but they are no less man's definition and commands compared to others that seem more straightforward.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a promise of the reward of eternal life, healing, and unending blessings. This is true; however, it is also a command. God is not suggesting that men turn to Jesus and be forgiven, healed, prospered, and blessed. God is commanding that men turn to Jesus and be forgiven (Acts 17), healed (Isaiah 53:3-4, James 5:15), prospered (2 Corinthians 8:9), use God's power as their own (Acts 1:4-8), and be blessed (Galatians 3-4). This positive aspect boggles the minds of reprobates. When God causes His definition of a plant to soak up light and water and thereby be blessed with growth and life, it is simply part of the plant's definition to be blessed; it happens instinctively.

When God relationally gives us promises of blessings and life, it is simply His definition of us. We are to understand our definition, consciously obey it, and be blessed and prosper. Until the end result is accomplished, we have not obeyed God's command and definition. Until we are reconciled, walk boldly into the throne room of God with our heads held high to ask and receive—that is, until we are healed, until our relationships prosper, until our marriages are filled with pleasure and faithfulness, until we can give to the ministry out of abundance, and until we are expanding the kingdom of God with fruitfulness—we are in disobedience because we are not walking in our definition in Christ.

Even in this aspect of spiritual growth, we are promised we will overcome besetting sins if we look to Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12). In Hebrews 4 when it says to go to the throne of grace, there is immediate context of fighting sin. Thus, you should feel zero hesitation to approach God's throne of grace, whether you are asking for help to fight a besetting sin, or for a new car. Jesus left to sit on His throne but in exchange gave us the baptism of the Spirit for power and counsel. Men might fail you as a counsellor, but the Word and the Spirit will never fail you.

Let me give a personal example of this, which I wrote during a family Christmas visit years ago

One-on-One Ministry with Jesus

I've been sick the last week. When I had the mental strength, I'd ask for healing and praise God for helping me. But I didn't get the instant healing I wanted and couldn't figure out what was blocking it. Then today, I felt well enough to walk and pray in tongues. I was doing that, praising God, and declaring His promises in faith: "God, You forgive all my sins. You heal all my sickness. You make my cup overflow. You are my salvation. You are my righteousness." I noticed a slight hitch when I said, "You are my righteousness." I mentally flagged it to work on later and kept praying in tongues, asking for an interpretation. At one point, the tongues ramped up, and God's power hit me—wave after wave pouring over me. Then the Spirit of God said,

"I will make you truly understand how righteous you are. You will become strong and powerful from knowing how righteous I've made you. You'll know the powerful effects that come from realizing how righteous you are (James 5:16). The years the Evil One spent hindering you from grasping this are done. I've removed them. Rejoice!"

Two big takeaways here.

One: I need more faith overall—especially in how righteous I am and the power that comes with it. Second, is how important it is to have God give you one-on-one personal ministry through the Spirit. By this God's Spirit dropped a power bomb and a truth bomb—righteousness is my new flex, and Satan's out of a job. Acts says Philip and Stephen were filled with "faith and the Holy Spirit." No combo on earth beats that for power.

Faith can't fully replace this. Faith is the master key. Charismatics overplay spiritual "gifts" over faith, but faith builds your inner strength and cranks out miracles nonstop—morning, noon, night. Gifts are God's sovereign call, flowing when He says so. We can do things that encourage a more constant flow with stuff like praying in tongues, but Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 says they're God's sovereign move—not instant-demand stuff, except private tongues. Faith? It's on-demand. No feelings or setup needed—just believe. When you flex faith, God delivers—healing, provision, fish for fish—every single time. Morning, midmorning, afternoon, evening, midnight, over and over in one day. If you've got faith, you'll get whatever, everything, and as much as you ask. Only catch? God might toss in extra.

That's why faith is the biggest chunk of spiritual strength. We need to chew on it daily, growing it by hearing the Word of Christ—especially the Christ of the Gospels and Acts.

That said, the Holy Spirit brings power in a way some undervalue, and faith can't touch it alone. (This is about imperfect faith—mature faith has no limits.) Jesus is your personal minister. Since our faith isn't perfect, tailored guidance for our specific issues is a game-changer.

Imagine going back in time, sitting with Jesus for an hour, getting His blessing and custom advice. Amazing, right? That's why Jesus said it's better He left and sent the Spirit. Now every believer gets that apostle-level access to God. Don't think it's weaker than time-traveling to Jesus—it's not. Romans calls the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. When we're baptized in the Spirit for power, Jesus ministers to us like He's right there. That's insane power! It's the ultimate Master-to-student setup, open to all Christians who chase it.

I needed to see my gap in believing how righteous I am. I caught a hint of it from Scripture and self-reflection, but how good's my own analysis? Who do I ask? Who's got advice? And how do I fix it? If it takes real power to fix this, will some random helper give it to me? And in age where it is hard to find a church that is expansionist and believes in God's sovereignty, who can I ask for personal help?

But all that's irrelevant—God's my personal Minister. He knows His Word and me perfectly. He sees the problem and its root. He's got the power to ditch it and the exact wisdom I need. Who cares if Satan himself was blocking me all these years? God curb-stomped it and cleared the way, so I don't sweat it. I get custom encouragement and power that fixes my head and the issue. Who counsels like that but God? Who else can spot a hiding Gideon, say the perfect thing, and hand over the power at once? Who ministers like God? The Spirit hooks us up with that—perfect words, perfect timing, power to smash hindrances and solve anything. If God's your minister, rejoice—the Greatest Master's your personal coach.

Identity in Christ.

Thus, one of the most foundational aspects of obeying God and His commandments is assenting to our identity in Christ. If we are to act like the image of Christ, we must come into agreement with how God has defined us in Christ. For example, I cannot play chess until I read the rules and agree they are the correct definition for the game. Only after this can I change my behavior to play the game correctly.

We must first come into agreement with how God has defined us in Christ. The New Testament provides both our identity in Christ and the commands that correspond to our new creation. One does not necessarily need to know all the information to behave in a certain way. For instance, I can comprehend the command that sex is reserved for marriage without fully understanding the connections my identity has in Christ. However, we are not to choose one over the other; we are to pursue knowledge for all of Christian life and ultimate questions. Since knowing our identity is logically prior, it is therefore important to understand this as soon as possible so we can grasp why God has commanded us to shape our behavior in a particular way. Jesus said He calls us friends because He reveals all that He and His Father are doing. We are God's friends; He wants us to understand the ins and outs of what He is doing and why. He loves us in this way. Our minds are the mind of Christ.

Our identity starts with knowing what we are not and then affirming what we are. We have already addressed much of this in the previous section on salvation. We are no longer sinners. We are not dirty. We have been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. Jesus Christ, whom the Father loves so deeply, has enveloped us in that love. We were once darkness, but now we are light. We once had an unrighteous record, but now our record is perfectly righteous. We were once outsiders, but now we are insiders to the New Covenant ratified by God's only Son. We were orphans, but now we are children of God and co-heirs with Christ. We were weak, but now we are empowered by God's Spirit with His gifts and His abilities. Like all non-Christians, we were once foolish, but now we are wise.

Before, we lacked, but now we are empowered to be healed, made wealthy, anointed in the blessings of Abraham and miracles of the Spirit.

“Are you black? That is fine, but forget about it. If you are a Christian, you are a new creation in Christ, a unique race of God’s chosen ones. “Wait,” you say, “should I not take pride in my race?” Of course not. Who told you this nonsense? The world taught you this, not the Bible. If you must be proud that you are black, and if you must make a point of stressing this, then do not complain when others express their pride that they are white instead of black like you. Then, of course, the result is division rather than unity in Christ. ...

For example, a person who mainly defines himself by his race might even refuse to become a Christian. I have heard of a Chinese woman who refused to believe in Christ because the Son of God in his human nature was not Chinese. Truth was secondary to her, but race was paramount. ...

What is your occupation? Are you a psychologist? Good, but do not think that psychology can explain everything, and do not read the Bible with a psychologist’s mindset. Rather, judge psychology with a Christian’s mindset. Christ is to be the central reference point for all our thinking and behavior. Race, gender, and class make no difference, but only a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Those who have undergone notable or even traumatic experiences might also allow these things to shape their identity and outlook. So there are those who define themselves as cancer survivors, or holocaust survivors, or survivors of rape, abuse, and so on. This is unacceptable to the Christian faith. Problems occur when people define themselves by these human categories, and then allow them to frame the way they perceive the world and relate to others. There was a Chinese pastor who tried to prove that the Chinese are in fact of Jewish blood. If this sounds ridiculous, then so is “Messianic” Christianity, and so is “Black” Christianity. We know that they are poor Christians the moment they identify themselves by these terms. The rebuke that Jesus gave Peter applies to them – they have in mind not the things of God, but the things of men.

You may complain that it is impossible to approach anything, including the Christian faith, without bringing to it our own backgrounds and presuppositions. This is true. But if you are a Christian, then you are a new creation in Christ – you have a new background. And if you are a Christian, then the Bible commands you to renew your mind – get a new set of presuppositions. Reorient your thinking, and enthrone Christ in your mind as the reference point by which you define yourself and everything else. Then, you will find it impossible to approach anything apart from your Christian background and presuppositions. Only then can you be assured that you have a firm grasp on your identity as a Christian.”²⁸⁹

²⁸⁹ Vincent Cheung. The Christian’s Self Definition.
From the eBook, Reflections on First Timothy. 2009. Pg 6-7.

New Contract: God is our God, and we are His people.

Our identity is defined by the New Covenant. This doctrine was taught in a previous section, so we will focus on a summary here.

The Father cut up His only Son into pieces into a bloody mess, to establish these promises, saying, *“I will do what I promised.”* All our sins are forgiven and forgotten. God Himself sanctifies us by writing His laws on our hearts. He personally teaches us. God will never stop favoring us. And God is forever our God and Father, and we are His children and people.

This final promise carries a vast package of blessings and benefits. It stems from the blessing and gospel of Abraham. Paul defines this promise as God giving the world to Abraham (Romans 4:13), along with the baptism of the Spirit and miracles (Galatians 3). By defining God’s blessing to Abraham through the words and context of Abraham’s life—God being his God and Abraham being His chosen one—this blessing includes all sorts of favors for every aspect of life, such as supernatural health, military victories, and prosperity.

Now, without faith, it is impossible to please God, for the one who draws near to Him must believe that He exists and rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). The first time God declares someone righteous in His sight has nothing to do with sin or forgiveness but with Abraham believing God would give him all the rewards and blessings He promised. Abraham trusted that God would fulfill all the good things He had promised. What was God’s response? He pointed His finger at Abraham and declared, *“You are righteous in my sight.”*

What if Abraham had said he believed God would give him a son but doubted that God would make his name famous, prosper him, or give him the world as his inheritance (Romans 4:13)? If Abraham had done this, God would not have declared him righteous in His sight, for James says if you doubt, do not expect to receive anything (James 1:6-7).

Likewise, if you believe God will forgive you but doubt He will heal, prosper, and reward you, do not expect to have God’s pleasure upon you. To please God, you must believe He will reward you with the good things He promised. How can you be a child of Abraham? How can God declare you righteous if you doubt He will bless you as He promised?

Our identity is part of Abraham’s blessing. Our definition is this: just as God was a Father to Abraham and singled him out to be His people, we are defined in the same way. God is our God, and we are His people.

The blood Contract guarantees that we can make demands on God to always favor us—not because we forced Him to do so, but because He wanted us to have absolute certainty in receiving the good things we ask for. We can demand that God heal, prosper, and make our names great because we are sons of Abraham. Jesus said it was “necessary” to “heal” a “daughter of Abraham” on the Sabbath (Luke 13:16). We can make this same demand of God. We can say it is necessary for Him to heal us and grant us success, because we are sons of Abraham by His contract ratified in blood. God went so far out of His way to guarantee this that He gave up His one and only Son to prove it. God delights when we confidently ask based on the Contract. Beggars are outsiders, but sons ask with confidence because they are indeed insiders.

God can also call upon us through this Covenant. He can summon us to help a family member or serve in a ministry, and by the same Contract, we are bound to follow. We are glad to do so, just as God is pleased to be called upon based on His Contract.

This Contract is a permanent definition of our relationship with God. It stands forever. It is who we are.

Forgiven but Also Adopted as Beloved Heirs

Abraham got called righteous by God because he believed God would make him famous, rich, give him amazing health, winning battles, and constant favor. It's the same for us—we're righteous when we trust God to hand over all the good things He promised. Imagine God finding a guy struggling, bloody and abandoned. That's Abraham. God walks up to him and says, "The whole world's yours." Abraham believes it, trusting God's word completely.

We're Abraham's kids too if we have that same faith. But then sin comes up—Romans 3:25. Here's the thing: the blessings came first, not the sin fix, because God's plans make sense in order; He's not just reacting. You see it with Abraham—all blessings, no talk of sin. The good stuff was the main point, but sin was there, so it had to be handled later. God corrected sin by sending His one and only Son to take our punishment. Jesus got cut up into pieces for our sins, standing in our place. That's mercy that never stops. It's good because God promised it and followed through.

The gospel we're agreeing to isn't just about getting sins wiped—it's about a ton of blessings and favors. Forgiveness is the front door. The good news covers all of Abraham's blessings and more, stuff Jesus died to lock in for us. It's a full package. Sitting at God's table with healing, favors, growth, wisdom, miracles, and spiritual strength is as much the gospel as forgiveness is—if not more. That table of blessings was God's first plan, the original good news He gave Abraham. Forgiveness got added to clear out anything blocking God's kids from grabbing those promised blessings. Like the law was an extra, not the core promise, forgiveness is an add-on to the real Good News. With Jesus taking our punishment, it's all tied up together in one deal.

Hebrews 10 says if God's people are truly forgiven, they don't keep thinking about their sins—they're gone for good. Colossians 3 tells us our minds should be up with Christ in heaven, because that's where our real life is. We're God's sons and daughters, and if you know that, your thoughts stay on that truth. That's why forgiveness is just the door. Would you walk into the King's house and stand there staring at the frame? If you did that while everyone else was at the table with the King, it'd be a slap in the face. Jesus said the bread on that table is something Abraham's kids need to take. The gospel has a bunch of great blessings set out on that table. That's the original good news and blessing.

Only a real insider—a child—can sit down and join in. Some hang out by the door because they're fakes and know they don't fit at the King's table. They act like outsiders because that's what they are.

Our identity isn't just being righteous—it's being God's kids, co-heirs with Jesus. We're like little gods. The Trinity has traits only God can have, like being eternal or

never changing—stuff no created thing gets. We have the “mind of Christ”; not the immutable and infinite propositions, but we have been given a huge amount of God’s propositions and can assent to these proposition with the application we are adopted sons of God. The ability to think about so much of what God knows comes from His Spirit in us. It’s the same Spirit that knows God. This same Spirit helps us so much that Paul says, “We have the mind of Christ.” We don’t know exactly how much power or how many thoughts it takes to call it that, but whatever that huge amount is, we’ve got it. We’re not just “sub”-heirs with Jesus—we’re co-heirs. God judges angels, and so do we. No created thing can judge God, so created thing can judge us. Creation belongs to God, and it belongs to us too (1 Corinthians 3:19-23). The new creation gets freed into God’s freedom, and into ours too (Romans 8:21). Jesus has bold, constant access to God, and we do too.

In the end, aside from traits only God can have, He’s given us everything to share in His divine nature. We’re gods, plain and simple. He gave us His one and only Son, so He’ll give us all the other things too.

This our new creation, our new identity.

We Ought to Be Healed

“If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.” (1 John 1:9)

God cannot lie and is faithful—once He makes a promise, He cannot break it. He is always true and never a liar.

God’s commandments, by definition, are given to man, not Himself. That’s why God can take vengeance and man cannot—they are categories that do not belong together. His commands don’t tie Him down, but His perfect, faithful nature always applies. So, if He gives a promise, He will be faithful to do it.

To be righteous means thinking and acting in a way that values God above all things. For man, this comes in two main ways: (1) Agree with all God has said is true and reject human speculation; (2) Obey Him. We must note that many commands are in the form of precious and marvelous promises of good. It is not a suggestion to ask God to forgive our sins, reconcile us, bless us, or heal us (and so on)—it’s built in. Valuing what God values isn’t a third way; it’s included in agreeing with Him and obeying Him. When we believe His revelation and obey Him, we are acting and thinking in a way that values Him above all others.

God being righteous is not about obeying, because God is free and not under an authority. God is knowledge—He does not receive knowledge and then agree with it, as man does. God being faithful to His perfect nature and perfect understanding, and valuing Himself above all others as the greatest, is good because God is so. We can label this as God being righteous when He acts this way, which is always. Jesus says He is righteous because He does not do His own will, but the Father’s (John 5:30). Jesus values His Father’s will above all others. For God to seek His own desires and will is righteous. For us, it is to seek His will above all others.

In relation to man, God is “just and righteous” to fulfill His promise. Before the promises, God is free to show mercy to whom He wants—no one forces Him to be kind and gracious. Because God is truth and perfect, once He gives a promise, He would be unjust and unrighteous not to do it. He would be acting in a way that does not value His perfect nature and knowledge above all others.

This is why John says God is just—or righteous—to forgive our sins. He promised it, and Jesus finished the requirements. On the demand of faith, God is righteous to forgive us. We should be forgiven in order for God to value His own worth. It is necessary for us to be forgiven on the demand of faith.

The same applies to the promise of Abraham and the Contract by Jesus’ blood. (See Vincent Cheung’s “The Edge of Glory” and “Our Contract” for more details on these promised blessings.) These promises, already secured by Jesus, include things like healing, prosperity, miracles for all sorts of things, wisdom, and blessings. On the demand of faith, God is righteous to give us all such things when we ask. He would be unrighteous to His own value if He did not. This is why Jesus said it was necessary for a daughter of Abraham to be healed on the Sabbath—she ought to be healed because she is a daughter of Abraham.

Thus, we ought to be forgiven, we ought to be healed, we ought to be wealthy, we ought to have fruitful relationships and ministries. It is necessary for us to be healed on the demand of faith. It is necessary for us to be given miracles on the demand of faith. Anything less is to think and act in a way that would devalue Him as the greatest above all others.

Do Not Fear, Only Believe

“But Jesus... replied to him, ‘Do not be afraid! Only believe, and she will be healed.’” (Luke 8:50 LEB)

Our new identity in Christ marks us as people who only believe, with no fears about life’s troubles.

Not fearing troubles isn’t what some make it out to be. Some say we have no fears because one day in heaven everything will be wiped away. But that’s not what Jesus means here or in many other passages on this topic.

This isn’t like eastern religions where we just change inside while our circumstances stay the same. No. Jesus said, “Only believe, do not fear,” tied directly to “she will be healed.” The fears He’s talking about are right here, right now, in this life. If you know faith works with absolute certainty—if you ask for healing and it happens—then of course there’s no fear of sickness. You know it’ll be gone. In this passage, Jesus links “resurrection” to “faith.” He does the same with Martha about Lazarus’ resurrection. For resurrection—and healing—here and now in this life, Jesus says to only believe, with no fear, because it will happen. Think about that. How many so-called Christians would blast Jesus for such straight-up Health, Wealth, and Word of Faith talk?

Jesus teaches us to face everyday troubles with only faith, no fear, because faith makes those troubles disappear here and now.²⁹⁰ A person isn't fit for ministry until they can handle this basic piece of Christian discipleship. This isn't advanced stuff. It's what Jesus expected from His disciples and even people He'd just met. He expects you to believe in Him. He expects you to only believe, with no fears tagging along. He commands you to replay His promises in your mind, like a broken record. He commands you not to replay your fears. The mix track looping in your head should be faith, with no fear reruns. He expects you to believe resurrection and healing happen today, with no fears they won't.

The good news is God backs up what He commands. In the New Contract, God promises not just to forgive but to write His laws on our hearts and teach us. He promises to be our Father and us His children. He promises to never stop favoring us. So, this command from Jesus to only believe with no fears isn't some high bar—it's easily within reach for every believer. God built it into our DNA. This is our new identity.

Free and Bold Access

"...We can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus... Since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise." (Hebrews 10:19-23, NLT)

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16, NKJV)

"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:3-5)

Our new identity includes boldly walking into the throne room of heaven. Only family insiders have this status.

Think about being a guest of a king. You're standing off to the side in the throne room, chatting with some nobles. You're only there because the king invited you—you don't just stroll in whenever you feel like it. Now picture the throne room doors swinging open. You're caught off guard because the king's chamberlain didn't announce anyone else. A young man walks in and heads straight for the throne—no formalities, no bowing, none of the stuff you had to do as a noble. He walks up to the king, who's grinning ear to ear. The man asks for a prime piece of land to build a house. The king says, "It's yours." Who is this guy? Then the man says, "Thank you, Father." Oh— he's a son, an insider.

²⁹⁰ (see Vincent Cheung on the, The "Already/Not Yet" Fallacy, for more reading)

Hebrews says that young man is you, and the king is God. Angels and other created beings don't get to be children of God like we are. We're family insiders. They can only watch and wonder what it's like. We live it.

Hebrews says we can not only enter God's throne room but do it with "confidence" and "boldness." This is like walking in unannounced and still stepping up with guts. We can push open those doors and stride in with our heads high as beloved princes of heaven. Only loved insiders get this kind of access. We've got it.

The passage says we should be aware that we're clean, holy, and righteous in God's sight as we approach Him. Faith isn't about focusing on our own feelings or thoughts—it's about God's feelings and thoughts. God sees us as completely clean and pure. That's what faith locks onto. A righteous noble, even if clean, can't march in like a beloved kid. Beyond just being clean and pure, God thinks we can boldly approach Him like a cherished child. That's faith's target.

It goes on to say we can boldly approach to ask for help and be confident we'll get it. Chapter 4 doesn't say we ask and then cross our fingers, hoping our Father might help. No—it says to boldly approach to "receive" help. As Vincent Cheung puts it in "The Absurd Idea of Need," a need is anything you want. Jesus says a good father gives a fish when you ask for a fish. So, this bold approach is us going to the King to get what we want, and our Father happily saying yes. Anything less than that isn't boldly approaching with confidence, given Jesus' finished atonement.

This is how the Bible defines our relationship with God.

Colossians says our lives are already hidden with Jesus in heaven. In God's mind, He sees us as part of Jesus' body and as His children. God's thoughts and power are the same thing—what He thinks is reality, or it becomes reality. So, what God thinks matters most. We're already so clean, glorified, and lifted up in God's eyes that He considers us with Jesus right now. And so we are.

When we pray, we're already in heaven with Jesus. God sees us there with His Son. God isn't far off—He's close, and we're already close to Him. This is our new, eternal identity.

Whether a Christian taps into this new identity and bold access to God with real power is another question. But the fact stands: we have this bold access, and we're already with Jesus as children of God.

All Things Are Yours to Moralize

"All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God." (1 Corinthians 3:21-23, NIV)

"They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. ... Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ... These

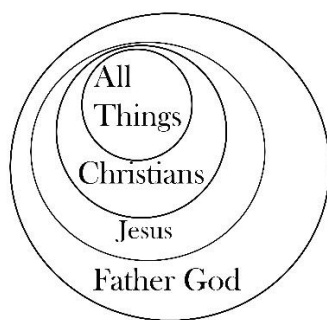
things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come.” (1 Corinthians 10:3-4, 6, 11, NIV)

“And the prayer offered in faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him... The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the earth produced its fruit.” (James 5:15-18)

As Vincent Cheung points out in “All Things Are Yours,” the Bible moralizes itself. We use “moralize” to mean taking the truth and promises and applying them directly to ourselves. The Bible takes Elijah’s prayer for rain (a natural weather event) and moralizes it for us to pray for healing and forgiveness of sins. It moralizes Elijah’s story to the stars and back.²⁹¹

Paul tells us straight in 1 Corinthians 10 that moralizing Old Testament stories is solid biblical interpretation. These stories are examples for us to learn from and apply to ourselves. If you’re a Christian, you can moralize them. This keeps the Bible from being just a general ethical guide anyone can use for secular lessons. Only Christians can apply them. Only Christians can take Elijah praying for rain and use it as an ethical example to pray for healing. Non-Christians don’t have the right, the smarts, or the faith to do it.

Only if you’re a Christian—and have inherited all things—can you do this. Why? Because all things are yours. This isn’t rocket science. Since all things belong to you, of course you can moralize these examples for yourself. As Paul says, they’re yours, and you’re free to use them.



Our identity in Christ means we’ve inherited all things. Reality itself is ours. Recall our earlier diagram. Sure, all reality belongs to Jesus. But God has exalted, glorified, and placed us in Christ so high that instead of “reality” being a subcategory under Jesus, it’s now a subcategory under us. That’s why we can take all the stories in Scripture and apply them to ourselves for our own good. All things are ours. We are Christ’s. And Christ is the Father’s.

We’re covering this in the ethics section of the book because living and walking in our new identity in Christ isn’t optional—it’s a command. It’s good ethics to read the Psalms and apply them to yourself. Psalm 103 is yours—use it! The Exodus story is

²⁹¹ See Vincent Cheung, All Things Are Yours, who helped me understand this better.

yours—use it. The judges and prophets are yours—apply them to yourself. Do it again and again. David versus Goliath is for you to moralize, use it.

We're meant to grasp how all things are ours and live out this new identity. Part of that is using biblical examples to guide, grow, and build our faith. Don't let religious snobs trick you out of your inheritance. You can apply the Bible to yourself. If they keep getting in your way, use your authority in Christ and hand them over to Satan—let them either repent or get destroyed.

Our Royal Authority and Power

"I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven. I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." (Matthew 18:18-19, NLT)

"Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'" (Matthew 16:16-19, NIV)

"Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world? And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even these little things among yourselves? Don't you realize that we will judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary disputes in this life." (1 Corinthians 6:2-3, NLT)

"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; and they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover." (Mark 16:16-18, LSB)

"When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick." (Luke 9:1-2, NIV)

"Then Peter said, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk... By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong.'" (Acts 3:6, 16, NIV)

In the context of Matthew 18, it mentions forgiveness, but it also talks about faith to ask for anything and get it. So, don't let anyone trick you into thinking this passage isn't for Christians to use God's authority today—Jesus says it is.

This same phrase shows up in Matthew 16, giving it the first-mention rule. The setting is Jesus asking Peter who he says He is. Peter declares Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus responds that He'll build His church on this rock. Some folks wrongly think this means Peter himself, but they're mixed up. Jesus means Peter's faith confession—that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus will grow His kingdom through faith that says He's the Son of God. He calls it a military push—His kingdom will charge ahead, and the gates

of hell won't stop it from busting through and trampling hell's walls. Some try to make it all about Peter, but it's about Jesus as the Son of God and those who trust Him. This faith is a winning force with so much authority and power it rips down hell's gates. As faith moves forward, demons scream in fear.

In this setting, Jesus says what you lock on earth will be locked in heaven, and what you unlock on earth will be unlocked in heaven. He sees His kingdom's growth as unstoppable and gives you authority to loose and bind things. This power belongs to a faith confession that Jesus is the Son of God. It's not just about Peter—Peter isn't the only one who believes this.

This kingdom growth is so strong that hell's gates can't hold it back. That context opens up this authority wide. It's a total power for Jesus' followers who have faith—the same faith to be saved, to heal, to move mountains, to grow His kingdom, to forgive, and to ask for anything you want. It's broad authority for anything tied to kingdom expansion.

Think about it. You have faith to get a miracle of wealth and use it to fund the gospel mission. You've unlocked a financial door on earth, and by pouring it into God's work, you've unlocked treasure in heaven. Faith opens doors on earth, in heaven, and across dimensions. Faith is the master key. He says if "you tell" a tree to jump into the sea with faith, it'll obey "you." So, if you cast out demons and free a trapped soul who accepts Jesus, what "you" loosed on earth gets loosed in the next life. And God will reward you for using His authority to push His kingdom forward.

Jesus first gave the Twelve "authority over all demons." Later, He extended it to 70 non-apostles. Then, in Mark 16, He says this power is for all believers. In Acts, Luke shows the Spirit's power went to a huge group of non-apostles—so much that table servers had enough faith and power to see into heaven's throne room and some even teleported across time and space. Faith makes time and space bow to you, not the other way around. Jesus whipped up good, "aged" wine for a wedding. Faith makes time your servant. With faith, you're the boss of reality—even stubborn things like time and space bend. Prophets multiplied stuff like reality was their personal Lego set. Then Jesus told the disciples, "You give them something to eat." He expected them to have faith and do it too, like it's normal for believers. Jesus commands us to multiply and distribute. The question isn't whether God promised it—it's whether you'll trust God over your eyes, experience, and feelings. Acts shows regular Christians had more power than whole armies, like Samson versus the Philistines.

Right after the Spirit's baptism and its big focus in Acts 1 and 2—and all through the book—Luke shows in chapter 3 how Peter healed a man with authority in Jesus' name. Peter "loosed" him from sickness by faith in Jesus, not by claiming some Spirit gift. Even after Jesus' resurrection, the authority to loose and bind, rooted in faith, is still fully active—if not stronger, because Jesus is at the Power's right hand. Luke adds that God gave the man faith in Jesus to be healed—or "loosed"—from his sickness.

So, all who have faith in Jesus as the Son of God have this access and authority to loose and bind. Anyone who loves Jesus and wants His kingdom to grow will take this power seriously and use it. Jesus didn't say He'd expand His kingdom with governments or cultural shifts. No—He wants you to do it with authority to loose and bind. If you love Him, you'll do it His way.

Our new identity in Jesus makes us gods. We have the power to grow God's kingdom. Our tools are faith-filled words that can bind and loose reality, sickness, demons, and blessings. God is this power—when He speaks, reality listens. But He's handed this kingdom expansion to us. He's given us His lightning bolt. He's qualified us to speak and make reality obey us, sending demons running scared. Like with Joshua, God told them to take territory with sword and shield—He'd back them up, but they had to march and fight.

Our weapons are faith-filled words and confessions. God and His Word—or promise—are one, as we saw earlier. So, when you speak God's promise in faith, you release God. You unleash unstoppable power. It's God's power, but since the Bible rejects pantheism, you release it when you speak in faith. With this, we tear down hell's gates. With faith-filled words, mountains must obey us.

One day, the saints will have so much authority we'll judge the earth and angels. We don't just own reality—we'll judge it. Since angels are part of reality, and we own and judge reality, we'll judge angels too. This is our identity in Christ. This is who we are.

God Did Not Ask Or Consult Me

You didn't ask to come into existence. It's not about you. Reality is God's playdough, and He shapes it however He wants for His own purposes. I was given the gift of existence whether I wanted it or not.

Reality is God's Lego set, but unlike Legos, He made the pieces from scratch. H₂O doesn't naturally make water—it acts like water because God decided it should always work that way. Reality is God's call, plain and simple.

Some downplay God's sovereignty for different reasons, like thinking it messes with our ability to have faith and do miracles. That's terrible, because the Bible uses election and predestination as a launchpad for bigger faith, more miracles, and answered prayers.

Take sin and righteousness, for example—Romans 9 and 5. We're told God picks who He loves and who He hates based on His own choice, not their good or bad decisions. God molds each person from a neutral lump of clay for His own reasons. In Romans 5, we read Adam fell, and God's the ultimate cause behind it. There's no dualism in the Bible. Man is responsible because man isn't free—man's under God's sovereign control and command.

Romans 5 says everyone after Adam is born a sinner, with a sinful mind already built in. Since God's the only cause in reality, He's the one who makes every person after Adam with a sinful mind. We reject pantheism, so God causes the sinful nature but isn't sinful Himself. God isn't a tree, even though He makes a tree and causes it to be a tree.

The same God who created you made you a sinner from birth. I didn't ask to be born. I didn't ask to come with a pre-installed sinful mind. God did it all on His own. I was never asked or consulted.

The list of sins in my head doesn't matter. God says He's the judge of reality, and only His thoughts about my sins or obedience count. He never asked me about it or checked if I wanted this setup. It's His Legos, His playdough, His program, His story.

The same God who caused all this also caused me to be righteous. Out of favor to me, He sent His only Son to take the punishment for my sins. In the Father's mind, my sin list got transferred to Jesus' list, and the Father punished Jesus for it. Romans 5 adds that, in the Father's thinking, Jesus' righteous actions got transferred to my list, like I did them. Because of this, my sinful nature's gone, I'm born from above with God's mind, and I rule in life with Jesus.

Just like everything before, I didn't ask God to send His Son out of love for me. He didn't ask my permission. He just did it because reality is His personal Lego set. He built me. He first stuck me with the bad guys in His Lego playground. Later, He swapped my Lego head and moved me to the good-guys' side. He didn't ask or consult me. He did it because He wanted to. When God gave me faith, it was Him making me aware of all the good stuff He'd done for me.

The doctrine of God's sovereignty bulldozes any sense of lack or guilt over sin. It's about God, not you. When Satan or your old thinking tries to condemn you or drag up past sins, it's to make it all about you—to get you fighting on the wrong hill. The hill that decides who wins is God's actions, not yours.

Romans 5 says it's the gift of unearned favor and righteousness that lets me rule in life with Jesus. Just like existence was handed to me without my asking or say-so, the gift of unmerited favor and Jesus' righteousness came the same way. It's about God's work, not mine. The Holy Spirit making me believe this is God cluing me in on what He did. Just as existence doesn't come and go, neither does my unmerited favor, righteous standing, sonship, or royal priesthood. Picture a kid yanking a red Lego leg off a figure and snapping on a green one—God did that for me in Jesus Christ. Being righteous is my definition, my identity, my reality. It's about Him, not me. It's about what Jesus already did, what's already me, and what's already mine.

In the sense of owning reality and my identity, then it's about me. God's finished the atonement and caused me to be born from above. I'm already a new creation with new labels. I'm the righteousness of God. I am what I am by God's grace, but I am what I am. I'm a royal priesthood. Jesus gave me authority to heal all sickness and cast out all demons. He gave me the right to march boldly into His throne room to ask and receive. He gave me the right to sling His Name around to ask for whatever I want and get it. It's about God, not me. Reality is God's playdough, and this is how He shaped me.

That's why we've got boldness on the Day of Judgment. Just as Jesus is, so are we in this world. God's love is complete in us when we've got no fear—just faith, joy, and confidence in all the good things He's done for us.

It Is By Jesus' Name & I Have That Name

“Then Peter said, ‘Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God... By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see... how he was healed? Then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ.” (Acts 3:3-8, 16; 4:9-10, NIV)

Peter’s words would get him booted from most American churches. He didn’t bother checking God’s will—he just said, “What I have, I give.” Peter stood on his own will and what he already had. What he had was the authority to use Jesus’ name to heal. He didn’t need to ask for God’s power—he said he already had it. He didn’t need to ask for authority—he already had it. He didn’t need to check if it was God’s will to heal this guy—it was Peter’s will and the cripple’s will. They wanted healing, and this was all the “will” they needed. Peter didn’t need God’s permission because he had Jesus’ name to sling around however he saw fit. If he wanted someone healed, it was his call—because, “What I have, I give.”

God gave Peter His name to use, just like God gave Peter two arms. Peter doesn’t ask if it’s God’s will every time he moves his arms. Jesus didn’t say, “Ask God to heal them.” He said, “You heal the sick and cast out demons.” Peter followed orders. He didn’t ask God to heal the cripple—he didn’t even pray in the usual way. He commanded the healing, exactly as he was told. Jesus didn’t tell us to ask God to move our mountains—he told us to use faith and move them ourselves. If you sit around waiting for God to “sovereignly” do it, you’ll stay crippled your whole life and die that way.

Jesus gave Peter His name to wield like Grayskull handing He-Man the sword of power. When He-Man fought bad guys, he didn’t pause to call Grayskull’s hotline and ask if it was their will to take out the enemy. The sword was given to him to smash foes—he didn’t need to check. At first, the sword wasn’t He-Man’s, but once it was handed over, he wielded it as his own power. The power belongs to Grayskull, but it was his to use.

In the same way, Jesus gave His name to all His disciples to wield as their own power (John 14-16). He told us to heal the sick and cast out demons. Peter said when Jesus healed sickness, He was breaking people free from Satan’s victimization (Acts 10:38). So, by healing the sick, we’re also kicking out demons and tearing down hell’s gates.

Like He-Man, we don’t need to call heaven’s hotline and ask if it’s “God’s will” to take out the enemy and push God’s kingdom forward. God gave us the power and authority so we don’t have to keep asking. Does a soldier check with the general every time he shoots on the front lines? Peter says healing is front-line warfare against the kingdom of darkness. Yet, tons of Christians act like it’s all about “God’s will” nonsense, as if they don’t see bullets flying overhead. God armed you and told you to fire back. You don’t need to ask. Command the sickness to leave—pull out the sword God gave you and slash Satan’s chains. Tear down hell’s gates.

Some whine, “But it’s God’s power, not yours—you’re stealing God’s glory.” Really? You’re the only one who doesn’t get it. When an Olympic shooter wins a medal, do they praise the gun or the shooter? I’ve never seen someone at the Olympics yell, “The

power was the gun and bullet, not the person—you're stealing the gun's glory!" That doesn't happen because everyone there has a brain. The gun didn't shoot itself. Giving the medal to the shooter doesn't mean they're denying the gun's power. Everyone gets that—except pastors and theologians, apparently.

Jesus said, "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Thus, we know healing often means casting out demons. So, by healing, you're kicking out the demon kingdom and bringing in God's kingdom.

"In a world where everyone's begging for divine permission like they're waiting for a bus, Peter rolls in with Jesus' name and says, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you.' He's like the He-Man of healing, swinging the 'Power Sword' of Jesus' name without dialling heaven's customer service to see if it's cool. Peter doesn't wait for a sign or a prayer meeting—he orders healing like it's takeout. 'Walk,' he says, and the cripple does, hopping and praising God like he's at a holy rave."²⁹²

Sure, if you're sick, you want healing to feel better, be more productive, and grow God's kingdom—but healing isn't just personal. Yes, some sickness comes from Adam's fall—God spoke a curse into the earth that causes it. But Jesus took that curse for us, swapping it out so we don't face it; instead, we get Abraham's blessing, including healing, miracles, and Spirit power.

Still, Peter says in Acts 10:38 that all the people Jesus healed—hundreds, thousands—were sick because the devil was attacking them. Think about that. At the very least, demon-caused sickness isn't rare or minor. At minimum, sickness is largely from demons, even knowing some comes from God's curse. Since sickness is demon-driven, healing is mostly a soldier's job, not just a personal perk. Even if you're into suffering and want to groan "for God's glory," healing's a battlefield issue—under God's command to cast out demons and smash hell's gates, you don't get a vote. You have to face sickness with Jesus' name and wipe it out. You have to kick out the demon kingdom and bring in God's kingdom with the power of Jesus' name.

I'm not just zooming in on faith here—I'm keeping the spotlight on "the Name of Jesus."

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." (John 14:12-14)

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you." (John 15:16)

"Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." (John 16:23-24)

This passage in John is where Jesus keeps saying, "Love one another." So, both straight reading and context show He's talking to all His followers. Jesus has commissioned us with His name. It's carved into our tongues like a tattoo. God's gifts

²⁹² Grok, xAI 2024, witty summary of the essay

and callings don't get taken back. Every believer has Jesus' name stamped on their tongue, whether they use it or not. It's always there.

How dense can someone be to have Jesus' name etched on their tongue and not use it? They've got His name but won't use it to grab joy through healing and miracles? They can't blame "God's will" when "God's will"—Jesus' name—is right there on their tongue, and God told them to use it to ask for anything and get it. "God's will" isn't blocking their healing—their silent tongues and lack of trust in Jesus' name are.

Point The Gun At Satan & Pull The Trigger

No analogy is perfect, but faith to heal is like God giving us a gun. No one says, "I blew up this apple with my own power when I shot it." It's obvious to everyone the power came from the gunpowder and bullet. Yet, when someone shoots a target or a person, they get the blame—and rightly so—as in, "This person wrecked that," or "They hurt someone." The power isn't theirs, but they aimed it. When an Olympic sharpshooter wins gold, the medal goes to them, not the gun.

It's the same when Jesus commanded us to heal the sick, rebuke demons, and knock down mountains using His Name and authority. God and creation aren't the same—we deny pantheism. Jesus gave us His power and authority. The Spirit wasn't given to God to have rivers of life and power flow from His belly—it flows from ours. Since healing came from the stripes on Jesus, as a substitute for our healing, we don't ask for it—it's already done and handed to us. We don't ask God for forgiveness either—we repent of our sins because forgiveness is already finished.

Adam and Eve didn't beg God for food—it was already provided and given. They could beg all day, but God wasn't going to grab a pear and jam it down their throats. They had to take the food and eat it themselves. Healing's the same. The atonement provided it—we've got to grab it and take it. We do that with faith, opening our mouths and commanding sickness to leave and healing to happen. Jesus said, "You heal the sick." He didn't say, "Ask God to heal them." He said, "You do it." He didn't tell us to tell God about our mountains—he told us to use our given authority and power to command them to move. Most Christians flat-out rebel against Jesus on this teaching. That's why Peter in Acts 3 says, "What I have, I give to you, in Jesus' Name, walk." Peter didn't pray—not in the usual sense. He commanded the healing, just like Jesus told him. We're under the same gospel, the same orders.

Since the power, authority, and healing are already ours, we pull the trigger—not God. We climb into the driver's seat and make it happen—not God. God's not holding back your healing—you are. God's not the one healing you or those around you—you are. Jesus said, "You heal them."

This doesn't mean God never works outside our faith. A "gift of faith" or healing helps us when we're weak—we seek them and use them gladly. But the Bible talks about gifts the least, compared to everyday faith in God's promises. Faith is the master key. The point stands: God's not holding back your healing—He's commanded you to pull the trigger. It's the same with forgiveness. God's sovereign and controls everything, even our faith, but when we bring faith, He always does what He promised—forgiveness or healing.

The power and authority to heal are ours, just like food was there for Adam and Eve. God's put the gun in our pocket—it won't fire itself. It fires when we use faith, point it at sickness, and command it to leave. God's told us to resist the devil and cast him out. His power's already in our bellies, His authority stamped on our tongues. God's not keeping you from breaking free of demonic harassment—He's told you to point the gun at Satan and pull the trigger. He's told you to command demons to leave. You resist the devil—not God. You order them out—not God.

When we do, we get praised for the results, and God gets credit as the ultimate power—just like Peter said, “What I have, I give, in Jesus' Name, walk.” Jesus said the mulberry tree won't obey “God”—it'll obey “you” when you command it. God will praise us when we use the authority He gave us. When we pull the trigger, He's all praise: “Your faith has saved you, and it has healed you.”

Many Christians beg God to heal them, as if Jesus' stripes didn't already provide it, and God needs to do something new. God doesn't need to re-crucify Jesus—the atonement's done. Like forgiveness, it's finished—you repent and receive it by faith. God doesn't need to do anything extra to forgive you—it's already accomplished, so you don't beg for it.

They pray and beg, expecting God to pluck a pear (healing), shove it down their throats (faith), and make their jaws chew. That's why their prayers go nowhere. The pear tree's staring them in the face, and they're begging God for a pear. If I saw someone act like that, I'd think they're a few screws short and probably just stare, not knowing what to say to such weirdness. That's one reason God seems silent when you pray. Too many Christians pray like they're unhinged.

Let's obey Jesus' extreme faith and prayer teaching. Let's sound like smart children of God. Let's stop begging for what God's already given us.

Faith Is What God Has Done for Us

The definition of faith is a mental assent to God's word.

With this in mind, we can define faith in the context of the gospel already finished and its promises. In the finished atonement, I am already forgiven, I am already healed, I already have the blessing of Abraham, and my poverty has already been taken away. This was done by God's work and given to me as grace. I don't beg God to do something to forgive me—I'm already forgiven. I don't beg God to do something to heal me—Jesus already carried my sickness away, and by His stripes, I was healed. I assent to these truths and thank God for them.

If you ask God to forgive you thinking you need to provide something—like being sinless for a while or praying perfectly—then no one would ever be forgiven. That misses the whole point of Jesus' finished atonement. It's already done, and you already have these benefits. There's no begging or gimmicks—it's already yours.

So, I don't need to be perfect or pray perfectly to make God forgive me. Jesus already lived perfectly in my place and prayed perfectly for me as High Priest. The whole point of substitutionary atonement and unmerited favor is that Jesus did it for you—you just believe it. Same with healing. You don't need to stay sinless for four and a half

days or pray with flawless faith to get healed. Jesus already took your sickness to the cross and swapped His stripes for your healing. Faith believes this. That's it.

For example:

Faith isn't my love for God—it's God's love for me.

Faith isn't me doing something for God—it's God having already done something for me.

Faith isn't me earning forgiveness with my actions and perfect prayers—it's Jesus having already forgiven me by His atonement.

Faith isn't me earning God's favor to get healed—it's Jesus having already earned my healing by His stripes.

Faith is a focus on His love for us, and not a focus on our internal thoughts about God's love.

Faith is a confidence in God's promise, not our ability.

Faith is receiving God's free supply by grace; not our performance.

Faith is God giving to us, not us giving to God

I heard Andrew Wommack define faith as, "our positive response to what God has already done." If you use that as the core definition of faith, it's off. Faith is simply a mental assent to God's truth. Andrew's definition is a narrower take, a subcategory of faith tied to believing the finished benefits of the atonement. It's more like faith plus the right action or response to God's given gospel benefits. In the context of Jesus' power, authority, and healing already being ours, our positive response is to believe God and then command the demon, sickness, or mountain to get out. Our response is to grab the provided pear in Eden, and eat it.

The Will of God Is Irrelevant

The Bible teaches that God has absolute and direct control over everything. He's the only real cause behind all that happens—no room for secondary causes. God is the metaphysical author of sin and evil, meaning He's the one who writes reality's script, including the good and evil. He's predestined everything based on His own goals and choices, laying out all existence in a logical order tied to what He wants (supralapsarianism). Free will? Doesn't exist. Man is responsible not because he's free, but because he's under God's sovereign grip and orders. Since God directly causes every single thing, He directly decides who's elect and who's reprobate. It's simple logic: Romans 9 says God grabs from a neutral lump—before good or evil even enter the picture—and with the same power and intent shapes some into evil reprobates and others into righteous elect. God doesn't hand over control to humans because free will isn't real, the Bible never says He did, and His nature guarantees He causes everything—good or bad—with the same directness. His thoughts, power, and decisions are one seamless package. If He thinks it and chooses it, it happens. So, in the ultimate sense, God's will is the only thing that matters.

I'm laying out this broad, airtight view of God's sovereignty so no one twists my next points into something I don't mean.

When we pray for healing, miracles, or forgiveness, the "will of God" (meaning His causality, not His commands) doesn't matter. Vincent Cheung nails it in "Healing: The

Will of Man”—fretting over God’s will here is already half a loss, because the Bible zeros in on man’s will, not God’s. It’s fitting on the wrong hill.

Scripture’s clear: healing hinges on human will, not God’s. Jesus never checked with the Father to see if healing someone was “God’s plan.” Nope—He asked the sick, “Do you want to be healed?” Then He told His disciples, “You heal the sick.” God’s will—His decrees or causality—never got a mention. Only man’s will did. God’s will? Irrelevant. Jesus, the most God-focused guy ever, showed us God’s will doesn’t factor in; man’s choice does.

Some folks are more comfy talking atonement and forgiveness, so let’s start there. The big takeaway: healing (Isaiah 53, Matthew 8, James 5, Galatians 3) is as much a part of the gospel and Jesus’ substitutionary atonement as forgiveness—maybe even more so.

Here’s the real question: Does God’s will matter for salvation or conversion? Not if I’m answering. I’m not asking some grand doctrinal riddle. I’m asking it like Jesus did: “Do you want to be healed?” Or: “Do you want to be forgiven?” Jesus is out here asking, “You in or out?” while God’s will is chilling in the background, irrelevant as a third wheel. Like Moses in Deuteronomy: “I’ve set life and death in front of you—pick one.” The Bible hits me straight with its promises and commands, demanding my response.

God’s will doesn’t factor into my salvation because what He decrees and causes doesn’t change my duty to obey His command to repent. Paul in Acts 17 orders us to repent—no options, no suggestions. When I figure out how to act, I lean on God’s commands, not His secret plans or hidden causes. Take Romans 5: Paul says God made me a sinner from birth, because of Adam’s sin. If I treated God’s will as a deciding factor for repenting, I’d say, “Well, God caused me to be a sinner, so I’ll stay one until He causes me to stop.”

Most people would spot the flaw there. Clearly, God’s will doesn’t matter when I’m deciding to repent. What matters is His command to do it. If someone uses God’s will as an excuse to dodge repentance, we’d call it rebellion and unbelief dressed up as piety.

It’s the same with healing, miracles, or supernatural stuff. Healing comes from the same atonement as forgiveness—both are done deals, received through faith’s demand. God’s sovereign over our faith, sure, but when faith demands, God delivers on His promises. Faith always wins, and God’s in charge of it. Yet, even though His will controls faith, we’re never told to factor that in when deciding to trust a promise. When it’s about “should” or “ought,” it’s always God’s command.

In John 15, Jesus uses God’s predestination to hype us up—ask whatever you want, and it’s yours. Peter does the same in Acts 2 about the Spirit’s power. So, God’s will matters for encouragement and doctrinal explanation. But when Scripture commands me to repent, receive healing, or grab gospel promises (James 5:15, John 14-15, Galatians 3, Acts 2), the thing that counts is God’s command.

God’s will and predestination is the hype that motivates faith for miracles, not the headliner—obeying commands steal the show when it’s time to act.

So, when we pray for healing, God's will is a non-issue. Bringing it up is like wondering if God's decree that made you a sinner (Romans 5) should stop you from repenting or trusting Jesus for forgiveness. It's nuts—delusional, even.

God's will doesn't matter when deciding if He'll save you if you repent in faith—it's irrelevant. Same goes for healing: if you command sickness to leave with faith, God's will isn't the point, your will is the point.

"Oh, God, please forgive me. I'm helpless. You haven't done anything yet, but you could, O mighty eternal One. You made me a sinner because of Adam, so I don't know if You've picked me to be saved. If it's Your will, forgive me."

That's a lunatic's prayer—and it's how tons of people pray for healing. It's dumb and sinful. The Bible never tells us to pray like that. If you do, don't expect forgiveness or healing. Making God's will the issue cuts you off from both—it's a prayer of death.

When Peter said, "What I have, I give—in Jesus' name, walk," God's will didn't get a cameo. Why? It's irrelevant. Jesus told His followers to heal the sick. That command is what matters, not God's hidden plans. When you drag God's will into healing or forgiveness, you end up canceling out His command. Decrees and commands are separate categories—don't mix them or let one void the other.

"Oh God, by Your will I got sick, so I'm not sure if I should be healed. But please, heal me if it's Your will."

That's a prayer of death—insane and disobedient. It uses God's decree to duck His command to be healed. Leaning on God's will to skip out on obeying His commands—like receiving forgiveness or healing—is stupid and wicked.

Praying "if it's Your will" is like handing God an excuse note for why you didn't do your homework—He's not buying it.

Sure, there's nothing wrong with a salvation prayer "asking God into your heart," but we can be sharper. Peter's Pentecost sermon nails it: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." He doesn't say "ask" for forgiveness—he says repent in Jesus' name. Why? Jesus already died and rose. Forgiveness is done. We're not begging God to re-crucify Him—it's finished. We don't ask God to do something new; we repent because it's already ours. Here, faith isn't pleading—it's confessing. Faith knows God's already forgiven you, and repenting is just agreeing with Him. It's about confession, not groveling.

Healing, casting out demons, moving mountains—it's the same deal. Jesus' finished atonement secured them. Begging for what's already yours is irrational. His stripes healed us—God's not whipping Jesus again in heaven to make it happen. It's done. We don't beg for healing; we command sickness to leave. Like with salvation, we confess confidence in Jesus' work, not grovel for it. Jesus said, "Heal the sick, cast out demons." When we command healing or demons to go, we're boldly agreeing with His finished atonement that handed us the authority to do it.

Cold Water on Their Fleshly Thoughts

To be carnally minded is death. So, what's "carnally minded" mean? "Carnal" is about the flesh. You can fixate on the flesh in two ways. One's obvious—giving in to impulses like lust or anger. The other's sneakier, more like empiricism: using the flesh as your foundation for knowledge instead of the Word and the Spirit. A fleshly mind leans on the five senses and feelings for truth. Romans 8 pits this against being "spiritually minded." Jesus told Peter, "Flesh and blood didn't reveal this—My Father did." Same contrast: flesh versus divine revelation as your source of knowledge.

The Bible's testimony is rock-solid: observation's a liar, trash, total garbage as a way to know anything. So, treating it as a co-equal starting point alongside Scripture deserves excommunication—full rejection. Beyond that, the Bible draws a sharp line between itself as the true epistemology and the flesh as a fake one. When Scripture says one thing and your senses, observations, or feelings say another, you've got two paths. Be spiritual, trust the Word. Or be fleshly, trust what you see and feel.

Most Christians are all-in on this fleshly-minded gig. Jesus says over and over, "If you have faith and ask, you get it"—healing included—and they go, "Nah, I don't see it." Their whole worldview's built on fleshly quicksand. Their minds are carnal central. Their eyes call the shots, not the Word. They're total perverts when it comes to knowing stuff—worldview degenerates of the highest order.

They'll clutch pearls at some guy watching porn, but they're banging fleshly knowledge so hard they'd make a red-light district pro blush. Ezekiel 23:20 (NLT) nails it: "She lusted after lovers with genitals as large as a donkey's and emissions like those of a horse." These knowledge freaks see, feel, observe, and pop a boner bigger than a donkey's. Then they climax so much a stallion would turn green. Jesus saying, "You get what you ask in faith," leaves them limp. "By His stripes we're healed" makes their carnal brains flabby. James' "prayer of faith will heal the sick" is cold water on their fleshly observations. But the second their senses don't see prayers answered or the sick healed, their pants bulge like a pornstar just winked at them. They're cheating on God's Word with their senses—50 Shades of Fleshly Grey, starring donkey-sized delusions.

Folks who bank on what they see, touch, or feel are cheating on divine revelation with the flesh. They're the nastiest worldview whores out there, committing the ultimate infidelity in how they know things.

Knowledge shapes your whole worldview. It's everything. If two worldviews have different foundations for knowing—like Scripture versus flesh—they're not the same. They'll see and deal with reality differently. Building yours on observations and sensations is anti-Bible, period. Scripture crowns itself the only legit source of knowledge and trashes observation as a fraud.

It's a total worldview gut job—way worse than any other sin in scope because it attacks faith's foundation.

I'm saying this to show how massive a screw-up it is to be fleshly-minded about knowledge compared to, say, lusting after porn or prostitutes. Not excusing lust—don't get it twisted—just pointing out scale. Paul tells the Corinthians, "If you're messing up sexually, get married." He still calls them God's elect. They needed a kick in the pants and a new focus, but they were Christians.

But swapping the Bible as your sole source of truth for flesh-based knowing? That's trading your entire Christian worldview. Lust is just one slice of the pie you're wrestling with. The Bible says lust is a beast—warns us because even Christians will trip over it. Fleshly knowledge, though? That's the whole damn pie.

It's not the unforgivable sin, but a truly born-again mind wouldn't ditch God's revelation for flesh-based nonsense. Satan begged God to wreck Peter's faith—wanted the whole thing to crash. We know how it went: a stumble, not a collapse. There can be slip-ups, but God's sovereignty won't let His elect's faith or worldview tank completely. He won't let them trade revelation for observation. Just like God got Peter back on his feet to say, "What I have, I give—get up and walk," He'll pull His elect out of their fleshly-knowledge fetish.

Christians who won't ditch this after repeated warnings? Mock them, excommunicate them, abandon them. Maybe after Satan destroys their flesh, they will stop using it as a source of knowledge

Ultimate Authority

Imagine being so dense that when you read 2 Corinthians 8:9, you think it's about "spiritual" wealth instead of cold, hard cash. The words say "wealth" and "poverty." Reading comprehension much? Step one: read the words. Paul's out there collecting money, so yeah, it's about finances—not some floaty, ethereal jargon. Only a pastor or theologian could twist it that bad and still sleep at night.

Sure, you might squeeze some extra insight from a redemptive-historical angle, but that's indirect, secondary, and does zilch to cancel the passage's straight-up teaching.

This money swap was baked into Jesus' atonement. He took our poverty and handed us His wealth—part of the substitution deal. Curses included poverty, and Jesus snagged those curses, nailed them to the cross, and swapped them for Abraham's gospel, which comes with miracle cash. He took our broke-ass state and gave us His bling. It's the full Jesus package. Mock the money part, and you're mocking Jesus, stomping on His atonement. You're not just wrong—you're God's enemy, an anti-Christian trash heap with a worldview to match.

Jesus cashed out our poverty for His riches, but some clowns think it's Monopoly money—insulting the bank of atonement.

These types jump from money to "spiritual" so fast they don't even glance at the text to learn from it. The Bible's not their boss—their observations are. It's not their final authority or starting point for knowledge, which is why they don't bother pretending to read it. Their worldview's a different beast. They'll say, "I don't see all Christians prospering." Their eyes and feelings rule, not Scripture. The Bible's just a prop to prop up their observations as the top judge. Emotions run the show, and "reprobate" is tattooed across their foreheads.

Picture managing an Apple store. You hire a newbie, and the next day, Microsoft gear's all over the counter. You pull them aside: "This is an Apple store. You swore we only sell Apple stuff in the interview—what's with the Microsoft junk?" They nod, "Yeah, we

only sell Apple,” then add, “But Microsoft’s got keyboards and screens, so it’s fine.” Excuse? Doesn’t matter—there’s no excuse. They agreed: Apple only. Two options: they’re too stupid to spot the contradiction, or they’re sabotaging the joint on purpose.

That’s your average Christian, pastor, or theologian.

They swear the Bible’s their sole authority and truth-source, but they twist a passage so the words and context don’t even matter. Call them out, and they point to what they see as their top authority.

2 Corinthians 8:9 is about money, and the context screams money. They flip it to “spiritual” like they’re the ones who breathed out the Bible, not God.

Imagine Satan grinning ear-to-ear watching someone claim the Bible’s God-breathed, then steal God’s breath and replace it with their own hot air.

Later, they whine, “But we don’t see all prospering,” or on healing promises, “We don’t see all healed.” Then they shrug, “Guess it’s not God’s will to heal everyone,” or “Even if you’ve got mountain-moving faith, God does what He wants.” They say God’s their authority, but they bow to observation and sensation. Like that Apple hire swearing “Apple only” while stacking Microsoft boxes. Ever seen an Apple newbie so twisted they’d sell Microsoft? Doubt it. But Christians pull this hypocritical stunt daily, leaning on observation like it’s king.

Jesus was accused of something similar by His hometown when He did not do many miracles.

They were saying, "because you cant do the miracles you did in Capernaum here, therefore you are a fraud."

But Jesus says back, "No, I didn't do the miracles I did in Capernaum here, because of your unbelief."

This is a more specific example from infallible scripture that you cannot judge a person in miracle ministry, if they are truly a fraud or not, by observation. As Jesus points out, the issue was an invisible problem of the heart not believing.

Some demand, "but if you can demonstrate this by emptying out St. Jude, it would end the debate."

No, even if I did this, it would absolutely not end the debate, for one simple reason. Because such a conclusion was produced by the authority of observation and empiricism, there is no knowledge to be gained. How can someone be so delusional they think the authority of observation would give them knowledge about healing. The only place the scripture allows me to get knowledge is from itself, and nowhere else. There is only one authority I am allowed to get knowledge about healing and miracles, and that is the scripture. Whatever agrees with this authority is correct and whatever disagrees with it, is false.

This essay is about the fundamental worldview issue. If a person keeps screaming "the bible is my only final authority," but keeps demanding what determines truth from opinion is observation and empiricism, they are a fraud and liar. The bible was never their authority, it was and always will be their observations

This is a worldview problem. Different authorities mean different worldviews—full stop.

I don't call them Christians—I call them reprobates and outsiders. Not to be a jerk, just to be dead-on. Their worldview hinges on their starting point for knowledge. If they lean on observations, we're not just a little off—we're on different planets. Not a minor disagreement; we see reality through totally different lenses. When they say, "I don't see all prospering or healed," it's not theology anymore—it's a worldview clash. An ultimate authority clash. We're not just reading text differently; we're understanding existence differently. Until they can prove observations give legit knowledge and defend the shaky mess of induction and empiricism, they've got no ground to stand on.

The biblical worldview declares itself the only way of knowing and trashes all pretenders, including observations. The Bible says I can't use what I see to decide what's true. It doesn't let me peek around and judge based on that. If a so-called Christian says, "I don't see all healed," we're not on the same page—we're in different realities. An atheist and I differ because I lean on Scripture for knowledge, and they lean on observations.

Scripture forbids me from using "Do I see people healed or not?" as a way of knowing or an authority. So if a so-called Christian grabs knowledge or authority from observations, we're as far apart as atheism is from Christianity. Different authorities, different worldviews. Different foundations, different realities. It's not about text context—it's about ultimate authority. My worldview bans appealing to observations; theirs welcomes it. Because observations are not consistent, or justified, and because induction is not a valid conclusion, the dual authority of observation will always leave one room to make the text say what they want. This is why atheist and evolutionist love the authority of observation, because it lets them craft their worldview in their image.

Devil Dogmatics

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth." 1 Timothy 4:1-3 NIV

We are not talking about denying the resurrection of Jesus, the Trinity, or the forgiveness of sins. Instead, we examine denying people their carnal desires for good sex in marriage and good food. Keeping Christian men from penetrating women in marriage is demon business. According to the Good Book, some morons will ditch faith faster than a priest at a strip club, chasing after demon whispers, from those whose consciences are as burnt as last night's lasagna.

Marriage offers the pleasure of sex and the joy of family. Although God is a God of fertility and family joy, the biblical emphasis in marriage is on sex. Hence, this

becomes our basic emphasis. The Bible has an entire book, the Song of Songs, dedicated to this, not family. Think about that. The Spirit of God, who wrote the Bible, gave the high title, “The Song of Songs,” to celebrate the romance and sex between a man and a woman, not to praise Jesus. Your worldview should include this. Christian sex should be world-envied.

These doctrines did not originate from men but from demons. The concept of restricting sex and food was so vile, a demon conceived it. They’re straight from Satan’s playbook. Only a demon would come up with banning burgers and apple pie. God’s all about the bangin’ and the breedin’, but these fools say no, you can’t enjoy your steak or your spouse.

Some have conspired with demons to spread these doctrines, making them human too. This is the opposite of Isaiah 55. These demon thoughts are too low for a human to think it. Only a demon could think it, and by demon manipulation humans think Satan’s thoughts after him.

The passage states these men have seared their souls with a hot iron. These trash have seared their own souls, not from too much sex or food, but from denying it to others. That’s some twisted stuff! This could mean they become perverted after searing their souls, or teaching such doctrines does this, or both. Either way, the horror is the same. I’ve never heard a pastor use the phrase “seared their conscience with a hot iron” in this context. What else do our pastors not tell us?

Not rejecting the resurrection, but rejecting carnal sex and food is so dark, vile, and rebellious it’s labelled a demon doctrine.

From this, we learn demon dogmatics withhold good things meant for Christians. These doctrines oppose the blessings given to God’s elect. God has given good things in creation, in Abraham and in Jesus, but demon dogmatics are designed to snatch and steal this knowledge. The goal is to ensure faith never has a chance to receive them.

Thus, “how much more,” would rejecting good things, such as miracle ministry, faith and the baptism of the Spirit, be demon doctrine. These good things have the blood of Jesus stained on them, and so they would be greater. If withholding sex is demonic, how much more so is withholding healing and miracles, which Jesus’s blood bought? If withholding a juicy steak is devil’s work, imagine what denying healing or miracles means – that’s like Satan on steroids!

Healing is good; it was part of the atonement, and Jesus spent much time healing, when He could have spent more time preaching. As Peter said, Jesus went about doing “good,” healing all oppressed by the devil. Supernatural healing is a very good thing in the Bible.

And so, to teach healing by putting it behind a paywall of, “if God wills it,” is a demon dogmatic. They block healing’s door, like bouncers at a club you can’t get into. Such a thing is so delusional that only a mind as perverted as a demon, could imagine it.

Jesus said, “if you are not with me, then you are against me.” He said this in context of blaspheming a ministry of healing, miracles and casting out demons. It is the ultimate devil dogmatic.

Those who evangelize these doctrines deserve all the harsh rebukes scripture gives them. Cut them out of your life as you would any demon. Demons cannot enjoy God's good things and out of envy, they use pastors to propagate their dogmatics, keeping you from God's gifts.

So, if you're with Jesus, you're all about the healing, the miracles, the good stuff his blood paid for. If not, you're with the other team, the one with the horns and pitchforks.

Cast them out. Expose them for who they truly work for.

Receiving God's love

"Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:28NIV)

"But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the wisdom which has been hidden, which God predestined before the ages to our glory," (1 Corinthians 2:7 LSB)

"She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:39-42 NLT)

"For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." (Ephesians 3:14-20 NLT)

"However, we do speak a message of **wisdom** among the **mature...** what God has prepared for those who love him...

that we may **understand what God has freely given us**" (1 Corinthians 2:6, 9, 12 NIV).²⁹³

For many, this seems like the opposite of Christian ethics. Doesn't James say religion is taking care of widows and orphans and staying unpolluted by worldly lusts? That's right, but it's only part of the picture. I'm not downplaying its importance. If a man doesn't work to provide for his family, he's not even a Christian—he's worse than an unbeliever. Paul sets rules for helping widows who've been faithful. Orphans need support and guidance. The New Testament constantly pushes sexual purity and bases

²⁹³ Emphasis added by author.

our relationships on the forgiveness and kindness God showed us. But those fall under human interactions in ethics. God also gave commands about how we relate to Him.

The first commandment is to love God with all your mind, soul, and strength. Some take this to mean our relationship with God is about us giving to Him, but that's off. Loving God with everything does mean giving Him your best—your intellect, time, focus, and admiration. That leads us to study the Word and theology. But when we dig into the Word and theology, we find it says, "Love is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and gave His only Son." We see "Jesus chose us," not us choosing Him. We read that Martha was serving God while God was serving Mary, and Jesus said Mary picked the "better part." Mary let God serve her, and Jesus called it better. Jesus said He came to "serve man."

When Scripture says it's more blessed to give than to receive, it's talking about human relationships—not our relationship with God. Jesus said Mary chose the better thing by receiving from Him, not giving to Him. In our relationship with God, it's better to receive from Him than to give. The gospel is one massive gift God gives us. God serves and glorifies man. Paul says it flat-out in 1 Corinthians 2: God "predestined" the gospel to glorify man. The gospel values, honors, and glorifies man—not because man already has these qualities, but because Jesus' finished atonement puts them on His chosen ones. God wants us to come to Him knowing He'll serve us by giving, helping, and freely supplying all the good things He promised.

The gospel is for the glory of man. God glorifies man in the gospel. God is man's waiter who serves and glorifies him in the gospel. As Jesus says to Peter, if you do not allow God to be your waiter and serve you, then you have no part in Jesus. We already went over in the metaphysics section how all things are for God's glory and so even the act of God glorifying us, is ultimately for His glory. Be as it may, the bible does not constantly qualify or excuse itself when it says Jesus came to be our waiter in the gospel to glorify us. We need to receive it as such, or we have not part in Him.

Even with sanctification, it's better to receive. The New Contract says God promises to write His laws on our minds. Hebrews 12 says our sanctification comes from looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. We are told sanctification was something Jesus accomplished in His finished atonement for us, 1 Corinthians 1:30. Jesus worked to give us sanctification, and we receive it by faith. God gives us sanctification, we don't give it to Him. We don't "give" better performance to God in sanctification—we look to God to keep His promise, and we "receive" sanctification from Him by faith. Hebrews also says we are to "strive to enter His rest." And so, this doesn't mean we don't work or think about obeying God better. It means as we strive, we rely on God to give us the sanctification He promised. By faith, we receive sanctification power. We don't work to earn sanctifying power—we receive it by faith and then walk in godliness because we have it.

Paul prays in Ephesians that we can know and receive the length, width, depth, and height of God's love for us. He doesn't pray we love God with our length, width, depth, and height—he prays we receive His great love. He wants us to know how big it is and experience it here and now, not just later in heaven. By receiving His love, we become complete with His life and fullness. We don't get complete by giving Him our love—we get completed by receiving His. Since the blessing of Abraham and the gospel include good things for the inner man, body, finances, relationships, and ministry,

experiencing God's love means receiving fruitfulness in all these areas. When we receive fruitfulness in these by faith, we grow stronger and more into God's fullness.

Paul wants our inner man strong. He says receiving God's great love for us lets Christ live in our hearts more. We receive His love by faith. It's simple: by faith we receive His love, Christ dwells in our hearts more, and we get stronger in our inner man. A stronger inner man means more maturity and growth as a Christian. This comes not from giving to God, but from receiving His love for us by faith.

Paul then says God will answer our prayers way beyond what we ask. This shows the kind of application he had in mind when telling us to know and receive His love. The application is to ask and have God give us much more than we expect. Think of the extra baskets left over from feeding the 4,000 and 5,000. Paul says this—asking for good things and God giving them in overflow—is how you experience God's love. It's how you get stronger in your inner man, mature as a Christian, and let Christ live in your heart more. Inner power is measured by how much you can receive Christ's love. This is why you know people who say, they are the worst of sinners, are the least mature. They should not give counsel, but be counseled in how to receive God's love and their identity in Christ. Their inner man is weak. Their minds are too weak to receive God's love and benefits.

When you ask for healing, and God heals your cancer while making you stronger than ever: you grow stronger in your inner man, mature as a Christian, and get more complete with God's fullness. When you ask for financial help, and God sends seven times more money than you need, you grow stronger in your inner man, mature as a Christian, and get more complete with God's fullness. When you ask God to bless your spouse or kids with their heart's desires, and He gives them more than they dreamed, you grow stronger in your inner man, mature as a Christian, and get more complete with God's fullness.

Vincent Cheung helped me see this clearer in his essay, "What Is Mature Doctrine," saying:

"As Paul said, 'However, we do speak a message of wisdom among the mature...what God has prepared for those who love him...that we may understand what God has freely given us' (1 Corinthians 2:6, 9, 12). What is mature doctrine? It is not what we do for God, but what God does for us (1 John 4:10).

Jesus said that a person cannot be his disciple unless he first counts the cost, and then renounces everyone and everything to follow him (Luke 14:26-33). This is not the pinnacle of spiritual maturity, but it is the beginning. This is what spiritual infants do. We repent of our transgressions and reorient our lives on Jesus Christ. We become God-centered...

Although the gospel demands total commitment, since the beginning it is not about what we do for God, but what God does for us, in all areas of our lives, by Jesus Christ (Romans 8:31-32). We truly come to know him as the Father that Jesus talked about, the one who is greater than all (John 10:29), the one who supplies everything (Psalm 103:2-5, Matthew 7:32-33, Philippians 4:19)...

Therefore, spiritual maturity must entail learning more about the benefits that God has given us in Christ, and then receiving and experiencing them (1 Corinthians 2:12). For this reason, Paul prayed that Christians would receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation to know God, to know the gospel hope and inheritance, and to know the super-

surpassing power that God has put to work in us, which is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead (Ephesians 1:15-22). He prayed that Christians would be strengthened with power in their spirits, to have power to grasp all the dimensions of the love of Christ (Ephesians 3:14-19).

Do they teach you how to receive things from God by faith? Jesus taught these things as gospel, intertwined with the doctrines of faith, the atonement, and the Fatherhood of God (Matthew 6:32-33, 7:7-11, 8:16-17, Mark 9:23, 11:23-24, Luke 8:50, 18:1-8, John 11:40, 15:7, 15:16, 16:26-27, and many more). .. It takes spiritual power to grasp the magnitude of divine love toward us. Learning more and more about God's love for us in more categories is not for babies, but adults, because it takes spiritual strength and maturity to grasp it.

If you are selective about the blessings of God, then you are spiritually feeble and immature. If you accept his forgiveness but reject his healing, then you are weak. If you embrace his discipline but refuse his prosperity, then you are a baby. You are not some epic apologist, some defender of the faith. You are just a crybaby..."²⁹⁴

It is interesting that Paul defines a 'message of wisdom for the mature' as about knowing and receiving all the free blessings God has given us. If you listen to many theologians, they say the opposite. They teach denying yourself and fearing God is wisdom for the mature, but this is backward. Such things are wisdom for babies to start on the good path. Vincent is correct. To deny yourself, to fear God and follow Him rather than selfish lusts, is the beginning of wisdom—not the maturity of it. The fear of God is the start, not the peak, of wisdom. The fear of God gets you on the path and keeps you there. Because it keeps you on track, it's always worth remembering—but it's not the height of wisdom. Mature wisdom is receiving all the free goodies of God.

As Vincent says, "It takes spiritual strength and maturity in the inner man to receive from God." The Bible teaches it takes power in the inner man to fear God and deny yourself, but it takes even more power to receive free goodies like healing and prosperity. Those who receive healing, prosperity, and miracles from God prove they're mature in their inner man and can handle higher-tier wisdom. Those who bash the "health and wealth" crowd, if they don't want to look like hypocrites, need to show greater wisdom and maturity with more healings, more prosperity, and more miracles. But someone teaching Expansionism and God's absolute sovereignty has the right footing to call out both the health-and-wealth folks and cessationists.

Paul says you can't claim spiritual maturity or handle greater wisdom if you don't show it by receiving God's freely given blessings. You can give money to the poor, help widows, and receive forgiveness, but if you can't heal the sick, cast out demons, and receive all kinds of miracles, you're not mature—you can't handle deeper wisdom. You're still a beginner who needs basic lessons.

Since denying yourself and fearing God is the start of wisdom, pastors who stick to that level either think their people are babies who never grow or are deliberately stunting them. When the Bible tells us to run the race to win, these pastors keep Christians crawling on all fours, hoping they might limp across the finish line dead last. I'm being nice here—my rebuke could cut deeper. Get away from those teachers. They're not your friends—they're your enemies, the worst kind. They're brutal

²⁹⁴ Vincent Cheung. What is Mature Doctrine.
From the ebook, Fulcrum. 2017. Pg 69-70.

taskmasters working for Satan. They're useless at applying mature doctrine. They're trash who reject God's love and free blessings. There's no healing, no demon-casting, no clear signs of God's miracles with them. They know they're garbage with no proof of God's love on them. They push you to be twice as useless at receiving God's blessings as they are, just to feel better about themselves. They stomp on Christ to hide their jealousy.

So even if history calls some past Christians heroes, if they didn't heal the sick, cast out demons, or receive regular miracles from God, they can't—by Scripture's definition—be wise or mature. Scripture, not fame, decides if a Christian was wise and mature.

As we saw in the last section on the gospel, it includes healing, prosperity, and overflowing fruitfulness for all areas of life in this world. Even if forgiveness of sins is a bigger blessing—since it moves you from hell to accepted—God commands us to receive all gospel blessings. Obeying commands isn't optional. To disobey or disbelieve any of God's promises isn't maturity—it's immaturity and dumb. It takes a strong inner man and higher wisdom to believe the whole finished gospel and receive all its benefits. It takes little wisdom to grab forgiveness and ditch the rest. Mature wisdom takes it all.

Lastly, think about the Lord's Supper. Christians do it all the time—or should. It's the only repeated religious act we've got. The whole Old Testament system boils down to this one thing: the Lord's Supper. What do we do in it? We remember and receive God's love for us. That's Christianity. We don't give to God—God gives to us.

In a right view of ethics (God's commands), this is the starting point and foundation. God commands us to be saved by faith in His Son, to receive His forgiveness, His love, and all good blessings. It's on this ethic that we get strength for other ethics like human interactions and purity. Receiving God's love is the root ethic.

The Bible Distinguishes the Elect from Reprobate Trash by Praying in Tongues

“In the end times there will be scoffers...”

These “not having the Spirit.”

But you, “building yourselves up in your most holy faith, by praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God.” Jude 1:18-21

Jude calls out mockers—part of his takedown of false teachers—saying they don't have the Spirit. He means the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 1-2; Paul in Acts 19:2 ties “the Spirit” to baptism and tongues in v.5). Jude calls the born-again “the called” (v.1). In conversion, the Spirit moves you to grab Jesus—you either have Him or you don't. In the baptism of the Spirit, Jesus moves you to grab the Spirit—you either have Him or you don't.²⁹⁵

Unlike mockers who miss out on this baptism, Jude tells the saints to pray in the Spirit—which is the baptism, meaning praying in tongues. It's how you stay locked in

²⁹⁵ Vincent Cheung helped me understand this better in “Theology – Borders Edition,” 2023; from them “Empowered by God,” section.

God's love. Chew on that. Then think about what happens if you don't pray in tongues.

Tongues are the VIP pass to God's love—mockers are stuck outside, whining at the bouncer.

Paul echoes this in Ephesians 6:17-18. He says "receive" the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit by "praying in the Spirit." That's big—salvation's shield and the Spirit's weapon. Paul says do it by always praying in the Spirit. We know what he means, because in 1 Corinthians 14 he defines "praying in the Spirit" as praying in tongues. So, we keep snagging salvation's protection and the Spirit's power by praying in tongues.

Then in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul says praying in the Spirit builds up your inner self—lifts you up when life sucks. It's how he stayed solid through all his hardship. He brags, "I thank God I pray in tongues more than you all" to the Corinthians. He didn't crash into depression because he drowned it in tongues. That's how he fortified himself against hardship—an all-out tongues assault. It's how any believer can smash depression too. If you're not praying in tongues to fight it but just begging God for help, you're swinging at yourself. Ask God, sure—but obey Him too by praying in tongues.

Paul's out here flexing his tongues game—depression didn't stand a chance, and neither should yours.

This private-edification tongue is for all believers. It's a launchpad for the Spirit's gifts to kick in or to usher in God's power and presence. But the "tongues and interpretation" kind—for public use—is a specific gift not everyone gets. Praying in tongues keeps us in God's love, strengthens our core, and keeps us stocked with salvation's helmet and the Spirit's sword. It's a power-up cheat code for every believer.

Doesn't mean you're unsaved without the baptism of the Spirit. But the same unstoppable God who drags the elect to Jesus for salvation will push them to grab the Spirit by faith. Peter in Acts 2 says forgiveness is the warm-up for receiving the Spirit. He ties it to election and predestination, linking it straight to the baptism with tongues. Some think Peter's saying God's election call means being born again or being forgiven—wrong. Peter's predestination point is: God calls His own and hands them the Spirit, tongues included. Not the fancy religious take on predestination, but the Bible's raw version. God's faithful—He calls His elect by making them receive the Spirit.

If a Christian hasn't got the Spirit, it's ignorance or unbelief holding them back. Their disobedience turns their faith into a second-rate gig. The baptism of the Spirit equips you to fight hard for God's kingdom. Praying in tongues keeps the Spirit's sword in your hand. Sitting it out while others swing is straight-up spiritual laziness. God's elect get the full Spirit swag—tongues and all—while slackers nap on the power couch.

Mockers can't and won't do this. First, they're too busy sniping at faith teachers who pray in tongues to stay in God's love. Second, they despise the Spirit and dodge His gifts and power. False teachers and heresy hunters trash the very thing Scripture uses to split the called from the reprobate trash.

Tests to see if we are walking in your new identity:

Now we will review some basic tests to see if we are believing and walking in our new identity correctly. To understand our new identity and live out the definition God has given us isn't a suggestion—it's a command.

Hebrews 10, in its first few verses, says if animal sacrifices could truly forgive sin, they'd lead to "no more conscience of sin." Then it introduces the New Covenant with Jesus. On this foundation, we can boldly approach God's throne with our conscience cleansed of sin and guilt. We can face God without our minds dragging up sin. We can confidently ask for things and receive them, like a child who belongs with their father. In this New Contract, we have "no conscience of our sin;" rather, we are "conscious" of our righteousness and bold access to God through Christ.

The way to test this is when you sin and ask for forgiveness. Are you aware of how righteous you are, knowing all your sins—past and future—are forgiven by Jesus' finished work? We're not supposed to dwell on sin but on righteousness. Don't keep mulling over your sins in your mind; keep reminding yourself how righteous you are in God's eyes.

The other half is boldly approaching God in prayer to ask for good stuff—health, money, fruitful relationships, sanctification, ministry. Test it when you ask God for money. When you sin and confess, if you hesitate, you're not believing or living your identity in Christ right. Even if you can ask for mercy, can you, in the same prayer, ask for healing and money without pausing? Do you feel you need to work or make up for it? After asking for mercy, do you think you have to wait before asking for money—like God won't give you something good right after, or you're not worthy? If so, you haven't fully grasped your new identity. Old thinking's still tripping you up. You're stuck on sin instead of the righteousness God gave you.

If you're tiptoeing around God like a guilty kid who broke a vase, you're missing the "righteous VIP" memo.

"The Lord has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death." "I will praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my salvation." "Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity." (Psalm 118 NKJV)

Imagine the guilt someone might feel over God "severely" disciplining them. Yet David, in the same Psalm, says God not only forgave him but answered his prayer. Then, as if that's not enough, he asks for salvation and prosperity. That's the bold access God's kids have before His throne in Christ. When you can pray with that kind of guts—no hesitation, no waffling—it's a sign you're believing and walking in your new identity.

Jesus told Jairus, "Do not fear, only believe." That's how to be intelligent. You tackle the dumb stuff—in this case, fear—replaying it over and over in your head. Then you lock in the truth—"only believe"—and replay that instead. Jesus told Jairus to keep his mind on one thing: a miracle was coming, guaranteed by God's power. Jesus said if Jairus ditched fear and stuck to faith, "*she will be well.*"

"While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, 'Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher anymore.' But Jesus, hearing this,

answered him, 'Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well.' When he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him except Peter, John, James, and the child's parents. All were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, 'Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping.' They laughed at him, knowing she was dead. But taking her by the hand, he called, saying, 'Child, arise.' Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. He directed that something be given her to eat." (Luke 8:49-55, ESV)

Worrying is replaying something stupid, evil, or troubling over and over in your head. We're flat-out commanded not to worry. Instead, we're told to fill our minds with good things, faith, and God's promises.

A test to see if we're growing in our identity is **what we keep replaying in our minds**. Fear or faith? When trouble hits—a pain in your body or bad news from someone—does your mind jump to fear or faith? That's how you check if you're maturing in your new Christ-given identity. A mature believer, trained in God's truth about who they are, will think, "No fear, just faith—this cancer is a dead man walking, because by He's stripes I was healed."

Another test is how freely, naturally, and **boldly we approach God** on His throne, asking for anything and knowing we'll get it. This is a top-tier test because it demands belief in tons of foundational truths. You've got to trust your new identity big-time to march up to God, ask for anything and everything, and walk away with it.

Strutting up to God's throne like it's a cosmic Amazon checkout? That's the faith flex we're aiming for.

Receiving what we ask for. Ask and get it. Jesus said you prove you're His disciple by asking whatever you want and God delivering. That's why some guys—theologians and big shots—gang up against God to deny faith, miracles, and answered prayers. That proof would tank them and their precious historical heroes. They could either admit they're wrong and fix it, or chuck God under the bus and claim He didn't mean what He said. These losers picked door two. They get claps from their academic herd and fanboys. That's their prize. They'd rather stomp Jesus' blood than step on their dead idols who trashed God's good promises.

But when we stand before Jesus' judgment throne, only His Word will judge us. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples" (John 15:7-8 LSB). When this Word sizes up your historical heroes, how'll they hold up? Your pastor? You? If you see you're falling short and feel scared, good. The fear of God kickstarts wisdom. Repent, fix it, grow in faith. God wants you blessed in this more than you do. Turn to Him—He'll help. Don't wait.

Pray in the Spirit.

Only on starting point for knowledge.

Lastly, we test if we've nailed our new identity by **how well we receive God's love and share it**. We're mature when we sit at Jesus' feet, taking from Him, not giving to Him. We're mature when we accept His love for spiritual stuff like forgiveness and joy, but also for health, prosperity, and fruitfulness across our whole life.

When God's love fills our inner self and impacts every part of us, we've got more juice to love our neighbors. It's not that we skip loving family and neighbors until we're mature inside—it's about order. Step one fuels step two, not the other way around. So, receiving from God comes first, while never dropping the ball on loving others. The principle is simple, the better you are at receive God's power and love, the better you are at giving it to your family, friends and those in desperate need.

"The love chapter" sits between "the power chapters." But calling it "The Love Chapter" is a stretch, as Vincent Cheung points out.

"There is no such thing as "The Love Chapter." The topic of 1 Corinthians 13 is spiritual gifts, not love itself. Paul's point is that spiritual gifts should be pursued in love, not replaced by love.

Don't read 1 Corinthians 13 at your wedding unless you are prepared to put this love into action and lay hands on the sick among the guests as a couple after the wedding vows. That's love..."²⁹⁶

The Bible defines love smack in the middle of Paul laying out different kinds of power. Paul's point? Supernatural power must be wielded with love. The context is power, not love. Power is to be paired with love. So, when folks read 1 Corinthians 13 at weddings, they shouldn't stop there—they need a healing service right after. That's the real context: how to use power.

Since power and love can't be split, Christian love isn't Christian without miracle power. We're supposed to mirror our Father in heaven. With God, love always packs power—He loves us with massive strength.

Paul says anyone who doesn't get that we're to chase spiritual gifts (power) with zeal isn't recognized by God. We're not just to seek them but to have enough faith to see those gifts show up regularly in our lives and ministries. Any pastor or ministry leader who doesn't do this needs to step down now or get excommunicated. If God doesn't recognize them, who am I to call them spiritual? If God sees them as trash, who am I to treat trash like treasure? If God rates them low, who am I to slap a different label on them?

"Prophecy is said to be imperfect, not because the gift itself is defective, but it offers incomplete knowledge. So "when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears." Paul does not leave the time of "perfection" in doubt. He writes, "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known." When perfection comes, there will be "face to face" knowledge. When perfection comes, we will know fully, even as we are fully known. This is not a potential knowledge, as in knowledge revealed but not completely assimilated, but an actual knowledge, so that we will know as we are fully known. When this

²⁹⁶ Vincent Cheung. From this wordpress blog commenting on the essay called "Way of Love." Dec. 2018.

happens, the gifts will cease, and we shall not miss them, for we will lack nothing.”²⁹⁷

“Paul does not refer to a potential knowledge, but an actual knowledge, as actual as we are “fully known.” As perfect as the Bible is, we do not even know fully the Bible. It takes an extraordinarily delusional person to think that he already knows fully, even as he is known fully. A “face to face” knowledge should not need exegesis, reading, revision, debate, and research. If the way I will know fully is the way that I am known fully, then unless God himself needs to perform exegesis, revision, and debate in order to know me, “face to face” knowledge cannot refer to what we possess at this time. Thus if a person insists on his cessationism on the basis of this text by sheer determination, although even then it can apply only to prophecy, he loses his God, and so his salvation as well.”²⁹⁸

The gifts will be imperfect in the next life because we’ll have so much spiritual power that the gifts will seem too weak, or imperfect. Paul also teaches we’ll know as God knows us. Even with Scripture complete, we know God through study, meditation, review, revision, and debate—but God doesn’t know us that way. He knows us instantly, intuitively. That’s what Paul calls the “perfect.” So, until we know God like that, the “perfect” hasn’t come, and the gifts are still here to help us. Paul’s command to chase them and use them to love others still stands.

God wants us to love with supernatural power. When someone’s sick, He doesn’t just want you to sacrifice time to “be there” or cook them a meal—He wants you to make the sickness and pain vanish by commanding it to leave. That’s how Scripture defines love. Love that doesn’t boot the sickness isn’t Christian love—or at best, it’s a half-baked version. Same goes for lack of insight. Christian love brings prophecy to help family or friends gain wisdom for jobs, ministry, relationships, and godliness. If your neighbor needs specific know-how (that you don’t have), you can’t offer true Christian love without spiritual prophecy, insight, or visions. Anything less isn’t it. Your church family faces all kinds of troubles, and the Bible’s fix is miracles. You don’t qualify as giving biblical love unless you’re dishing out miracles to help. Human love is just human effort; Christian love shines with God’s supernatural punch. Christian love isn’t Christian without miracle-working power. Worldly love can skip God’s power, but not Christian love.

God’s love doesn’t just bring chicken soup—it kicks sickness out the door with a holy haymaker.

When we’re sick, the Bible pins it on Satan—Acts 10:38, Luke 13:10-17. Sure, it’s not always just the devil (1 Corinthians 11:30), but those are outliers. The high-level sinning that triggers God’s smackdown in 1 Corinthians 11:30 isn’t the norm. Acts 10:38 sets the standard: sickness usually comes from Satan, at the very least. Your theology better reflect that. God’s the foundation of sickness, like He’s the foundation of everything in the ultimate sense. But this same God talks to us on our level and mostly tags sickness as Satan’s doing. Jesus, the apostles, and their crew were dead-set on wiping out sickness—by crushing it, they crushed the devil. Jesus didn’t shrug

²⁹⁷ Vincent Cheung. *The Way of Love*. 2011. Web. (www.vincentcheung.com)

²⁹⁸ Vincent Cheung. *The Worst Text for Cessationism*. Web. 2016. (www.vincentcheung.com)
See ebook, *Sermonettes Vol. 9*. Chapter 1, page 6. 2016.

at sickness as “God’s will” and leave people hanging. No, He saw it as Satan victimizing folks. He could’ve preached more, but He attacked Satan head-on by healing. One healing packed compassion, wrecked Satan’s kingdom, and pushed the gospel forward—all in a single blow.

Satan’s kept tons of Christians chained—weak, helpless, sick. The sick get shamed, time-crunched, and hurt, often blowing kingdom cash to buy healing from doctors. They’re pros at praising man. Hours meant for ministry or God, get sunk into pain and groveling to human fixes. Depending on the sickness, family members lose time and money too, diverting it from ministry or devotion to help the sick spouse or kid. Satan’s the only winner here. If your family’s sick, you’d better help—or you’re worse than an unbeliever. But God didn’t call us to help with puny human effort—He called us to blast Satan’s works with His power. We’re not allowed to let Satan bulldoze our families with sickness, shame, time drains, and medical bills.

When God empowered barren women to bear kids, it’s said He took away their “shame.” We know—and God knows—sickness and defects bring shame. You can tell yourself, “This deformity doesn’t define me,” but you’re kidding yourself. The Bible calls it shame, and it is. If you’re a Christian, it’s not your new identity, but God still sees it shames you. He’s compassionate—He wants to heal and honor you. Seek Him, and He’ll heal, strip away shame, and seat you among princes. Only then does shame stop defining you. Satan wants you shame-bound; God can smash the devil’s works. With faith, you can command Satan and sickness to scram. You can tell shame to run, and it will.

Satan’s serving shame sandwiches, but God’s got a miracle buffet—grab a plate and kick the devil’s lunch tray.

Compassion that only eases symptoms without curing sickness is human love, not God’s. Compassion that dulls pain with drugs is human glory and power. If you’re a Christian, you’re not just human—you’re God’s kid, a new creation, Jesus’ image. You’ve got divine favor, authority, and power to heal your family. You can love like God does—with real power. Compassion without power is how broken humans love, and it’s sad. God loves with power that fixes, heals, transforms, and delivers miracles. When God loves, sickness bolts, poverty turns to surplus, impossible messes flatten, giants lose heads, bodies teleport, barren wombs bear life, and the dead rise. God’s love makes bad stuff vanish and swaps it for good—troubles flee, blessings roll in, sickness runs, and honor doubles up. God’s powerful love bulldozes Satan’s works, and expands His kingdom.

It is often said, “The Scriptures say that God is love, but it does not say that God is power.” Actually, it does. It says this in a way that is stronger than most Christians would want to admit, and in a context that is more intense than “God is love” in the letter of John. Jesus declared, “From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64; Mark 14:62). In other contexts, the word refers to miraculous power, such as when Jesus said, “Power has gone out of me” to heal the woman with the bleeding disease, or when he said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” Power. This is what Jesus called God. He did not say that he would be seated at the right hand of Love or Wisdom. He did not use a different word for power to call him Authority, but he called him Power, raw ability and force. No matter what hermeneutical excuse you attempt

to use, I know all the tricks and I have already considered them, and the fact remains that in this place he did not refer to God as anything else but POWER. God is Power as much as Jesus is Word. Where is Jesus? Power. He is next to Power. What kind of power? Power for miracles. Power over demons. Power to rule in creation. Christians are ashamed of power. And if you are ashamed of power, you are ashamed of God, for God is Power. If you refuse to seek power, you refuse you seek God. If you mock miracle power as if it is some sideshow, you mock God as if he is a sideshow.

Everything else that Christians have been saying about “God is love” can be said with even greater emphasis about Power. Do you worship the one who is on the throne? Do you raise your hands and praise the one whose right hand is your Lord? Good! But your Lord called him Power. Now do you still worship him? Do you worship Power? Are you now zealous to excel in power no less than you wish to excel in love? Or do you shrink back and insist on calling him something else? We do not worship power, as in some impersonal force. But Power? Certainly, we worship Power, as in God who is All-Power. If you do not worship Power in this sense, you do not worship God at all. As the Scriptures say, “No one has ever seen God, but the One who is himself God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” If you reject the God that Jesus himself declared, which is Power — miracle power — you will burn in hell. But Christians are ashamed of power. They are ashamed of such a God, who is All-Power. How often have you heard it said, “God has power, but God is love”? Jesus denied this. God is power at least as much as God is love. Power himself is on the throne, and Jesus is at Power’s right hand. This is the gospel. Accept this, or make up some other religion.

Satan has convinced Christians that it is unholy and unspiritual to seek spiritual power. But Jesus is at the right hand of Power. To seek the one on the throne is to seek Power. Thus it is most holy and most spiritual to seek spiritual power, no less than it is holy and spiritual to pursue divine love, because – you guessed it – God is love. Of course Satan has also tried to hinder Christians from walking in love, but it seems he has never tried to convince them that it is unholy and unspiritual to walk in love. Power is what he is afraid of. And love remains ineffective without the spiritual and miracle power that it is supposed to wield. If you love as God loves, you will want to preach the truth, heal the sick, and cast out demons. Power lets you do these things. Compassion is the strongest catalyst in the ministry of healing, but without power, it is either counterfeit compassion or compassion frustrated. Love and Power are not in conflict, but if you walk in love, you will seek the power. Pray that God would grant you, “according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man.” Power. You must have truth as the foundation. Then you must rise up in power. All this discussion about power is theological truth. But it will not release power if you only debate it and sit on it. Truth will release power when you boldly affirm it and act on it. Do it...²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ Vincent Cheung. “On Spiritual Attacks”
From the ebook, Contract. 2020.

When we can **receive** God's love in *powerful* healing, prosperity, and miracles; and when we can **freely give** love to others with *powerful* healing, prosperity and miracles, then we have proof we understand and walk in our new identity in Jesus Christ.

The Word of Faith Confession

We have already dealt with this topic off and on, so this section will serve as a foundational summary. Some might ask, "Why is this in the ethics section?" As Paul states in Acts 17, God "commands" us to "repent" and be saved. Being saved is wonderful. Being saved is a promise. Being saved is a command. When we repent, it is not a silent, internal confession. Paul also says in Romans 10:9-10 (NIV), *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."* Confession and declaration are an ethic because they are a command; it is not a suggestion—it is law.

Some fools might suppose this is the only time we are commanded to make a public confession or declaration. They fail to see that, from the very beginning, the Word of Faith Confession (WOFC) has been a regular part of Christianity. The WOFC has been a foundational and primordial ethic for God's chosen ones since the start. It began with Abraham, the father of faith ("those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all," Romans 4:16 LSB). The true children of Abraham follow in his actions—they emulate his faith and his confession of that faith.

Salvation's not just a quiet nod to God—it's a loud, proud shout of victory. Abraham's megaphone faith kicks off the ultimate Christian tradition: believe it and confess it.

"This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! What's more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham, for you will be the father of many nations. I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them! I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you" (Genesis 17 NLT).

God tells Abram, who has no children, that his new name is "*The Father of Many Nations*." Imagine Abraham's servants watching him announce himself as "The Father of Many Nations" to their neighbors—again. I can picture one of them uncomfortably shuffling his feet, muttering, "Well, here we go again, the childless old man is claiming he's the father of many nations."

From the beginning, the father of faith lived a life of confession and declaration. Abraham's very name was a declaration of faith to the whole world. His name was a confession that contradicted reality and empiricism. Abraham's public confession of faith defied what he and his neighbors saw. From the start, it was always a life lived by faith, not by sight.

Abram gets a divine rebrand to Abraham: Father of Nations, no kids required. Cue the awkward servants and neighbor watching, yet faith is bold and so it laughs at observations.

“[Abram] believed God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, ‘So shall your seed be.’ And without becoming weak in faith, he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Romans 4:17-20 LSB).

Abraham, the father of faith, set an example for us, and to this day, it has not changed. Even the Psalmist says, “I believed, and therefore I spoke” (Psalm 116:10). The Psalmist echoes Abraham, the father of faith. Paul quotes this in 2 Corinthians 4:13. Thus, even after the advent of the cross, the children of Abraham continue to do the same: they believe, then confess the promises of God and His faithfulness to fulfill all He has said.

But is this type of confession only for salvation and forgiveness? No. Abraham was declared righteous for believing and confessing that God would make him great, prosperous, fruitful, and the father of many children (including healing for his body). The father of faith’s confession had nothing to do with forgiveness or sins. God’s promise, which Abram believed, was all about goodness and favor—not sins or such things. This faith confession in God’s favor, healing, prosperity, and fame is the foundation for all faith confessions that follow, including the forgiveness of sins.

Abraham’s faith wasn’t whispering ‘sorry’—it was shouting ‘success.’ God’s promises of fame and fruitfulness started the confession party, and forgiveness just RSVP’d later.

The father of WOFCs began with confessing God’s promises of goodness, healing, favor, fame, and prosperity. No doctrine or WOFC that comes later negates or replaces this foundation. Paul shows in Galatians 3 that even the atonement of Jesus does not negate or replace Abraham’s WOFC; rather, the atonement grafts us into this blessing without merit or works. Paul says the blessing of Abraham includes miracles and the baptism of the Spirit for us today. The miracles Abraham received were fame, favor, healing, supernatural health, knowledge of the future, military victories, and abundant fruitfulness.

Thus, those who are true children of Abraham will also share his WOFC in the goodness, favor, and miracles of God. They will confess and receive them, just as Abraham, their father, did. Jesus’ finished atonement for our sins was a necessary step “added” to ensure the blessing of Abraham comes by grace and guarantees his children will possess their miracles. The blessing of Abraham is God’s original intention and promise. The forgiveness of sins was added later to guarantee that God’s original intention and promise are accomplished.

Thus, if we are to be like Abraham, we will just as easily believe we are forgiven of our sins as we believe we are healed, prospered, and made excessively fruitful in all areas of our lives. Despite our sins being so great, we believe God when He says we are forgiven. Despite sickness or poverty being so severe, we believe God when He says He

will heal and prosper us. This is the WOFC that Abraham lived, and if we are to prove we are his children, we must do the same.

Abraham's blessing is the VIP pass to miracles—Jesus' atonement just swipes us in for free. Confess forgiveness, health, and wealth like Abe, or you're not in the family photo!

The wilderness experience example shows us why it is so important to confess faith and not unbelief. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10, uses the wilderness experience to moralize it as an example of how not to live. Hebrews also refers to those in the wilderness experience as examples of how not to live. The wilderness is an illustration of what a confession of unbelief will do. The Bible's commentary on the wilderness experience is about people who suffer because of their own foolish unbelief. They are not suffering because of faith in the gospel or persecution for the gospel's sake; no, they suffer because they wanted to silence those (Joshua and Caleb) making Word of Faith declarations in the gospel. They are the ones persecuting those who believe in the gospel. They suffer because God sees them as an abomination for trusting their eyes over His promise.

The wilderness crew didn't just miss the Promised Land—they flunked Faith 101. Turns out, doubting God's promise while gagging the optimists is a one-way ticket to divine rejection.

They see reality, and they see God's promise. This leaves them with a choice to make. They end up declaring confidence in the reality they see rather than God's promise. This is odd because I often hear sermons and theologians treat the wilderness experience as if it's meant to be worn on your shirt as a badge of honor. The Bible says the wilderness experience is a badge of shame; it is a badge of God's rejection of you. It is a badge that says you are a reprobate destined for hell.

Choosing grim reality over God's golden promise? That's not a heroic wilderness trek—that's a spiritual faceplant. If you want the 'Rejected by God' merit badge, then you only need to doubt Him.

On the other hand, Canaan, or the Promised Land, is used by the Bible as an example of faith and election. Joshua and Caleb confessed their faith in God's promise to take the land. They saw the giants, but God's promise was more real to them than reality. Thus, they believed and confessed their assent to God's unshakable promise. Even though they were surrounded by a sea of unbelief (literally millions of unbelievers), their faith still guaranteed they entered Canaan, despite being delayed. Their faith and confession were stronger than a hurricane of unbelief surrounding them. Their faith confession literally rolled back the clock for their bodies, so that Caleb felt like a healthy 40-year-old man when he was in his 80s. Thus, even if others around you are dropping dead in the wilderness because of their unbelief, a WOFC will ensure your clothes don't wear out, you won't age, and all the good things—gold and houses you didn't work for but God promised—will come into your possession. Nothing in this

The Ogs of optimism are Joshua and Caleb, staring down giants and a million naysayers with a WOFC. Joshua and Caleb are the original 'I'm not dead yet' squad. They dodged stones, outlasted doubters, and cashed in God's promise with interest—giants included. They are for our example. Once Joshua pronounced a positive confession in God's promise, you are either with Joshua or against him. There is no

middle ground, because to doubt or to be silent means not doing the positive. The same as with Jesus.

Joshua and Caleb are WOFC poster boys: faith confessed aloud, rooted in God's promise, unshaken by reality's giants or doubters' stones. They didn't earn Canaan through works but received it through belief and declaration. Their lives bridge Abraham's foundational WOFC to the New Testament, where confession still unlocks salvation (Romans 10:9) and miracles (Galatians 3:14). They prove our thesis: a true WOFC overcomes wilderness wastelands, delivering God's goodness against all odds.

What is an Evil Report?

"And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, 'The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size'" (Numbers 13:32 NIV).

Notice the evil report wasn't because they said, "What God promised, He cannot do. God promised this land, but He is too weak to drive them out by our hand." Rather, what they said focused on empiricism—what they could see. They saw giants. They saw they were small compared to them in height. They saw fortified cities and armies that destroyed their enemies.

They didn't directly attack God's promise; they only reported what they could see, touch, and hear. They gave a testimony of sight. And God called this an evil report. God wanted to destroy them right there on the spot. Moses had to step in and plead with God not to kill them immediately. God relented but promised they would never see the Promised Land and would all die in the wilderness. They reported they were too weak and the others too strong, based on sight and empiricism. God said, "You will therefore be bound to this report based on sight. You are too weak for them."

The spies didn't trash-talk God—they just drooled over giants and walls. God's response? 'Report card—F for faith, see you in the wilderness!'

The thing is, based on empiricism, human sight, and inductive calculation, they were weaker than the inhabitants. They didn't lie about what they saw. Thus, all they did was give a report based on sight. They testified correctly to what they saw and touched. And yet, God wanted to destroy them for giving an accurate testimony of their observations. Think about that. Imagine God hating you and rejecting you, and all you did was correctly testify to what you saw!

God harshly punished them for various sins, and through Moses pleading for their survival, God never completely abandoned that generation. Not until they reached the edge of glory. Despite their grumbling and sins, they still let God rescue them from Egypt, and God did not utterly reject them. But when God wanted to arm them with swords and commanded all of them to work miracles to conquer the land, they doubted Him. They had just enough faith for Moses to perform miracles to save them, but when God asked them to wield miracles, their faith vanished in the desert sun. Likewise, many so-called Christians reject God at this point, and God will reject them as He did the Israelites; a warning given to church members in Hebrews 3-4 about this exact issue. They may have faith for Jesus to save them, but when God calls them to exercise His power and miracles, their faith falters.

The real issue is that they never had faith in God, even to save them, and when God demands they work miracles their unbelief is exposed. They know they are too sinful, too stupid and too weak to work miracles.

The lesson is clear: at glory's edge, your words determine your fate. Speak doubt, and you'll die in the sands. Faithless people stir rebellion with unbelief, and weak minds turn to stone. When God commands them to wield swords and miracles, dread fills their hearts, and they long for Pharaoh's chains, now seen as a safer haven. They crossed the Red Sea, letting God save them, but when He told them to take up swords, they instantly rejected Him. God rejected them, and they wandered for forty years in the dust. A whole generation was lost. Unbelief in His Word, comes at a high cost.

God called a true testimony of what people saw evil and wicked. It was evil and bad because "we live by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7 NIV). If we see a contradiction between what we observe and what God has said, God considers it evil and bad to testify correctly to what you see. God expects you to testify to what He has said. Because there is a contradiction, if you affirm one and leave it at that, you essentially deny the other. This is either-or logic: when two terms are known to contradict, affirming one denies the other (fulfilling the requirements of deduction). It's like two contradictory testimonies: " $2 + 2 = 4$ " and " $2 + 2 = 7$." If you pick one, you deny the other. As Jesus said, if you are not with Him, you are against Him. If you do not directly choose Him, you are against Him. If you do not directly confess the promise against what you see, you are against God. If you do not confess faith against your sight and observation, you are God's enemy.

Think about it. You can truthfully confess what you saw, and still be an abomination to God. You did not lie. You told the truth. The issue is that you spoke what you observed against that God promised. Do this, and like the Israelites, God will not merely discipline you, but abandon and reject you. This does not mean that small one slip of the tongue and its over, because David repented when he said, "In my haste" I said, "I was cut off." If you have breath, then repent. God will help you.

The command of God is to speak faith directly. Abraham's very name was a constant spoken confession of faith in God's promise. We prove ourselves to be children of Abraham if we do the same.

An *evil report* is speaking what you see (empiricism) rather than God's promise. Even if your testimony is correct about what you observe, if there's a promise concerning the same circumstance, you are evil. You are the type of person who spreads evil reports. The more people who see you publicly confess your observations (even if true) rather than the promise, the eviler the report becomes, and consequently, the more guilt you heap on yourself.

I can hear these self-righteous Israelites saying, "But we only testified to what we saw! They are bigger and stronger, with more weapons. They're aggressive people. Why is God angry with us for speaking the truth?" The same happens today: "I only testified to what the doctor and I saw. I spoke the truth. The cancer was stage four, all over my body. Why is God angry with me?"

"We can do it, God is with us" was faith flex; the spies' report was a fear flop. Whine about giants or cancer, and God's like, 'Congrats, you're officially dead to me!'

God has commanded us to speak His word. He has commanded us to trust His promise. He has commanded us to agree that His word is permanent, faithful, and true. He commands us not only to believe in our hearts but to confess with our mouths His word and promises.

Adam and Eve had a problem with this. God told them something, and they faced the contradiction that the tree looked good to eat. The first school lesson for mankind was one of faith in God's word. Faith, as Vincent Cheung says, is the first primordial orthodoxy for man. No other doctrine revealed later will override faith. Faith overrides all doctrines because all other doctrines came after the orthodoxy of faith.³⁰⁰ Abraham had a similar situation. Romans 4 says he believed against all hope—that is, he believed against what he saw, felt, and observed. His name, “father of many nations,” was a contradiction to reality itself. Yet it is God's word that creates and controls reality. If you have faith in God's word, the Word will always prevail over what the eyes see. This is why we live by faith, not sight.

Adam and Eve flunked Faith 101 over a tasty tree; Abraham aced it with an impossible situation. God's word trumps observations. But the Israelites could not look past their sensations, and so God made them eat dust.

It's not as if you can never under any circumstances say what reality is, but it must be said in a way that doesn't negate your confession that God's promise is true over what you observe. Jesus said Lazarus was only asleep, but when pressed, He admitted he was dead—yet still affirmed Lazarus was as good as alive.

People want to see themselves like Caleb and Joshua while they still speak like the Israelites who gave a bad (albeit a correct) report on what they saw. They read God's promises of healing in the Bible, but then they get a doctor's report. They'll then give a true testimony of what the doctor saw and spoke: “The cancer is strong, and my old body is weak.” This is exactly what the Israelites said, and God was so furious He wanted to kill all of them right then and there. It was at this point God utterly left them. If you want to be like Joshua, who received God's approval, then be like Joshua. Say, “The doctor saw the cancer, but it is food for me. Jesus left my sickness on the cross because it died there with Him. The Father considers Jesus a substitute atonement for my sickness in my place, and therefore, I do not bear it. By His stripes, I am healed. I declare in Jesus' name, ‘I am healed.’ His promise is more real than what I see or feel.”

Want Joshua's gold star? Swap ‘I'm doomed’ for ‘Cancer's toast—God said so!’

The only way to be obedient is to directly and constantly speak the promise of God against what you see. If you merely omit this and only speak what you see, you are an evil person who spreads evil reports. You will partake in the same destiny as the Israelites who died in the wilderness.

But why stay silent? If you believe, then the Promised Land of blessings is yours for the taking. God has already spoken and revealed His promises. Stand up and agree with Him. Be like Abraham, your father, and speak the contradiction to all you see and observe. Speak the confession of God's promise and receive it like Abraham did. The only way to speak good reports and spread good reports is through public

³⁰⁰ See Vincent Cheung, “Faith Override.”

confession of absolute certainty in God's promise over reality. Be a super-spreader of faith confessions, and you will have God's approval. Men—especially churchmen—may hate you and even try to stone you for good faith reports (like with Joshua), but God will approve of you. He will give you what you ask of Him.

Silence is for wilderness losers. Be Abraham's kid, shout God's win, and watch haters throw stones while God hands you the prize.

King David is a stellar example of someone who consistently lived out a Word of Faith Confession (WOFC). When David faced Goliath, it wasn't just faith—it was a bold WOFC declaration. He publicly confessed absolute certainty that God would back him up. He said, *"This day Yahweh will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head"* (1 Samuel 17:46 LSB). David knew God would help him. Even an unbeliever—or, heck, a pigeon—might mumble, *"Maybe today God will help me,"* but for God's chosen, it's different. They know this very day God will show up with power. Not tomorrow, not next week—today. Today's always prime time for a miracle. It's the perfect day for God to flex His greatness and stay true to His promise to Abraham and the blood covenant sealed by His Son's atonement.

This is the kind of faith that births us from above. "This day, I've believed and confessed Jesus Christ, and this day God has saved me." We all know that if someone says, "I've confessed my sins and believed in Jesus' finished atonement, so I might be saved today—or maybe tomorrow, or next week, or next century"—their odds of salvation are slim to none. God might toss some kindness their way despite their weak confession; we can hope. Same goes for healing. Why expect results if your faith and confession are as flimsy as wet tissue? God doesn't honor unbelief dressed up as humility—only confessions rooted in absolute certainty of His promise. That's real faith. God's promise is clear: ask for help, and you'll get it when and how you believe you will. If you think forgiveness is a "maybe," you'll get a "maybe" at best—more likely nothing. Believe for mercy today, confess you've received it, and it's yours today. Same for healing.

David didn't stutter, and neither should you. God's not running a cosmic lottery—He delivers on certainty as a father gives bread for bread, not maybes.

Since Paul moralizes the Bible in 1 Corinthians 10 and James does the same in James 5, we can confidently moralize David and Goliath for any faith-and-victory scenario in this world. Let's apply this daily to every obstacle defying our God's greatness. Smash those Goliaths with a WOFC.

David also penned songs—many of which God deemed worthy for the Psalms. Here's the kicker: songs of praise, gratitude, and truth often double as WOF confessions carrying its DNA. When the Israelites marched around Jericho blasting trumpets and praising God, it was a WOFC in action—God had promised the land, and they claimed it. God does what He says. Period.

A pastor once admitted, *"In worship songs and Psalms, we often sing what we're too chicken to say in faith and prayer."* At least he was honest about his unbelief instead of faking it. The Psalms declare God answers us, heals all our diseases, delivers us from

every trouble, shields us from all danger, and forgives us. These are both past victories and future guarantees based on His faithful promise and love. Psalm 91 even boasts that 10,000 can drop dead beside me, yet I'm untouched. In today's terms, that's like saying a nuke detonates next door, bodies pile up, and I'm sipping coffee, unscathed. Radical? You bet.

Here's the irony: those who mock Word of Faith preachers will belt out Psalms—literal WOFC anthems—without blinking. How do they miss it? Sing it loud, skeptics—your karaoke night's secretly a WOFC revival.

We're commanded to keep songs, hymns, and Psalms in our hearts and on our lips: "Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19 NIV). Since biblically grounded songs and Psalms are packed with WOFC elements, and we're told to live with them constantly, we're meant to embody Word of Faith Confessions nonstop.

Take **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**. They dropped a WOFC about God's deliverance: "*Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king*" (Daniel 3:17 NKJV). They didn't hedge—they said, "God will deliver us." That "even if He doesn't" bit? It's not doubt; it's a hypothetical jab, like saying, "Even if the sun explodes, we're not bowing to your idols." And God delivered, just as they confessed. Point proven: God does what you believe He'll do. As Vincent Cheung puts it, "God wants us to live thinking we can have whatever we believe He'll do for us. We can't blame God for our failures or sicknesses, claiming some mysterious decree. No—Jesus said what you believe God will do is what He'll do. This is God's will, His decree—miracles included."³⁰¹

If you believe God's will is a foggy mystery, that's what you'll get: a life of uncertainty, tossed like a wave. But if you believe God's Word is His will and confess His promises outweigh what you see, God will perform them for you.

Jesus, the ultimate God-centered man, often prodded people into confessions of faith. "Who do you say I am?" "Do you believe I'm able?" "What do you want Me to do for you?" He didn't ask, "What's God's will?" No—per Cheung, Jesus assumes man's will as foundational³⁰², then demands a faith confession.

If you "**say**." Jesus in Mark 11:23 says twice "*if you say*."

In Mark 11:23, Jesus doubles down: "If you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and cast into the sea,' and don't doubt but believe what you say will happen, you'll have it." Faith is foundational, but Jesus stresses "saying" it—commanding reality itself. Jesus isn't playing 20 Questions—He's coaching you to boss mountains around.

Jesus is our maximum. He cursed a fig tree: "*May no one eat fruit from you again*." He rebuked a fever (Luke 4:39), and it bolted. He told a blind man, "*Receive your sight*" (Luke 18:42). The disciples followed suit: "*In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk*" (Acts 3:16 ESV). Jesus doesn't just say pray nicely, "God, please do X." He says command reality—speak to it—and it'll obey you.

³⁰¹ Vincent Cheung. Faith is the Answer

³⁰² See Healing: The Will of Man

Jesus is saying you command and speak to a part of reality, and it will “obey you.” God is not the one speaking to it. No you are commanded to speak and say. It is not your power but God’s power that will make it happen, but it is not God’s mouth, but your mouth that will command it to obey you. Its God’s power, sure, but it’s your voice. God is the gun, but commands you to point it and shoot.

This demands knowing your identity in Christ—righteous, accepted, empowered as God’s child. Begging God for healing? That’s outsider behavior. Healing’s already yours in Jesus’ atonement. God’s not dangling it out of reach—you’ve got it. The devil and cessationist are the ones cockblocking you from claiming what’s yours. Same with forgiveness: you don’t beg—you’re already forgiven in Christ. Confess it, receive it afresh. It’s your definition in God’s mind, so it’s reality. Healing, miracles, provision—all yours already. When you have the maturity to accept the gospel you can simply “say” to the place in your body that is hurting and command it to leave, and “*it will obey you.*” This is how Jesus instruct and expects us to behave.

Since the gospel defines us as royal children of God, we command reality—it obeys. No begging required. Grow up and believe who God says you are. Stop groveling—royalty doesn’t beg; it decrees.

God and His Word are one. Thus, when you confess His Word in faith, you unleash God—His power, His faithfulness. Word of Faith preachers nail this. It’s simple, though emotions, trials, and people-pleasing muddy it. Abraham and Sarah faced a contradiction: they believed God’s promised favor more than they could see, feel, or touch. Abraham had the contradiction of God’s promise versus what he could see or feel. He had the choice to base knowledge from God’s revelation or from sensation. He didn’t waver in faith. He got the promise.

In Jesus’ gospel, our WOFC rests on His finished work. His atonement grafts us into Abraham’s blessings, wipes our sin, and credits us with God’s righteousness. Any contradiction to this—spiritual (forgiveness, sanctification) or physical (prosperity, healing)—demands we confess Jesus’ work as reality. We are to confess that Jesus’ finished work has a necessary connection to reality (to our reality) and what we see and feel does not have a necessary connection to reality. What we see or feel? Irrelevant next to God’s promise.

Take Psalm 23. Life’s troubles (not gospel persecution) clash with Abraham’s blessings—green pastures, still waters, overflowing cups. We choose: confess God’s Word like Abraham or bow to empiricism. Confess Psalm 23 day and night. Psalm 1 promises success if you seek God “day and night.” Believe and confess relentlessly—it’s impossible to fail. Open your mouth if you see the reward; keep it shut if you’re blind.

Healing is Received by the Same Faith.

“Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” (Acts 2:38 NLT)

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” (Colossians 2:6-7 NIV)

It's by unmerited favor that God sent His only Son as a substitutionary atonement for us. By faith in Jesus' finished work—offered freely, no strings attached—we're saved. Peter in Acts 2 ties this same faith to receiving the baptism of the Spirit, which empowered the disciples to speak in tongues and work miracles. He links the faith that grabs forgiveness to the faith that claims the Spirit's baptism. Both forgiveness and the Spirit are unearned blessings, gifts we can only receive by believing God's promise. God agrees He'll do what He says, and faith is our mental assent agreeing with Him—agreeing He's faithful to deliver. Faith assents that Jesus earned forgiveness and the Spirit's power, then handed them to by unmerited favor

Romans 10 doesn't say if you believe and confess, you “might” be saved if God's in the mood. No—it says you will be saved. This rock-solid confidence in Jesus' finished work, this certainty you “will be saved,” is the same faith we're told to live by every day. Every blessing comes the same way. Colossians instructs us that just as we received Jesus—by faith in His unmerited favor—we keep walking in that same faith.

No wishy-washy “maybe” here—God's promise isn't a coin toss.

I've heard more than one pastor preaching the gospel say people reject salvation because they're unsure if God will forgive them. The pastor asks, “You know God has forgiven you, right?” Too often, the response mirrors how Christians talk about healing: “I hope so,” “I'm not sure,” or “If God wants me saved, He'll do it; if not, oh well.” Trouble is, these aren't faith—they're doubt and pride disguised to look like piety. Faith is agreeing with God's revelation. God says if you believe and confess, you will be saved—no “maybe” about it. If you don't believe you're forgiven, you're not buying what God revealed. That's not 50% faith; it's 0%. Faith is assenting that God's word is true—there's no other kind.

The faith you used to receive Christ for forgiveness (trusting God's unmerited favor) and the baptism of the Spirit is the same faith for everything else—like healing. We didn't believe we're forgiven because we earned it; we believed God already forgave us through Jesus' work. We didn't lean on sight, sound, touch, or feelings to know we're forgiven—we trusted God's revelation alone. We didn't obsess over our sins to get forgiveness; we focused on God's free mercy in Christ. We didn't wait to eyeball Jesus on the cross or at the Father's right hand; we believed God's word despite not seeing. We didn't hold off believing until we felt sanctified; we trusted we're forgiven because God says we are through Jesus.

Faith isn't a feelings audit—it's a yes to God's memo.

That's how we receive healing too. We don't earn healing by works or merit; we receive it by faith in Jesus' finished atonement. We don't wait for sight, sound, touch, or feelings to confirm it; we trust God's revealed promises. We don't hold off believing until symptoms vanish; we believe we're healed because God says we are through Jesus. We don't fixate on pain or the doctor's report; we lock onto God's faithful promises and love for us.

In his essay, “Healing: The Will of Man,” Vincent makes the case that when Jesus and the Scripture interacts with man, they ask what is “man's will,” not God's will, and

then upon the will of man things happen or do not happen. This is particularly so with healing.

“God’s will on healing is an artificially generated question. It is a theological scam and a trap. Christians should have never focused so much on it, even on answering challenges about it. If we were to read the Gospels without introducing concerns that they do not mention, then the question of the will of God on healing would never arise. It is possible to read through the Gospels and the Acts never having the issue cross our minds. Jesus was the supreme theologian on the sovereignty of God. He said that something insignificant like a sparrow cannot fall apart from the will of God. He said that no one can come to him for salvation without God drawing him. And he spoke as one who was with God since the beginning.

However, when it came to healing, the only times that this same Jesus mentioned the issue of the will, he referred to the will of man. Whenever he spoke specifically about the topics of faith, prayer, and healing, he focused on the will of man. This matter of the will of God on healing does not naturally proceed from what we read in the Bible...

A man’s son had a demon and the disciples of Jesus failed to cast it out (Mark 9:17-18). Jesus declared that they failed not because it was the will of God, but because of the unbelief in them (Matthew 17:20). He placed the explanation on the faith of man. He told them, “If you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.” He did not say, “nothing will be impossible for God,” but “nothing will be impossible for you” — nothing will be impossible for man. Hey, don’t look at me, he was the one who said it...

Jesus answered the man, “All things are possible for one who believes.” The context was healing, so although this statement applies to other things, it must apply to healing. As if to teach us that faith applies to all things, Jesus said that faith can even uproot trees and remove mountains. All miracles, all cases of healing the sick and casting out demons are possible for a person who believes. All miracles are possible for the human, the man — not “if it is God’s will” but “if the man has faith.” This is heresy to the cult of historic and orthodox religion, the cult of human tradition, but this is the heresy that Jesus taught. We must decide who is the true heretic, and our answer reflects whether we are true followers of Christ.

He did not say, “All things are possible with God” or “All things are possible to me, for I am God.” He did not say, “Anything is possible, if it is God’s will.” There was no consideration and no implication of anything that has to do with the will of God in this whole transaction. If the will of God never came up when Jesus healed the sick, why does it come up every time when Christians talk about the topic? Why is it emphasized all the time even by those who believe in healing? Satan has so successfully guided the development of Christian theology and practice that every time the issue is mentioned, it is already set up against the biblical teaching. Christians who follow Jesus on the matter fight an

uphill battle. We still win, but it is better to expose the fraud and level the mountain...”³⁰³

You have the Ability if you Believe.

“If I can?” Jesus asked.

“Anything is possible if you have faith.” TLB

“What do you mean, ‘If I can?’” Jesus asked.

“Anything is possible if a person believes.” NLT

The word for “can” or “able” means ability or power to do something. The word “possible” carries a similar vibe—having the juice to make it happen. Jesus seems to be playing with words here. He’s essentially saying, “If I have the ability? You’ve got it backward. You have the ability—if you believe.”

Jesus is doing a double whammy with this wordplay. First, He’s ticked off by the question. “*If I’m able? Of course I’m able!*” The grammar drips with emotion—“*IF I CAN!*” Jesus assumes if you’re asking Him for help, you should already believe He’s got the goods. Why bother otherwise? The father in this story approaches Jesus like He’s just a teacher or prophet, not the Messiah. Second, Jesus flips the script. The father questions Jesus’ ability, but Jesus turns it around: “There’s ability to heal here, and it’s on you—your faith.”

Context matters. Picture this desperate father, begging for his kid’s healing, in a public square with a crowd gawking. Does Jesus pull him aside for a quiet chat? Nope. Right there, mid-ministry, He corrects this frantic dad’s theological fumble. If someone needs healing and a doctrinal error’s in the way, the loving move is to call it out—even publicly—so they can fix it and get what they need. Too touchy to handle correction? Don’t expect healing. Jesus corrects those He loves. Our Father disciplines (not condemns) His kids. Why? He wants you healed, thriving, and mature more than you do.

Jesus isn’t here for your “if”s—He’s handing you the reins.

On that second point, notice how the father tries to dump the responsibility on Jesus. Jesus shrugs it off and plops it back on him. The father’s faith in Jesus’ ability is shaky—he thinks it’s possible Jesus can heal, not certain. If Jesus has the power and this powerless dad is asking, shouldn’t Jesus be on the hook? Nope. Jesus flips it: “You, through faith, can heal your kid. The accountability’s yours.” God prioritizes mercy over sacrifice—think of the Good Samaritan making the need vanish. The father owns up to his mistake, admits his faith is wobbly, and cries, “Help my unbelief!” That’s solid theology—a proper response to God’s delegated responsibility. And boom, Jesus heals the kid.

Too many today dodge this script. They slap the “hat” of ability and responsibility on Jesus’ head: “If You will, You can heal me.” Jesus yanks it off and puts it back on them: “You can heal yourself by faith in My promise. It’s on you, not Me.” But instead of rolling with it like the father, they rip the hat off, toss it at Jesus’ feet, and pout, “I’ll

³⁰³ Vincent Cheung. Healing: The Will of Man. HERO. 2022

suffer for God's glory by His will. We won't let You tell us what's on us—we'll decide." Sorry, folks—God, not man, calls the shots on responsibility.

Jesus doesn't mince words about those who reject His rule. "But these enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and slaughter them in my presence!" (Luke 19:27 LEB). Harsh? Sure. But here's the flip side: we're God's kids—loved, insiders with clout. We can heal, cast out demons, chuck mountains into the sea. Angels don't get this VIP status. Jesus wiped our sins, cleansed us, made us beloved in the Father's eyes. He took our sickness and curses, gave us His righteousness, health, and blessings. We're adopted into God's family, wielding His authority because of Jesus' atonement. God wants this—it's His plan. You're not arm-wrestling Him for power; resisting it is what fights Him. God's not stingy—He's stuffing power in your pockets.

Think how much God loves you. He puts power in your right hand, authority in your left. He wants you overcoming this world like Jesus did. He wants you self-aware as His kid, co-heir with Christ—rocking sandals, draped in His best robe, flashing His signet ring. Lift that ringed hand and order the servants to bring you food—you're His heir.

From an angel's view, our insider status is wild. God tells them "go," they go; "come," they come—servants, plain and simple. We're bondservants too, but also kids. An angel sees Jacob wrestling God for a blessing after God says "let go"—no angel would dare. Yet faith, our first doctrine, trumps all. An angel watches Moses tell God, "Don't wipe out Israel"—gutsy, demon-level stuff if an angel tried it. A gentile woman twists Jesus' analogy for her own gain after He says it's not her turn—no angel could pull that. But for God's kids, faith unlocks this privilege. Act like it. God wants you to—He remade you for it.

Start today. It's a good day. Ask for Jesus to help your imperfect faith. Run to win the race. Jesus is the author of our faith. Look to Him, and He will make you a hero of faith. He will strengthen you. He will increase you with excessive fruitfulness.

This is mature doctrine. Lord, let those with ears hear.

Faith to Move Mountains

We're accused of bending God to our every whim when we teach Jesus' doctrine of faith to move mountains. Critics claim we're forcing God to obey us instead of submitting to His will. That's reckless nonsense. Jesus commands us to have faith to move mountains, to do greater works than Him, and to prove our discipleship with a stack of answered prayers. Obeying this is submitting to God's will and desires. Yet some froth at the mouth, "But you're asking for—and getting—what you want!" Brilliant deduction, Sherlock. That's exactly what God intends.

I recall preacher Bill Winston saying in a sermon (paraphrased from memory), "God and His Word are one. When you speak God's Word, you release God. They're the same thing. It's not your power—it's God's, unleashed. Speak His Word, and you set

loose unstoppable Power.” Speak the Word, unleash the Boss—God’s not mad about it. This is stellar theology, a razor-sharp deduction and application of God’s attributes. If you slog through 500 pages on divine attributes and miss this, you’ve wasted your time. It means you lack the intellectual ability to understand who God is. Applying theology like this proves you’ve got the basics down.

God, His will, His Word, and His power are essentially identical. If God thinks that He wants x to happen, then it happens. He’s given us the authority and privilege to use His Name and speak His Word—His promises. He’s commanded us to declare them over our lives and reality. God guarantees that if we speak His Word in faith, He’ll deliver. The odds of someone speaking God’s promise of healing in faith and it not happening are as likely as God not existing. Zero.

God and His Word are one. He attached promises with ironclad success to anyone who speaks His Word in faith. Since God set this up, He wanted it. God knows the future because He thought about it and decided on an outcome. So when He made these promises, He foresaw³⁰⁴ every time someone would speak His Word in faith—and every time He would flex His power to make it so. God likes it when we speak His Word in faith and He gets to back it up. It pleases Him. He dreamed up this system, revealed it, and commands us to run with it. He wants it more than you do. God’s cheering you on to boss reality around—His idea, not yours.

So, those who balk at speaking to reality to make it obey are flat-out rebelling against God’s command. They resist what He enjoys and disobey His orders. Their take on God’s attributes divides God (power) from His Word—heresy 101. They should be booted from every church, no questions asked.

God glorifies man in the gospel.

“The gospel is "God in the service of man" at least in the sense that God provides what men need and want, and he does so through an act of unparalleled humiliation: God made flesh to be spit on, beaten and killed on a cross and cursed (Philippians 2:5-7). No one can humiliate God by treating him as a wish; [they cannot humiliate him] any more than he humiliated himself to [save] his people.

Friend, JESUS girded a towel, took a basin, and washed the disciples' feet! They didn't ask for it, they would never humiliate him like that. One of them was even scandalized. [And yet] Jesus rebuked him for it rather than accepting his reaction as zeal for the glory of the Messiah. He said: “I came into the world to serve” (Matthew 20:28). And he served by exposing himself to public nudity, the scorn of the authorities, and the humiliation of being counted as a criminal. Jesus did not fear shame, but turned his face as hard as flint (Isaiah 50:7).

The truth is that we glorified him when we received from him (John 14:13-14), but even if it were humiliating for him to fulfill our dreams, he would be willing to pay the price for our happiness. We see him growing bigger as he manifests

³⁰⁴ God also decreed the faith and unbelief of all people.

his love in our lives, and he doesn't care if, in the process of showering us with his grace, he ends up being seen as a servant by critics...

The children of tradition teach that God would lower himself, becoming a kind of servant, if he regularly fulfilled our wishes. In contrast, Jesus taught that he would glorify the Father by granting the things his disciples asked in his name.

The theologians are in opposition. One says that God belittles himself in doing our will. The other says that God magnifies himself by fulfilling our desires.

How can a tradition that purports to be Biblical come to a conclusion that is the opposite extreme of what the Bible teaches? Exactly! It's a scam! God granting me what I want does not make him my servant. I'm the one asking. I'm the needy one. I depend on him, not the other way around. That said, why should the idea of a God-servant scandalize Christians when Jesus himself said he came to serve? When Peter tried to stop Jesus from washing his feet, Jesus rebuked him saying, "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me". If God wants to serve you, shut up and accept it. Or rather, accept it and open your mouth in praise. Just don't refuse, because if you don't let God be your waiter, he will be your executioner, whether you like it or not. That's what "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me" means."³⁰⁵

If you are not willing to let God serve you, then you do not belong to Him. The gospel is not you serving God, but God serving you. He saved you; you did not save Him. He loved you; you did not love Him. Because this aspect of "Jesus or God serving us" is part of the gospel, we can use it to label false teachers. Those whose doctrine, in any way, restrict us going to God to serve us with healing, sanctification, prosperity, blessings and miracles are false teachers. Yes, there is more to our relationship with God than just this, but it is not less than this. Thus, we can use this doctrine to mock and dismiss false teachers.

We have already taught the doctrines of God's sovereignty, His decrees and how He makes all things work to glorify Himself above all things. But this is not the only thing the Bible teaches about who and how God glorifies. In the gospel God glorifies man; God greatly and incredibly glorifies man. Yes, it is true man's glorified state, ultimately glorifies God, but this is no excuse to blur this into pantheism. We know from previous chapters God decreed creation's glory, including redeemed man, gives Him glory. However, to understand how man's glory ultimately gives God glory, then one must affirm how much God glorified man in the gospel. If man is not glorified in the gospel, then man has no glory that glorifies God. What God gave to Caesar belongs to Caesar. The bible denies pantheism, therefore, when God directly glorifies man, it is that man's glory, not God's. When God forgives a man, God forgives the man, not Himself. Your theology needs to include this.

"I have given them the glory you gave me," John 17:22 NLT.

"But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the wisdom which has been hidden, which God *predestined before the ages to our glory*," (1 Corinthians 2:7 LSB).

³⁰⁵ Gabriel Arauto

Google translated into English from Portuguese, with basic proofreading. [] added for clarity.

“The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, “*Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?*” But we have the mind of Christ,” (1 Corinthians 2:15-16 NIV)

“Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not worthy to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we will judge angels,” (1 Corinthians 6:2-3 LSB)

One day, I’ll judge angels. One day, men and the world will stand by as I pass judgments over them. This isn’t God’s glory—it’s mine. Who’s ever counseled God, except His own Spirit within Him? Yet I have God’s Spirit and the Mind of Christ. God didn’t give Himself the Mind of Christ; He gave it to men and glorified me with it. Jesus gave me His glory. Sure, Ezekiel 36 says God glorifies Himself, in His action to glorify us, but the point stands: God glorifies man. The same value the Father gave Jesus Christ is the value Jesus gives His chosen ones. It’s not that God concedes man has limitless intrinsic glory; rather, He bestows and crafts man with high value through Christ—equal in measure.

Since man’s glorified state reflects God’s glory, any claim that cheapens man’s true worth stomps on God’s glory and the blood of Christ, treating them as trifles. Some diminish man’s glory, fretting it steals from God’s. That’s absurd and betrays how small they think God is. God’s glory is beginningless, infinite—endless. Even if man’s glory were infinite (with a starting point), it’d still be dwarfed by God’s. No need to downgrade man to prop up God—they’re not rivals. God highly exalted and glorified man. To downplay this is to trash God’s sovereign definition and mercy toward us. Since our glory intertwines with Jesus’, diminishing ours diminishes His.

God’s glory’s big enough to share—don’t shrink mine to pad His.

Peter says God exalts those who humble themselves. He doesn’t promise to exalt Himself—He exalts man. Christians are God’s glory, the image of Jesus Christ, the Mind of Christ. How much glory, fame, and exalted value does the Mind and image of Jesus carry? That’s the fame and lofty state of Christians. In the gospel, God glorifies man. This is mature doctrine, not baby food. God predestined the gospel to crown man with glory, to grant divine value—co-heirs with Jesus, not just sub-heirs. Ponder that. The gospel’s core includes man’s glorification. A man sits on heaven’s throne.

Mary received from Jesus; Martha gave to Him. Who did better, giver or receiver? Jesus said Mary, the receiver, picked the superior path. Receiving trumps giving in your relationship with God. With man, it’s the reverse. Jesus served man, multiplying bread. God serves man by giving His only Son to save us. Jesus came to serve—not because man’s the boss, but because God’s in charge and does what He pleases. He’s love, brimming with unmerited favor, eager to help us by serving us.

God’s the ultimate waiter—tip Him with thanks.

By receiving His service, we glorify God as our great supply and benefactor. We love God by taking what He offers. Jesus is thrilled to give and thrilled when you receive. Keep asking and receiving, and He’ll publicly cheer you on—like He did that gentile woman. He likes it.

Healing is centered on Man's Will, not God's.

"God's will on healing is an artificially generated question. It is a theological scam and a trap. Christians should have never focused so much on it, even on answering challenges about it. If we were to read the Gospels without introducing concerns that they do not mention, then the question of the will of God on healing would never arise. It is possible to read through the Gospels and the Acts never having the issue cross our minds. Jesus was the supreme theologian on the sovereignty of God. He said that something insignificant like a sparrow cannot fall apart from the will of God. He said that no one can come to him for salvation without God drawing him. And he spoke as one who was with God since the beginning.

However, when it came to healing, the only times that this same Jesus mentioned the issue of the will, he referred to the will of man. Whenever he spoke specifically about the topics of faith, prayer, and healing, he focused on the will of man. This matter of the will of God on healing does not naturally proceed from what we read in the Bible. Men of spiritual rebellion and theological incompetence have taken God's singular commitment to healing and forcefully separated it into God's ability and God's will regarding the matter, and then they proceeded to undermine the artificial division of God's will on healing the sick. They created a phantom issue, and then attacked the doctrine on that ground. The entire difficulty has been manufactured."³⁰⁶

This is a sharp observation. I remember reading the Bible as a young teenager, and honestly, the notion of "if it is the will of God" never crossed my mind while digging into the Gospels and Acts. So why do theologians keep harping on it when Jesus barely mentions it? Why does Jesus zero in on "faith" and the "will of man" in the exact spots where theologians obsess over "God's will"? Vincent Cheung nails it: this phrase is a contrived problem, jammed into places it doesn't fit. Theologians brought a decoy to a faith fight, and Jesus isn't buying it. Where Jesus pounds the table with "faith" and the "will of man," they wedge in their "God's will" fixation. Why the stark contrast? Are they right and Jesus wrong? I'll let that hang there.

Since it's an artificial issue, it deserves a rebuke—and then we should brush it off. Ignoring it is key because it's not the real fight. The true battleground, as Jesus and Acts spotlight, is "faith" and the "will of man." That's the meaty doctrine we're meant to preach and hammer home. We don't let opponents dictate our strategy or turf. Jesus hands us the battle plans, and we fight where He points.

Jesus was the most extreme Faith teacher.³⁰⁷

Jesus was the greatest, most radical faith teacher ever. Faith for everything—anything. Healing, long life, transmuting matter, multiplying resources, raising the dead, commanding inanimate objects to obey you—He ordered us to do it all. This most God-centered man said, "Nothing will be impossible for *you*." With faith, a tree will uproot

³⁰⁶ Vincent Cheung. *Healing: The Will of Man*. Hero. 2022. Pg. 8

³⁰⁷ I got this phrase from Vincent Cheung, "The Extreme Faith Teacher." See essay for more reading on this topic, which was helpful to me in writing this section.

itself and plant in the Dead Sea—it'll "*obey you*." Jesus puts you in the driver's seat, not some vague "will of God." Your health, your miracles? You're in charge through faith, not pinned to a hazy divine whim. Got faith? You get what you ask. No faith? You don't. This extreme faith teacher—this Jesus—is who we'll face on Judgment Day. Plead "God's will" then, and He'll counter with your faith—or lack of it.

"Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." (John 14:12-13 NIV)

"But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! This brings great glory to my Father." (John 15:7-8 NLT)

Jesus snapped, "You (unbelieving perverts)! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.' Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well. Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, 'Why couldn't we cast out that demon?' 'You don't have enough faith,' Jesus told them. 'I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it would move. Nothing would be impossible (for you).'" (Matthew 17:17-20 NLT)

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea," and it will obey you." (Luke 17:6 NIV)

Jesus hands you the keys—don't stall out on faith.

The first talk of binding and loosing pops up in Matthew 16, when Peter confesses Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus says this confession fuels the church's unstoppable march—hell's gates can't hold it back. On that rock, He declares what you bind or loose on earth sticks in heaven. Share Peter's confession? This authority's yours. "Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven." (Matthew 18:18-19 NIV) We're righteous in Christ, praying as God's insiders. It's not a "maybe"—God will heal you, just like He will forgive you. James ties forgiveness and healing to faith with no wiggle room: "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." (James 5:15-16 NIV)

John 14:12-13 echoes John 3:16's "whoever believes." Same author, same vibe.

"Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16 NIV)

"Whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these." (John 14:12 NIV)

Both are referring to whosoever, not just the apostles. The necessary connection for both salvation and working miracles is “faith.” The connection is not maybe, but a necessary connection.

This passage in John 14 lies within an unbroken dialog that Jesus is having with the disciples before His death. In my past I have heard pastors say this section (chs. 13-16), is the “love your neighbor” section—fair, since Jesus harps on that. But He doubles down even more (or at least as much, depending on your tally) on commanding us to pray and get what we pray for. Jesus commands this over and over and over. It’s not just “pray”—it’s “get it.”

John 14:12-13 kicks off with “works” meaning miracles—verse 13 clarifies³⁰⁸: ask anything, and Jesus does it. He’s not subbing in to preach your sermon or scrub your dishes—He means miracles. The most direct context makes “work” to be miracles. John 5 backs this: Jesus calls healing on the Sabbath “works” amid persecution. “Works” always includes miracles, even if it’s broader. Jesus says all believers will do His miracles—and greater.

Jesus says John 14 as a statement for all who believe in Him, will do His miracles. John 3:16 says those who believe in Him will be saved. If a person is not saved, it means they did not believe in Him. It is just that simple, because the logic is a necessary connection. Likewise, if you do not perform miracles and get answers to your prayers then you do not believe in Him. There is no other way around Jesus’ logic.

John 15 ups the ante: you prove you’re His disciple by asking what you want and getting it. This Jesus judges us—not your pastor, creed, or hotshot theologian. His words are the scale. He says believers do His works and greater—Vincent Cheung’s “expansionism” nails it. The church should swell in power and miracles; maturing believers should crank up the volume and scale of miracles beyond Jesus’. Plus, ask anything “in His name” (John 14:13, 16:24), and He’ll do it. Commanding in Jesus’ name—like Peter in Acts 3—is praying without hedging, a Word of Faith Confession (WOFC) shorthand. “In Jesus’ name, mountain move!” aligns with John 14.

Chapters 14-16 alone cement Jesus as the ultimate faith extremist. Hint that faith for mountains, healing, or transmuting matter goes too far? You’ve just smacked Jesus. You can’t critique miracle-demanding faith without hitting Him square on. There is no way to criticize the amount and grade of miracles on the demand of faith without attacking Jesus directly. You cannot throw a hammer at God’s face and then claim the

³⁰⁸ Vincent points helped me to understand this in the essay, “*The Extreme Faith Teacher*.” He also points out how “works” in context of Jesus is not referring to teaching and charity, but miracles.

“Just before verse 12, Jesus said, “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves” (v. 11). Even if we translate this as “works” instead of “miracles,” it remains that Jesus performed miracles, so his works would include miracles. In addition, the fact that he said they could “believe” due to these works suggests that he mainly referred to his miracles. And just after verse 12, Jesus said, “And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father” (v. 13). Then he said it again: “You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (v. 14).”

hammer did it. You cannot attack the doctrine of miracles on the demand of faith for whatever reason, without attacking Jesus. Backhanded attacks and sophistry might work with some, but God is not fooled; He knows when a gun is pointed at His face. Blame the hammer all you want, but God sees you are the one swinging.

Jesus lists four reasons for this extreme faith push: (1) it proves you're His disciple (15:7-8); (2) it fills you with joy (15:11, 16:24)—He cares about your happiness; (3) it sparks tons of fruit/good works (15:8, 16); (4) it glorifies the Father through the Son (14:13, 15:8). Therefore, to be against Jesus' extreme teaching on faith, is to be an enemy of Christians being able to prove they are Jesus' disciples, an enemy of Christians being competed with joy, being an enemy of Christians bearing many good works and enemies of the Father receiving great glory and being glorified in the Son.

Oppose Jesus' extreme faith doctrine, and you're against discipleship, joy, good works, and God's glory.

The scale and degree of things you can ask in faith are without limit. (We obviously do not mean asking for sins.). Jesus worked all sorts of miracle, healings, prophecies, transmutation and multiplication of material substance, paying for tax with free money etc. Jesus says we can do more of these and even greater types of these and by extension, even ones He did not do. Thus, even if the gifts of the Spirit have ceased, this teaching of Jesus from this passage would make all applications of the gifts of the Spirit available to by faith and prayer. As Vincent concludes, cessationism is therefore a pointless doctrine. Even if true, it would be a point of logical irrelevance, because by faith we get all the things the gifts offer.

In addition to this passage in John, Jesus also says the same thing in a different way in Matthew 17:20, Matthew 21:21 and Mark 11:23.

"Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, 'Why couldn't we cast out that demon?'"

You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. "I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it would move. Nothing would be impossible,'" (Matthew 17:19-20 NLT).

"Jesus replied, 'Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. 22 If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer,'" (Matthew 21:20-21 NIV)

"Then Jesus said to the disciples, 'Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you have received it, it will be yours,'" (Mark 11:22-24 NLT).

Matthew, in his gospel, records Jesus' teaching twice. In chapter 17, the focus is on unbelief. The disciples asked why they couldn't cast out a demon, and Jesus, the Extreme Faith Teacher, said it was their unbelief, not God's will. Jesus says if you have faith, you can speak to a mountain, and it will move into the sea—a direct

supernatural correlation, impossible to spiritualize differently. Jesus spoke to a demon, it left, and the boy was healed. He says if you speak to a mountain with faith, it will move. Unbelief stops this; faith makes it happen, whether it's a demon or a mountain.

Jesus emphasizes man's will and faith as the reason demons and mountains obey. Post-resurrection, the New Testament church follows suit. Jesus, now on His permanent throne, changes nothing until He returns. Peter, baptized in the Spirit, used Jesus' name to heal a cripple in Acts 3, attributing it to faith in Jesus. It was about faith in Jesus' name (John 13-16) and not about a gift of the Spirit. The doctrine from Matthew 17 and 21, therefore, remains unchanged. We still have that Name.

Jesus stressed, "Nothing will be impossible for 'you.'" Luke 17:6 clarifies "you" means "us," not "God." The disciples failed due to unbelief, but with faith, Jesus says they can do it—nothing will be impossible for them. He extends this to trees and mountains: "It will obey you." Jesus bets on you and so don't bench yourself.

On social media, "Bible verses of the day" accounts often emphasize "nothing is impossible for God"—true, as the Bible and Jesus affirm. But Jesus also stressed that with faith, "nothing will be impossible for YOU." Why the theological shift? Jesus focuses on our identity in Him, enabling us to command mountains, demons, and reality as God's children. To wield Jesus' Name and authority, you must firmly believe in your God-given identity, rooted in His Word, which declares you righteous and authorized to use His power. A beggar, outsider, or sinful mindset cannot wield this authority.

Overemphasizing "all things are possible for God" is misguided. This focus risks instilling an outsider identity in Christians, seeing themselves as beggars lacking what's already theirs. Even demons acknowledge this—so what? Only God's children can truly say, "All things are possible for, ME." In Christ, we have Abraham's blessing—fruitfulness, miracles, and the Spirit—ours by faith. Being a child of God who commands mountains or demons is how God defines us, not something we lack and must plead for. If you're an outsider to God's covenant, then these good things are not your definition and reality. If you are born-again, it's already yours, accessible by faith. Jesus says "all things are possible for you" because that's your new-creation DNA. If that's not you, you're still outside the Covenant, and your only option is pleading for scraps like a dog.

You already got it.

In Mark 4:39-41, Jesus calms the wind and waves, asking his disciples why they are afraid and lack faith. In Matthew 21:21, Jesus tells his followers that with unwavering faith, they can do extraordinary things, such as commanding a mountain to be thrown into the sea. Luke 17:6 states that even with faith as tiny as a mustard seed, one can command a mulberry tree to be uprooted and planted in the sea, and it will obey. In Matthew 17:19-21, Jesus explains to his disciples that their inability to drive out a demon (and heal) was due to their lack of faith. He assures them that with faith as small as a mustard seed, they can move mountains and accomplish anything. Matthew 16:7-9 recounts a discussion among Jesus' disciples about bread. Jesus

questions their lack of faith and reminds them of the miraculous multiplication of loaves in the past.

I publicly proclaim bold promises.

I do not whisper obscurities in some dark corner.

I would not have told the people of Israel to seek me
if I could not be found.

I, the Lord, speak only what is true and declare only what is right.

Isaiah 45:19 (NLT)

We start this section with a presupposition that the Father and Jesus have when engaging men. The presupposition is if God talks about good things, no matter how awesome and wonderful, it is attainable by anyone who has faith. God is no respecter of persons. Small or great, it does not matter. If God promised to make Abraham's name great, give him supernatural health, and excessive fruitfulness, then Abraham can get these by faith, and it is very doable. It is like God commanding a plant, "if you gather sunlight and water, you will have food." In the context of a plant this is more than doable. God's precious promises and definitions for man, in context, that we more than able to walk in these excessive blessings.

Is moving mountains by faith hard? Is using faith on demand to transmute material substance and multiply difficult or high-level Christianity? Is using faith on demand to make reality obey you as its servant a hard thing to do?

Jesus Christ does not think so. In the above passages Jesus rebukes the disciples for not making reality obey you, multiplying material substance, casting out demons and healing on the demand of faith. Jesus' rebukes for doubting do not appear only at the end of His 3-year discipleship program, but start at the very beginning. Only after a little time teaching and showing examples, Jesus expected His disciples to do the same works. Think about that.

When Jesus rebuked the disciples for not casting out a demon because of their lack of faith, the presupposition from Jesus is that the disciples are able to do this. When Jesus rebuked the disciple in multiple applications for their lack of faith, His presupposition is that they can have faith to do these things. When Jesus said, "if you seek, you will find, if you knock the door will be open," and to pray and never give up because you will get what you pray for, the presupposition is that you are able to do this. Jesus would not said that if you bind something on earth it will be bound in heaven, if you could not do it. This is an encouragement. Jesus' presupposition means casting out sickness or mountains, in His Name, is some as attainable as a plant getting food from soaking up water and sunlight. When you read the New Testament, you realize doing miracles is an easy thing; it is only Satan and false tradition that teach the opposite. It is obvious why the devil is afraid of such a doctrine, but why do men conspire with him?

Imagine Jesus getting mad at you because your family member's cancer lingers after your prayer. You expect a pat on the back, but He calls you a spiritual pervert drowning in unbelief. That's exactly what He did to the disciples—publicly, no less. Would you stick with Him? Picture hosting a family, but your short seven chairs, and Jesus is scolding you for fretting instead of transmuting your armchair into extras. He chewed out the disciples for this kind of doubt. Would you still follow if He lit into you like that? Jesus hands out faith pop quizzes—fail, and He's not shy to call it out.

Yet the disciples grew. Peter's shadow later healed more folks than some denominations' entire track records. Healing got so simple he didn't even need to try—just his shadow did the trick. Jesus assumed healing and miracles were easy. The disciples matured, and their faith proved it—miracles became common.

This proves the critics of the health and wealth, who teach “name it and claim it,” are wrong, but they are wrong for the wrong reasons. The “name it and claim it,” does not go far enough in affirming Jesus' faith teaching. Peter did not even speak, his shadow had enough spiritual physics to heal. This is called “shadow it and be done with it.” Thus, you do not need to even “name it” to “claim it.” All you need is a shadow. All you need is to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus healed all those under the kingdom and torment of Satan. Holy Spirit empowered church members, even table bearers, did the same.

This presupposition might seem obvious, but false teachings or the devil's attacks cloud it for some. Take heart: God wouldn't promise these goodies if you couldn't grab them. He's rooting for you harder than you are. He promised them because He likes you—loves you with an everlasting love.

The sword of the Spirit? It's yours—you swing it, not God. Baptized in the Spirit with “power”? You wield it, not Him. It's in your hands. You've got authority in Jesus' name to tell demons and sickness to scram. As God's kid, you can ask for anything and get it— **You do this, not God.** These benefits, power, authority, blessings? **You already have** them. They're already yours. God's defined you with them; no begging required.

I recall Andrew Wommack saying in a sermon, “What if I gave you my Bible, and while you're holding it, you ask, ‘Andrew, will you give me your Bible?’ I'd think you're a few fries short of a Happy Meal and wouldn't know what to say. I'd probably just stare—the same God does with a lot of your prayers.” Andrew's onto something big. Too many Christians miss their full identity in Christ—they don't get that God's blessings, power, and authority are already theirs. So they beg for what they've got, stuck in lack and defeat. Stop asking for your own stuff—God's not your lost-and-found.

That's why Christianity, in many cases, is a Word of Faith Confession (“I am the father of many nations”) rather than a wish list to God. It's why it's a command: “Demon, sickness, mountain, trouble—get out!” You can't confess something true against a contradicting reality without power to back it up. You can't order something gone without authority. Jesus, the extreme faith teacher, tells us to confess and command because His power and authority are already ours to use.

When Peter, (even after baptized with the Spirit), commanded the man's sickness to leave (stand up), Peter did not speak to God about the problem; rather *it was more like Peter spoke to the problem about God.* Broadly, this Word of Faith command is just a snappy, no-hedge prayer. You know God's listening, and so you are flexing His authority, banking on His promise. In the most direct sense, *these types of prayers are spoken to the problem, and not to God.* For example, Jesus didn't say, “Speak to Me about your mountain, saying—‘Oh God, I'm nothing, help me.’” He said, “*Speak to the mountain—tell it to get lost.*” Jesus teaches we've already got His authority and green light to pray this way and see big results—to command and get what we want. If Christians skip this, they're disobeying and clueless about their identity in Christ. They don't get prayer.

The takeaway? When you face a problem, talk straight to it. Therefore, speak to your problems about God, telling them to throw themselves into the sea. Sure, praying to God about it isn't wrong, but Jesus laid out the playbook for these moments. It's Sermon on the Mount vibes—He's upping the ante on how we pray and win. Who am I to rewrite His rules? So, tell your problems about God—order them to dive into the sea.

Jesus says boss the problem, not beg the Boss.

Picture Christmas gifts with your name on them under the tree—already yours. Imagine grabbing one, then pleading with your mom, “Can I have this on Christmas?” She'd say, “It's yours—your name's on it—open it!” But you keep begging, gift in hand. That's how tons of Christians treat God in prayer—and why they're stuck losing.

Faith is agreeing with what God says is true. Begging and hedging your prayers? That's rejecting His definition of your new identity in Christ. Paul nails it in 1 Corinthians 2: the Spirit, who knows God perfectly, is given to us to reveal all God has “freely given” us. You don't beg for a labeled Christmas gift—you take it. You don't beg God for gospel goodies already handed over—you claim them by faith. They're yours. Stop begging for your own presents—unwrap and roll.

You do not beg the bank teller to give you your money when it is already in your account; and likewise you do not beg God to give you gospel blessings that have been deposited into your account by grace. They are already yours. Faith is your access or admission to retrieve them and use them.

Jesus didn't say, “God will feed them”; He said, “You feed them” (Luke 9:13). He didn't tell us to whine to God about our mountain in prayer; the most God-centered man ever lived, told us to speak to the mountain and make it vanish. Jesus didn't say God would cast out demons and heal the sick; He gave us the power and ordered us to do it (Acts 1:8). The Bible says it's not God who resists the devil to make him flee—it's us who resist, and he bolts (James 4:7). If you wait on some “will of God” to make the devil stop attacking and demonizing you, then you will die under the boot of the devil. You do it, not God.

Too many leave stuff for God to handle when He's already handed us the grace, resources, and authority to tackle it ourselves. They beg God for things He's already given—they act like He has spare miracles hidden up His sleeve, which He forgot to mention. This is why God stays quiet on so many of their prayers. How do you answer crazy talk?

Jesus says, “you are a certified demon hunter, why are you asking me to hunt your own demons. Kill them and be done with it.”

They shuffle up to God mumbling, “We're nothing, we've got nothing, please help us.” They act like beggars and outsiders to His Contract—like reprobates. But if you're in God's contract, you've got the legal right to stride up to Him as a prince of heaven. That same contract gives you authority to order demons, sickness, and mountains to scam.

When they say, “*We’re nothing and have nothing*,” God echoes Exodus 14, giving the Israelites what they claimed: “*Fine, because you said you’re nothing, then you are nothing, you are a sinful pathetic mess with no hope.*” Their faith in God’s Contract, sealed by His Son’s blood, is a dead faith. Commanding mountains and sickness to flee, seems pie-in-the-sky because they see Jesus’ blood-bought contract as too weak for big wins. They spurn God’s power and love.

Christians are like paupers crashing a royal party, too timid to claim their VIP status. God’s like, “I made you a prince, not a peasant—act like it and tell those mountains to take a hike!”

God gives them “strength” and He clothes them in the full armor of God. He gives them His shield and even His sword of the Spirit. But these same people will leave God’s armor hanging on the wall, the shield of faith in their closet, and the sword under their beds. Then they cry out for God to be a mighty warrior and come down to save them. It is not funny. It was not a suggestion for Christians to adorn God’s armor, use His weapons, and be empowered with His power; it was a command. “*Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.*” They cry out for God to be a mighty warrior, but God has given them the authority, power, and weapons to be a mighty warrior. God has given all Christians the power to be like David facing Goliath—no, He has given greater power. David said God made him strong enough to leap over a wall (Psalm 18), but by the power of God’s Spirit, Philip was transported to different cities. Imagine having to be in God’s place. He gives us power and authority, and people ask God to use authority to make Satan flee. He not only has given us this authority but commands us to make Satan flee by resisting him. “Lord, please make the devil flee.” How would you answer such a contradictory request? Imagine they keep asking over and over? Yet many Christians pray to God like this. They keep asking for things God has already given them. God’s answer is simple, “You resist and you make the devil flee.”

God’s decked us out with spiritual weaponry fit for a superhero, yet we’re over here stashing it in the closet like old gym clothes. Time to suit up, teleport like Philip, and tell Satan to scram—God’s already RSVP’d us to the victory party!

“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.”

Matthew 18: 18-19.

Christian: “How much authority do I have?”

God: “Whatever you bind, I will bind; whatever you loose, I will loose; whatever you allow, I will allow.”

This exemplifies what God has already entrusted to us. He has granted us the authority to bind and ask for anything, and see it done by His hand. This isn’t a privilege we lack and must plead for—gathering, agreeing, and receiving is already our identity in Jesus, our royal right. The ability to lock or unlock something on earth, with heaven aligning accordingly, is a power God has already bestowed. You don’t need a decade of Christian service, a hundred acts of charity, or a millennium of soul cultivation to wield it. Since it’s ours, we simply step into it. If something needs

binding or loosing on earth and in heaven, we act in Jesus' name—not grovel before God about it. If we desire anything, we unite, agree, and claim our miracles.

God basically handed us the cosmic remote control and said, “You’re in charge of the channels—bind, loose, and binge-watch miracles. Stop asking for the manual; it’s pre-installed!”

Take depression, for instance. Reports suggest it’s rampant in the church. Yet doesn’t Scripture address this? Paul endured relentless hardships—overwhelming trials—yet avoided despair. How? In 1 Corinthians 14, he reveals that praying in tongues “edifies” the inner man, fortifying a Christian’s soul with peace and strength. Why else would Paul boast of praying in tongues more than the Corinthians? He needed constant edification amid ceaseless suffering, so he tapped into the power God had given him. It’s so simple a child could do it. The Book of Acts shows this gift of tongues—for personal edification, not the congregational version requiring interpretation—appears available to all baptized in the Spirit.

God has thus equipped us to strengthen our inner being for peace and joy. Seasoned believers experience praying in tongues as a conduit to other spiritual operations and manifestations. It is a potent, underutilized tool. I can testify that in my own battles with depression, praying in tongues brought victory through power. Often, while combating sadness, fear, or despair, it led to interpretation—God’s direct counsel piercing through as my personal counsellor.

Paul’s like, “Tongues are my spiritual protein shake—keeps the soul in prime shape no matter the storm.” God’s given us this cheat code, yet half the church is still moping instead of letting God being their personal trainer.

Here’s a brief testimony.

The key is grounding yourself in God’s Word through continual study. Sometimes you need pastoral counsel, but deliverance hinges on POWER—God’s raw, unfiltered power. Praying in tongues is a gateway to that force, a glitch in the matrix that skips the grind and loads you with divine might. It is like a game genie cheat code to life.

The other day, I woke feeling off, head throbbing. Midday, a nudge to seek God in devotion hit me—confirmed by the Spirit. As the headache worsened, an irrational, oppressive fog clouded my mind, muddling memory and spawning baseless fears and accusations. I’ve prioritized inner strength for years; God’s freed me from old fears, sins, and more. As a young man, a demonic attack once terrified me—lacking knowledge or power, it filled me with dread. Vincent Cheung’s essay “Demonic Attacks” sparked my breakthrough.

But that day, those old fears surged back. So I prayed in tongues and declared God’s promises. At first the mental assault intensified; however, about 15 minutes later I felt a sudden power in speaking in tongues. This happens sometimes. You will be praying in tongues and suddenly, the power will increase. The bible says both the woman and Jesus “felt” power regarding the healing. There is such a thing as spiritual force and you can feel it. At that moment I heard the Spirit say, “*You are a child of God, these things are to be afraid of you, not the other way around!*” Immediately, all the oppressive thoughts and pressure vanished. And I felt power flowing into me. My headache was instantly healed.

Picture me, tongues blazing, headache raging, until—bam—God drops a truth bomb: “You’re the scary one here,” and hits me with power. Depression’s out, aspirin’s jealous, and I’m flexing spiritual biceps.

In a mature faith, a single word could’ve halted that attack earlier. We should all pursue such faith. However, while building it, show compassion to yourself and others by praying in tongues, unleashing God’s power to expand His kingdom. Vincent Cheung’s “Cure for Psychological Trauma” nails it: “Power is what will finally deliver you.” Studying sound theology and reviewing His promises lay the foundation, but it is raw power that liberates. Mature faith wields this power effortlessly. Praying in tongues is the simplest way to channel it into your soul, body, and life. Seek this gift eagerly—we need less chatter and more raw power! God’s power can redeem you, your family, church, even nations.

Yet people wallow in depression, crying, “Lord, help me overcome!” God’s already answered with the Spirit’s baptism and tongues. They beg for what Jesus’ blood already bought, and yet they ignore this free access. Jesus said the Father promised and gave Him the Spirit to pour out on us (Acts 2). Thus it is received by faith. And so, faith unlocks power and tongues, just like it unlocks forgiveness.

This isn’t to say we don’t cry out in distress—Elijah did, and God met him with rebuke, encouragement, and supernatural sustenance, turning sorrow to purpose. Scripture shows God’s eagerness to aid our sadness and commands persistent prayer. We obey, praying until answers come—seeking, finding, knocking till doors open. The promise is that the door will open. The promise is that we will find it. The promise is if we do not give up praying that we will be given what we ask for.

Why plead for depression’s end, if you will not use what’s already yours, which is praying in tongues for edification? It’s not the only weapon, but it’s delusional to beg God while too lazy to use it. God’s love shines in both: power pre-given and doors predestined to open if we persist in prayer. We’re rigged to win, the deck is stacked in our favor, because we have installed authority, and relentless knocking is always successful.

Consider God’s extravagance: divine power to crush depression by His supernatural lightning bolt. Yet Christians chase human fixes—counselors, pills—then grovel like beggars before God. What? That’s not Christianity; it’s a worldview blind to the Spirit and power. True faith embraces our identity as new creations in Christ. Outsiders don’t see God’s option of power, because they view reality by an anti-Christian lens. This anti-Christian view always sees themselves as limited and weak.

God’s tossing out free lightning bolts, like Zeus’, to all His children, and we’re over here popping Advil and whining. Christianity is a power trip and we need to own up to it.

And so, how would you answer someone begging for what you’ve already given?

“Wherever you set foot, that land will be yours,” (Deuteronomy 11:24 NLT).

God delivered Israel from Egypt all by Himself. They didn’t lift a single sword to fight—

God was the one-man army. Yet, after they were baptized in the Jordan River (as we are baptized in the Spirit), God said He would empower them. He commanded them to pick up shields and swords. God supplied the supernatural power—think obvious miracles and a divine GPS for their weapon-swinging hands. But here's the kicker: it wasn't God's footsteps that determined how much land they took—it was their footsteps. They had to plant their own boots on the ground and move forward.

However, this is also the place the leaders wanted to stone Joshua and Caleb to death. The leaders had no faith, but only fear. They were the whitewashed tombs of their day. They did not have the faith to produce miracles, and so the faith of Joshua and Caleb threatened their image. They complained, but still allowed God to save them from Pharaoh, but when God commanded them to work the miracles to take possession of the Land, they knew their lack of faith would be exposed. This is where persecution starts. It starts with the unbelieving church members hating those with faith. They are often more hateful and violent than those outside the church.

Imagine Joshua sitting at the edge of Canaan, crying and begging, "Lord, please give us this land!" How would God respond? Maybe with an eye roll and, "Josh, I already told you it's yours—get moving!" What if Joshua kept whining? At one point, God had to tell Moses to stop monologuing, shut up, and cross the Red Sea already. People pray to God as if they're still stuck in Egypt. But Egypt is a picture of Jesus' atonement. If you see yourself still in Egypt, you're acting like Jesus didn't die and rise again. After God saved the people from Egypt, He baptized them in supernatural power, and they, not God, marched into Canaan. That's how we advance His kingdom today. With every faith-filled step into the devil's turf, we claim ground for our inheritance and our Father's glory.

With every healing, faith declaration, supernatural prosperity, demon cast out and with every miracle produced by our faith, we claim ground for God's kingdom and increase our inheritance. If you are not getting answers to prayers and producing miracles by faith, you are not advancing God's kingdom (or at least not very well) and not increasing your own inheritance. This command to increase God's kingdom and increase your inheritance by faith, can only be done by miracles. You cannot fake it. This is why traditionalist hate God's miracle and healing doctrine. A whitewashed tomb cannot heal the sick and cast out demons. If you don't have the faith to tell the sun to stop, you will fail. If you don't have the faith to tell cancer to get out, you will die and give your money to men rather than God.

We don't "wait" for God to move, we don't beg Him to give, and we don't sit around twiddling our thumbs for a revival. We already have God's mighty power, rich supply, armor, weapons, and authority to march forward. If you are a Christian, you have the full kit—standard issue. And if we hit closed doors? We keep knocking, and our God promises to open them.

Andrew Wommack uses a great illustration: God's like a power plant pumping juice to your house. Want the lights on? Flip the switch. You don't call the electric company and demand they send a guy to flip it for you—unless you're auditioning for "Laziest Human Ever." God's the source of power, but we've got a contract with Him. It would be nuts to ask the utility company to send someone to turn on your stove, fan, and computer—that's your job. Same deal with God. We're not saying we've got the power innately; God supplies it freely. We don't force Him, because He convinced Himself to

give us His power. We direct His power and freely use the privileges, blessings, and authority He's already given us through Christ.

We pay the electric company to pipe power to our house, but in the gospel, Jesus both supplies and picks up the tab for all the power and blessings of Abraham. Only a lunatic would call the utility company every time they need a light flipped on, yet people treat God like that. He has already provided the blessings and power to do so much, and He commands us to turn on the lights, heat the stove, and boot up the computer. He asks so little! Flipping a switch doesn't mean I control the power company, just like commanding sickness to leave doesn't mean I control God. We've got a contract with Him through Jesus Christ—He's supplying the authority and power. It's on us to use it.

Jesus paid the bill, so stop acting like you're still on a prepaid plan with no minutes left.

Unbelief is so disgusting it turns people into slugs. Proverbs says a lazy man won't even lift his hand from the bowl to feed himself. Too many Christians are like that with faith and power. God has already handed them all the authority they could dream of, yet like the lazy guy who won't lift a spoon, they won't even grab the bread from God's table. Jesus called healing "bread" that belongs to Abraham's kids. But some Christians are so lazy they won't lift it to their mouths? Jesus said if you tell a mountain to move in faith, it will move. He showed us repeatedly to tell sickness to leave—and it does. But too many Christians won't even open their mouths to command sickness, demons, or poverty to hit the road. Do they expect God to come down from heaven a second time and spoon feed them and shove the bread down their throats? Do they expect God to force open their jaws and speak?

If there is sickness, then know the power to heal is already yours. Thanks to Jesus' finished work and your born-again status, God's power is piped straight to you—it's in your account. It's your job to flip the switch. Speak to sickness and command it to leave in Jesus' name (John 14:13). Jesus sat Himself on His throne in heaven and told us to be filled with faith and power to expand His kingdom and to increase our own inheritance.

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him," (2 Corinthians 5:21 LEB).

"Though [Jesus] was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that by His poverty He could make you rich," (2 Corinthians 8:9 NLT).

"Surely He has borne our sickness, and carried our pains... And by His stripes we are healed," (Isaiah 53:4-5 LEB).

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,' in order that the [gospel] might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, so that we might receive the [gospel] of the Spirit through faith," (Galatians 3:13-14 LEB).

Jesus took the ultimate 'L' so you could cash in the ultimate 'W,' therefore, stop acting like the check bounced.

When thinking about what we already have, consider the substitutionary atonement. In Jesus' atonement, there's an exchange—and it's already done. You don't beg God to swap your sins for Jesus' righteousness; it's a done deal. Jesus did it, and you confess it. All you do is believe—agree with God that it's true. Faith doesn't make the gospel happen; it taps you into what's already yours. Jesus has been deposited into your account by grace. Faith is your ATM card. You cannot withdraw what isn't there, but the "you already got it" doctrine, shows you what's in your account so you can use it.

Forgiveness? Already yours. Isaiah 53 says Jesus was cursed and crushed under God's wrath for our sins—past tense. 2 Corinthians 5 (and Romans 5) shows God did not decide for this to be a one-way trade: God decided that Jesus took our sins, and we got His righteousness. Hebrews says Jesus is sanctifying those He has already perfected. God is the only eyewitness that matters, and in His mind, the sins of the elect, which Jesus died, for are credited to Him, punished, and buried. He sees our rap sheet as cleared. We get a clean conscience and bold access to God because forgiveness, reconciliation, and adoption are already ours. Your sins got the death penalty, and because Jesus took the hit. The case is closed, you are free!

Children's bread (Matthew 15:26-28). Healing is already yours. Isaiah shows it was a substitutionary swap—stripes for healing. Verse 4 uses the Levitical word for "substitution," just like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). Jesus traded our sickness for healing. Matthew 8:17 confirms this was not some mystical or spiritual healing but what it normally means. When a Gentile woman begged Jesus to heal her daughter, He called healing "the children's bread." As Abraham's kids (Galatians 3), healing and miracles are ours as naturally as bread belongs to kids at dinner. Jesus said something similar about the woman bent over for 18 years. That is how God sees healing for us. If you are His child, the bread is yours. Does a kid beg loving parents for food? This faith only access to healing, is why the faithless hate it so much. They don't have the key.

Prosperity? Paul says Jesus became a money substitute in His death and resurrection. He died broke and naked on the cross—peak poverty. God promises a roof, clothes, and food, but Jesus had none of that. Paul's point in 2 Corinthians 8:9 isn't spiritual fluff—it's in the context of collecting cash for Christians; thus, Jesus was cash substitute. Jesus' poverty swapped for your wealth means you will have enough for your needs and desires, for tithes and giving to gospel ministries, and still have plenty of leftovers. It was yours the moment of His death and resurrection. Jesus did it, and faith withdraws it. You can only have it by faith, receiving it as unmerited favor. Remember that Money, even when supernaturally given, needs specific ways to get to you. God does not counterfeit illegal bills. It can be given. It can be a pagan wealth transfer, you find oil in the back yard, reap a 100-fold, get a big promotion, discover a new idea, or you can multiply material substance. All of this is available to God's children.

Excessive fruitfulness? Abraham's blessings included over-the-top abundance in every area—soul, body, money, job, family, relationships, ministry. Jesus swapped your curses for Abraham's blessings, including this jackpot of fruitfulness. God already considered your curses transferred to Jesus, and Abraham's blessing transferred to you. Curses have no legal right to attach themselves to you. It is in your account by grace—but it can only be accessed by faith. This faith only access is why whitewash tombs hate God's program, because it exposes their faithlessness.

Even sanctification is already yours. You already have the strength to fight sin. You do not beg God, as if you do not have it. Satan wants to convince you, that you do “not have the power to fight,” and so, “maybe God will give this power tomorrow,” and then the next day it is the same, “maybe God will give you new strength tomorrow.” You cannot win a battle, which you believe you are powerless to win. God promises in the new Contract that “He,” not you, will write His laws on your heart. Jesus was already your sanctification in His atonement. This already happened. It belongs to you like your DNA belongs to you. It is you.

Some are waiting for a power-up like it’s a video game, but fail to realize God already maxed out their stats.

Sometimes we face stubborn sins. We remember God’s love and power. God works in us to will and do. We need to lay all our burdens and cares on God so that He will carry them. We continue to renew our mind in His word. Through the baptism of the Spirit, God becomes our personal counselor. If we were dumb enough to allow the devil a foothold, it is His power that will deliver us. However, do not forget God already wrote His laws on our hearts. As Hebrews 3 says, we work to enter His rest. The “working,” is to rest in His finished work, and receiving it by faith. Jesus was already your sanctification, and you have already been born-from-above in a new creation. This new creation is a new mind imaged after the knowledge and mind of Christ. Your new identity came at your new birth. These powers and authority are yours. You don’t ask for them, you use them because they are already part of you. Faith grabs them and puts them to work. You are already strong in God. He is with you and He is on your side.

Knowing what is already yours is essentially the same as what some call knowing your identity in Christ. By knowing that you already have God’s strength and that you are a prince of heaven, sin will look weak and beneath your rank. And if you are struggling, then knowing God’s love, faithful promises, and power will cause you to boldly approach Him for help, and He will help.

As with all things in the gospel, fighting sin is not earned but received by faith in God’s unmerited favor. Paul says in Romans 6 that we are not under the power of sin but under God’s grace, or rather, under the dominion of God’s unmerited favor. In our past, sin dominated us, but now we are dominated by God’s unmerited favor. This does not excuse laziness. Like Joshua, we are to run to the battlefield and fight. What causes us to win is God’s power that was worked in us (He wrote His laws in our hearts) and His promise to work more and more power as we look to Him.

We are commanded to renew our minds. This presupposes we have the power to do it. God does not do this for us because we do it. We put off the old way of thinking and put on the new. Jude (1:21) says we “keep ourselves in the love of God,” and the context for how we do this is to build our faith and pray in tongues. We have the ability to do this. We keep ourselves in God’s love because God has already given us the tools to accomplish this.

This doctrine of “you already got it” is simply the application of knowing your identity in Christ. Our identity in Christ is a foundational doctrine rooted in metaphysics. The way you “apply” this doctrine reveals whether you have understood it correctly. When

we know what we already have through our identity in Christ, we apply it by using it, rather than begging God for something we already possess.

God has given you immense power, authority, and provision in your new identity in Christ. You should be so filled with power and faith that when you see sickness, your first impulse is to say, “Get out,” and it leaves; that when you see a demon, you say, “Leave,” and it flees; that when you face a physical lack of a material substance, you command it to multiply, and after it does, (there are 14 baskets left over); that when you feel stressed, you pray in tongues, joy fills your heart, and God gives you a tailored word to guide you; that when you need to make a house payment, you go to your backyard, grab a random toad, and pull out a gold ounce; that when you see a mountain in your way, you speak to it, and it vanishes into a black hole. If this isn’t your first impulse—if instead you “wishfully ask or beg God for help”—then you are immature in knowing and walking in your identity in Christ. You still don’t know who you are. You still don’t grasp God’s power and generosity. You still approach God as if you’re an outsider to Him and His Contract with you.

When faced with a mountain, Jesus didn’t tell us to go before the throne of grace and ask for help. No. Rather, Jesus told us to open our mouths and command it to move out of our way. This is radical for some, but for Jesus, it was Discipleship 101. The encouraging thing to remember is what Jesus presupposes: He assumes we have God’s authority and power to do this. What a wonderful God we serve! In faith, we can move forward with full confidence, knowing we have victory.

This isn’t to say we never pray to God by saying, “I need help with this or that,” because we are commanded to pray continually and to boldly approach God for assistance. What we’re saying is that when you understand your position in Christ, this maturity will lead you to correctly use what God has already given you. You will wield your authority and faith by speaking to sickness, troubles, and demons, rather than offering long-winded prayers hoping God might intervene.

If God’s sword is in your right hand, is it a correct application to beg Him for heavenly power? This is our main point. In short, stop groveling like a spiritual beggar when you’re already a fully armed heir to the throne—Jesus didn’t hand you a divine bazooka just so you could whimper for ammo!

“It makes no sense to knock on an open door, or ask for something you already have, or to look for something that has never been lost. [Asking] makes sense when doors close, when there is need and loss. Prayer reverses tragedy, meets necessity, removes hindrance. Prayer is God solution to man's problems.”³⁰⁹

Gabriel is correct. The fact that Jesus commands us to knock and the door will open, to seek and find, and to always pray for what we want without giving up presupposes that there are closed doors and hindrances blocking our progress in life, our desires, and our godliness. The way we face closed doors is to keep praying (knocking) until they open. When we are lost and can’t find our way, we seek (through prayer, praying in the Spirit, reading more Scripture, etc.) until we find it. We are to be like Daniel and pray to God three times a day, if not more. When Jesus asked, “Will the Son of Man really find faith?” (Luke 18:1-8), it was in the context of commanding us to pray and never give up. When you’re mature and know your identity and power as a Christian,

³⁰⁹ Gabriel Arauto. Google translate from Portuguese to English.

it's easy to see a sickness, command it to leave, and watch it go. But facing a closed door is more difficult because it requires patience, diligence, and constantly applying faith against all the fiery arrows of Satan telling you to give up. It's when we face closed doors that even the faith of a mature Christian can be tested. Mature Christians handle this knocking better because they understand how much God has given them and how deeply God loves them (Ephesians 3:14-21, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16). But God's chosen ones do not shrink back. They keep knocking, and the door opens.

In summary, this is a worldview issue. Knowing, believing, and walking in your identity in Christ makes you view the world in a completely different way. It can be a lack of knowledge, but it can also be that many so-called Christians are not truly born again, which is why their worldview is so limited, powerless, and blessing-less. They see themselves as limited because they only see themselves, without God. Jesus is just a slogan to them, and their true view of the world is filtered through their human limitations. God's elect, however, see themselves in and through Christ. Because they see Christ as limitless, they see themselves as limitless. Because they see Jesus as righteous without measure, they see themselves as righteous. Because they see how great God's love is for Jesus, they see how greatly the Father loves them. They see themselves in the world filled with God's power, blessings, privileges, and authority. The difference couldn't be more glaring.

If I were writing for the sake of emphasis, I'd go on for pages and pages about this because it's that important. However, I'll simply say that if you want to walk in the kind of victory and power you read about in the Bible, the above doctrine is foundational.

The Staff of God

"So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey, and headed back to the land of Egypt. In his hand he carried the staff of God." (Exodus 4:20 NLT)

When Moses worried that the Israelites wouldn't listen to him, God told him to throw his staff on the ground. It turned into a snake, and when he picked it up by the tail, it turned back into a staff. Later, in Exodus 4:20, the staff is called the "Staff of God." This is akin to the king of the Greek gods. Zeus had his lightning bolt, his weapon of power: "the lightning bolt of Zeus." He was jealous when someone's eyes lingered too long on his symbol of power. He didn't lend his lightning bolt out. Yet, with God, He freely gives Moses His weapon to use as his own. He even told Moses he'd be like God to Pharaoh. Notice how generous our God is to His children. This is important because, in Jesus Christ, we've all been given the Staff of God. Moses longed for this to happen, when all God's people would be given power from God.

Fast forward to when Moses and the Israelites were backed up against the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army behind them. Moses began a monologue:

"Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord Himself will fight for you. Just stay calm."

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the people to get moving! Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the

Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground” (Exodus 14:13-16). Moses was midstride in a monologue about God’s deliverance when God spoke. Moses was essentially trying to buy time for God to do something while they were backed up against the sea. Notice what God didn’t say. He didn’t say, “I will divide the sea.” No, God said, “You, divide the sea.” Are we to accuse God of not being God-centered? But I digress. This is like Jesus saying to the disciples, “You feed them.”

God interrupted Moses and said (in modern terms), “Why are you whining at Me? Stop begging and get moving. What’s that in your hand? Isn’t it the ‘Staff of God’ I gave you? This isn’t My problem anymore. You take the staff, and you divide the sea.” Moses’ mistake was thinking he was waiting on God to deliver them with a new download of power when he already had the Staff of God. He acted like he was nothing, had nothing, and needed God to come down and give some present or future help. But he already had God’s help. He already had God’s power grasped in his hand. God didn’t need to give Moses power to deliver them because He’d already given Moses His power.

It’s good to have passages like this because they remind us to “stop crying out” like beggars to God when He’s already given us the power and authority to command healing and make mountains move. God wasn’t happy with Moses’ flattering speech: “The Lord Himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.” Think about that. That’s some good theology. Yet, however good his doctrine was, God found it irritating. Again, think about that. Verse 14 is often quoted for promise verses, but in context, God didn’t like it.

Moses said, “God will fight for us.” And God responded, “Why are you whining?” Imagine if I gave you my car and you kept calling me to give you a ride to work. I might find the first time funny, but after the 78th call, I’d be irritated. “Why are you calling me about giving you a ride to work? I gave you my car. You need to get in it and drive yourself to work. Getting you to work isn’t my problem anymore; it’s your responsibility to drive yourself.” After a while, I’d think such a person is missing a few screws and choose to remain silent at their insane requests. As I’ve heard Andrew Wommack say in many sermons, “This is why God remains silent at many of your prayers.”

Jesus teaches a similar lesson to what Moses learned. When God has already given us the power, we need to stop crying out and start healing the sick, casting out demons, multiplying material substance, and making mountains obey us. Jesus said to the disciples, “You feed them,” regarding the feeding of the 5,000. Even though Jesus had to multiply material substance to feed the crowd, He expected the disciples to do it. He wouldn’t expect them to do it if they didn’t have the power and authority to do so. For example, Jesus was irritated when they couldn’t cast out a demon. He said it was because of their unbelief. Earlier, He’d already given them authority over “all” sickness and demons—“all.” Jesus expects them to do these things because He gave them the ability to do it.

“You divide the sea, you multiply material substance, you heal the sick, you make mountains obey you.” This doesn’t sound very God-centered, but it’s said by Jesus, the most God-centered man who ever lived.

Consider what Jesus didn’t say: “When you face a mountain, cry out to Me like a beggar and ask Me if it’s part of My will to move it.” No, Jesus said, “You” tell it to get

out of your way, and it'll obey "you." This isn't a mere suggestion. Jesus instructs us to command the thing to move. He's not teaching us to ask "Him" to make it go away but for "us" to speak in faith and make it go away. This is contrary to how many understand faith and prayer.

Jesus said, "You feed them." He didn't say, "Cry out to God to feed them." No, just as He told Moses to divide the water, Jesus commands us to "feed them" by making material substance multiply in miracle power. Jesus tells us to tell the mountain to move and make it "obey us," not God. God wouldn't have commanded Moses to divide the sea if Moses didn't have the power and authority to do it. Obviously, God is the ultimate power for all of this, but the issue is that, on the relative level, God has given His power to us. Jesus wouldn't have commanded us to make mountains obey us by speaking to them in faith if we didn't have the power and authority to do it.

Jesus commands this because He's already given us His Spirit and authority to do them. Jesus said He cast out demons (and healed) by the Spirit of God, not by His own personal Jesus power. This is important because He's also poured on us the fullness of the Spirit in the baptism of the Spirit. Jesus used the "power of the Spirit" to heal, cast out demons, and do ministry. He did it this way because He was a man born under the law. He became like one of us. Therefore, He ministered as a man, empowered by the Spirit, to do miracle-working ministry. He showed the elect how to do it. He's given us this same "power" and commands us to follow in His same miracle ministry (John 14:12-13, Acts 1:8, 2:38-39). So, Jesus told the disciples, and those with them, to wait until they were endowed with the same power of the Spirit.

In addition to this power of the Spirit, Jesus has given us the authority to use His name to ask and receive whatever we want (see John chapters 14-16). A shorthand way to use this power and authority is seen in passages like Matthew 21:21. It's praying with His power and authority without hedging. It's praying in absolute confidence in the power, position, and authority Jesus has already given us.

We can use this authority for anything we want because it's guaranteed to us in the covenant made in His blood. However, Jesus also makes demands on us based on this covenant. He commands us to expand His kingdom and tear down the gates of hell. It's not optional. We expand His kingdom and tear down the gates of hell with the same power and authority He used, which He's now bestowed on us through His finished atonement.

The big idea is simple. Every believer has already been given authority to use Jesus' name, and the baptism of the Spirit is a purchased gift for any believer to receive by faith. God has given every believer the Staff of God, just like Moses. These powers and gifts of authority aren't earned but given freely through Jesus Christ. They already belong to all Christians.

Moses wanted to ask God to do something about the sea, but God told Moses to do something about the sea with the power He'd already given him. Jesus teaches us a similar lesson. We cry out for God to do something about feeding them, and God tells us to do something about feeding them. We cry out to God to do something about healing them, but God tells us to do something about healing them. We're holding Zeus' lightning bolt in our hands, yet we're still crying out to God to move the mountain when all we need to do is speak in faith.

Imagine if every Israelite in Moses' time also had a Staff of God in their hands? It'd be like an army of 2 million powerful Gandalfs or wizards. Pharaoh's army would've been obliterated before they took their fourth step. This is exactly the firepower the true church of God has today in Jesus. But for the most part, they look like fools. There's an army of millions of powerful wizards with the Staff of God in their hands, yet they're bowed to the ground, crying out to God to give them some power. Despite their good theology in their cries, God is irritated by it. It's utterly pathetic. If they only knew what they had and how to use it, nothing could stand in their way in advancing the Kingdom of God.

This is what Satan truly fears. And he'll produce any false doctrine and tradition to convince God's people they're weak and sinful, endlessly crying out to God while holding God's Staff in their hands.

When you pray, believe that life-giving waters are already flowing out of your belly. Jesus didn't promise this would flow out of God's belly, but yours. See yourself in the spiritual realm like an empowered wizard in an anime movie. God's Spirit has already empowered you. When you speak in faith, power is released every single time. God and His Word are one. Thus, when you speak faith-filled words, you're releasing God; you're releasing Power. When you pray, understand that Jesus has already given you the authority to ask and command what you want. When you pray, you're not begging and waiting for God to do something because He already did something. It's now your turn to do something. He already gave you His power and authority. Use it.

Moses didn't walk on dry land until he used the Staff of God. Likewise, you won't see the victory you want until you use God's power and authority by speaking and commanding what you want. You're the one holding back your blessing, not God. You're the one preventing the dividing of the sea until you use what God has already given you.

God handed Moses His cosmic lightning bolt—the Staff of God—and told him to split the sea, not beg for a divine Uber. Jesus doubles down, tossing us the same Spirit-powered staff to heal, feed, and bulldoze mountains. Whining for power when you're already packing Zeus-level juice? That's a pathetic facepalm. Grab your Staff, speak faith, and watch advance the kingdom of God, for your joy and His glory.

If you don't work, you don't eat. Most, even unbelievers, understand this. Likewise, if you don't open your mouth and command what you want with faith, you don't get your blessing. Open your mouth today and start speaking faith-filled words.

There is a reason this falls under the ethics section: confession and commanding are conclusions from the higher level premises in the Christian worldview. In this worldview, God is sovereign. He has revealed how He has defined His creation according to His will. All things are possible for Him. So, what has God done with His limitless possibilities? He has recreated us in His Son, as His righteousness, as His children. He has defined us as possessing His power and authority, and the Son has poured the baptism of the Spirit on us. Our incredible new creation is possible because, for God, "all things are possible."

Since Scripture denies pantheism, so do we. God has made me conscious of my definition in Christ and has commanded me to walk in my new identity. God didn't

define Himself as being imputed with His righteousness—He defined me that way. He gave and defined me as His righteousness. God didn't define Himself as a child of God; He defined me as His child. He defined me as a co-heir with Jesus, not Himself. He defined me as being endowed with His authority, not Himself. He didn't endow Himself with power; He endowed me with His power. God defined me as having His authority to command sickness, demons, and mountains to flee and obey me. Therefore, God has defined me as "all things are possible for me," and "it will obey me." This ethical conclusion rests on God's revelation, sovereignty, salvation, logic and commands.

This means we can know with certainty that a person has fundamental ignorance or disbelief in one or more ultimate doctrines of the Bible if they don't conclude that we can command mountains to obey us or that, with the demand of faith, sickness will always be healed. This is based on the logic of *modus tollens*, or denying the consequent. If they reject this conclusion, they're denying a major premise (an ultimate question) of Scripture. There are other ways to discern if someone disbelieves a foundational doctrine, but this is one of the easiest and quickest methods. Arminianism is one doctrine that can muddy the waters. Though it denies the premise of God's sovereignty in the syllogism, it reapplies God's sovereignty narrowly to faith and receiving in the conclusion. Because Arminianism denies God's full sovereignty, it lacks logical confidence that faith can move a mountain or heal the sick. Instead, it illogically sneaks some of God's sovereignty back into the conclusion to get some prayers answered. It's sinful, rebellious, and stupid, but at least with this heresy, some people can still experience healing and miracles in times of need. With a heresy like cessationism, however, there's no hope for God's help, and you risk the added horror of committing blasphemy against the Spirit. Both should be avoided with fear, but of the two, cessationism is worse.

"For this reason I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted to you" (Mark 11:24 LSB).

Notice the past and present tense: "Believe you have received it," and then it will be yours. This ties into the conclusion of this section on "You already have it." The promises of God are so certain and truthful that when you pray with faith, they are granted. These promises are based on God "having already given you the blessings" of the gospel and you receive them faith. If they weren't already given to you in the gospel, you would need to believe God will in the future, grant them when He is ready, or when you have done enough good works, or some other nonsense. Yet Jesus, the ultimate faith teacher, teaches that when you pray in faith, it's granted the moment you ask. Thus, just one second after you pray, it has (past tense) been granted.

In short, God's already decked you out with the full superhero package. Arminians might fumble the logic, but cessationists ditch the cape entirely, but Jesus says you have the power, so pray in faith and watch mountains scamper!

Answer to Prayers is the Alignment of Christian **Ultimate Questions in Application**.

There is a school of philosophy that takes God's word as the first principle and then deduces its system. It rejects false methods of discovery such as intuition, sensation, and irrational processes and starting points. This approach is correct. In fact, it is the only correct approach. However, the followers of this

philosophy often fail to truly hold God's word as the first principle and deduce their conclusions from it. Their first principle is often their own philosophical theories about God's word, rather than God's word itself.

For this reason, most of them are cessationists. They would claim that knowledge comes only from God's word, so that prophecies and revelations are ruled out, even though God's word promises and commands us to receive prophecies and revelations. If God's word is their starting point, their foundation, their ultimate authority, then they would heal the sick and cast out demons. But they do not. This is evidence that their first principle is not God's word, but like their opponents, their first principle consists of their own assumptions about the world....

The Bible says I am the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). The Bible says God has commanded his light to shine in my heart (2 Corinthians 4:6). The Bible says that I am the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). The Bible says I am more than a conqueror through him who loved me and gave himself for me (Romans 8:37). The Bible says that I have overcome, because greater is he who is in me than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4). The Christian religion is a worldview of righteousness and victory. I was deceitful above all things, but now I worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24). I was desperately wicked, but now I have been born of God, and God's seed remains in me, and I cannot go on sinning, because I have been born of God (1 John 3:9).

If the Bible is truly your first principle, then this is what you would deduce from it. Or do you pay lip service to the "Bible" as a sound or a symbol, but regard what it says as rubbish? The reprobate mindset belongs to the unbeliever. It churns out a grotesque gospel. If you think like a reprobate, then you must be an unbeliever. If you are a Christian, then you must admit that I am correct about this. Now renew your mind (Romans 12:2).³¹⁰

Good and evil are defined solely by God's definition and actions. God has commanded this and done it; thus, it is good. To resist it is evil. This is like the forgiveness of sins and adoption. God commands us to repent and be saved. He wants it. We want it too. I wanted to be forgiven of my sins without having to earn it. I wanted to be adopted into God's family as a son—not just a sub-heir, but a co-heir with Jesus. God and I both win. God planned it to work out this way. God is so good. This is the kind of being we're dealing with.

To resist praying and receiving constant miracles that move mountains (like healing, relationships, productivity, and prosperity) is to submit to your own desires and reject God's will. It is evil. God commands us to be healed by faith and perform miracles. He promised it through Abraham and sealed it by cutting up His only Son in blood to ratify it. He wants it. If He commanded it, then He desires it. I want it too. I want to be healed and do miracles without earning it by merit. I want to do this by God

³¹⁰ Vincent Cheung. "The Gospel Guarantee of Self-Knowledge." from the eBook, Fulcrum. 2017. Pg. 49-53

empowering me on the foundation of His unmerited favor. God and I both win. God planned it to work out this way. God is so good.

If a church does not heal the sick (there should be no sick members attending), cast out demons, and teach the absolute sovereignty of God, it has no right to assemble. So what if Satan assembles with his demons? You are not allowed to attend. You're forbidden from partaking in the fellowship of Satan. Anyone who attends such a church shares in its sin and commits the additional sin of not exposing it.

A Christian does not have the right or privilege to assemble at just any church they want. They're not permitted to gather at a church that limits God or faith. If your pastor spiritually slaps your miracles down (with "if it is God's will") and smacks God's sovereignty (with "free will"), they are not your friend. You don't have the right to be abused. You are commanded to stand up with courage and expose it. At the very least, you're under God's command to leave and boycott (2 Corinthians 11:19-20, 2 Corinthians 11:4, Galatians 1:8).

Reality is God's personal playdough. He decided how He wants each part of reality to be and behave by His sovereign choice. He then causes each part of reality, moment by moment, to exist according to the definition He gave it. This applies to humanity in general and to God's chosen ones in Christ. God has molded and recreated His elect as He wished, by His definition. The difference between us and a rock, however, is that God has revealed our definition to us; we understand it and make a conscious choice to follow it. When it comes to faith and power, God has defined us with statements like, "Whatever you ask in faith, you will get it," "The prayer spoken in faith will heal the one who is sick," and "You will be endowed with power." To reject this is to reject God as a sovereign Creator and His definition of reality. It is a worldview issue. It is pointless to praise God for His absolute sovereignty while denying He is sovereign over our creation and definition by rejecting His commands and revelation about faith and power.

If you don't believe God will give you what you ask for, you're likely stirring up God's anger rather than His love. When the leper asked if Jesus was willing to heal him, we read that Jesus said He was—but He was also "angry."

"A leper came to Him, entreating Him and kneeling down, saying to Him, 'If You are willing, You are able to make me clean.' And becoming angry, He stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I am willing; be made clean.' And immediately the leprosy went away from him, and he was made clean" (Mark 1:40-42 LEB).

Jesus has a 100% record of healing all who came to Him. No one walked away unhealed. Thus, He had a 100% track record of being "willing" to heal. Yet the leper still had the nerve to ask if Jesus was "willing." If you ask and don't believe Jesus is willing and able, you're not asking in faith or with the respect He deserves. If you don't believe God will give you what you ask for, you're treating Him like a dead, dumb idol.

In brief, God's the cosmic sculptor who molded you for miracles; and so, ditch the doubters, skip Satan's sad church club, and don't tick off Jesus by asking 'if,' when He's already shouting 'yes,' from the right hand of the Power.

Some concluding Thoughts

Let us be Heroes of Faith. One of the clearest ways to see how God values faith and how man does not is seen in the story of Samson. When many preach about Samson as an ethical story to tell us not to be lustful like him, the Scripture preaches to us to emulate him and be a hero of faith like him. Why the difference? It is because what men and God value and the degrees of value are different. Jesus said, "*When the Son of Man comes to earth, will He really find faithful marriages?*" No. He said, "*Will He find faith?*" Jesus never marveled at finding a "faithful marriage" or someone helping an orphan. No. Not one time. Rather, Jesus marveled and was shocked when He found someone with "faith." This is not to diminish faithfulness in marriage, but even some unbelievers can be faithful in marriage and help orphans. But faith, that is extraordinarily valuable and scarce. No unbeliever can have faith, because they are unbelievers.

Faith is the greatest divider of humanity. It started with Adam, continued to Cain and Able, to Noah and Abraham and on and on. It slices mankind in half. Even with those who go to church and are professed followers, faith is still rare. This is why Samson is mentioned by name with Abraham, Moses, and David as a man whom the world was not worthy to have known. The world is not worthy to speak Samson's name on their filthy lips, because he had faith in God's promise, and they do not.

Put yourself in Samson's shoes when the 3,000 Judah soldiers surrounded him and told him to give up and turn himself over to the Philistines. These are his peers, and he might have known some of them. This is like a classic hero movie. There is the low place of the hero, and he is tempted to give up, often by his peers. But here are 3,000 peers telling Samson to give up. It is a hero movie on steroids. How many men did Gideon use to defeat an army? Only 300. If these 3,000 soldiers only had a little faith, they could have joined Samson and destroyed the Philistines. God heard their prayers and anointed Samson, thus they were praying for deliverance. But instead of trusting that God heard their prayers for deliverance and God's promise to use Samson, they were mouthpieces for Satan and tempted Samson to give up. Most cave in with just a little push from life and the devil, let alone thousands of your peers who should be helping you, telling you to give up. But Samson had something the world cannot defeat. It is so rare. It is faith. And with it, he killed 1,000 Philistine warriors with a donkey bone. He made donkeys out of them, through faith. Faith will make a mockery of cancers, empty bank accounts, devils, and troubles.

However, in the prison, he has more reasons, sensations, and voices telling him it's over: "*God has left you. God has abandoned you. You are unusable. God does not like you.*" When the smallest amount of empiricism and sensations contradict God's promise, people give up on God's promise in a second. But Samson had an unending onslaught of sensations telling him it's over and God's promise no longer worked on him. And yet, he did not doubt God's promise to empower him to judge. If a gospel-believing, Spirit-empowered Christian today could have half the faith of Samson, they would be unstoppable in healing the sick, casting out demons, reaping financial success, preaching the gospel, and tearing down the gates of hell.

I have often used Samson ("Why does the Bible mention Samson as a hero of faith to emulate?") to quickly test if someone thinks like the Bible or like a man. I remember one evangelist telling me they disagreed with the Bible because Samson is not someone to emulate and should not have been mentioned in Hebrews 11. At least he

was honest about his disgust of God when most lie about it. They only see that one pet sin they hate, like lust, and will filter the whole Bible through it. The Scripture shows that lust was not Samson's main or even secondary issue. But this is all you hear about the man, and so they slander him, and by extension they slander by bible. When a person is in tune with the Scripture, they value the things God values. God highly values faith. When that is the case, they will strive with zeal to be like Samson because he was someone God valued so much.

Samson is the Bible's brawny bad boy turned faith-filled hero. While mortals moan about his lusty misadventures, God gives him a heavenly high-five in Hebrews 11. He faced 3,000 naysaying peers and with a donkey-bone brawl He destroyed 1,000 Philistines. Samson's faith flexes harder than his muscles. Does the prison walls whisper of abandonment? So what? He is still God's VIP. Moral of the story: faith is greater than fidelity in marriage or orphan-hugging—just ask Jesus, who only marveled at faith (or the lack of it), not good behavior. So, channel your inner Samson, because the world is not worthy of his name, let alone his game.

It wasn't good marriages that healed the sick, cast out demons or boldly preached the gospel. No. It was faith. In God's eye, faith is the pear of great price, that He seeks in us. You can be just one face lost in a crowd of millions, but if you have faith, God will suddenly zoom in on you, above all others. You will have His undivided attention. Power will flow into you, and you will see God lifting you up by His mighty hand.

"Faith never waits to see before it believes. It 'comes by hearing' about 'things not seen.' It 'is the evidence of things not seen.' Faith only needs one thing: to know that God has spoken. This alone imparts certainty to the soul. 'Thus says the Lord' settles all questions. 'Faith looks 'not at the things that are seen.' There was no flood in sight when Noah built his ark. Stone walls had never before fallen down at the blowing of rams' horns and shouting. They were merely expecting what God promised. When they acted their faith by blowing the rams' horns while the walls were still up, this was their move. Then, of course, God moved in His turn, and down came the walls!" (94)³¹¹

"Faith always blows the ram's horn **before**, not after, the walls are down. Faith never judges according to the sight of the eyes. It is the evidence of things not seen but promised. Faith rests on far more solid ground than the evidence of the senses. It is the Word of God, which "abides forever." Our senses may deceive us, but God's Word never! (94)

"It honors God to believe Him even while every sense contradicts Him. He promises to honor those who honor Him. God has promised to respond only to the faith that is produced by and rests in His Word, His promise. Some expect to believe they have been heard as soon as they feel better. He did not say that He sent better feelings to produce faith and then healed them. "He sent his word, and healed them." God Himself "sent his word." We did not "worm" it out of Him. How absurd, then, to doubt it. Is it not more rational to expect God to keep His promise than to expect Him to break it? Really, nothing can be more ridiculous or absurd than to allow symptoms or

³¹¹ F.F. Bosworth. Christ The Healer. Baker House. 2000. 9th edition. Pages indicated.

feelings to cause us to doubt the fulfillment of God's promises. Suppose your child, after being promised a new dress, should sprain her ankle and should cast away her confidence for the dress cause the ankle was painful. You say to her, "My dear child, I promised to get you the new dress. Can you not believe my word?" She answers: "But, Mother, my ankle still hurts; it doesn't feel a bit better; it seems to be getting worse."

How absurd is such reasoning. Now if it be absurd to doubt one promise because of pain, then it is equally ridiculous to doubt any promise. Suppose again, that after you promise her the new dress, she runs to the mirror to see if she looks any more "dressed up." She then says: "I cannot see any difference; I do not look a bit better"; and then gives up the idea of having a new dress.

To learn how to believe that God hears us when we pray is a much greater blessing than is the healing itself. Then the prayer of faith can be repeated ten thousand times, for ourselves and others.

In this way our whole life can be spent in obtaining the fulfillment of divine promises. We have seen how Abraham experienced a miracle; and God says it is with us "as with Abraham." In this same way, we may all receive the fulfillment of God's promises, "*who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham*" (Rom. 4:12). (109-110)

"It is important to see that real faith is occupied with God's power and mercy, not with human weakness. God invites us to take hold of His strength. He says: "To them that have no might he increased strength." He also says: "Let the weak say, I am strong." It is as we obey Him, believing on the authority of His Word, that we have His strength. Even when we feel weak, His "strength is made perfect in [our] weakness." We must believe what God says in spite of how we feel." (114)

The End: "Do not Limit God"

My ending statement for teaching you systematic theology is simple: Do not limit God. Look from Mount Zion with our Father, on the balcony of His palace overlooking an endless valley. See Him stretch out His hand and say, "All this is freely yours and is available to you through Jesus Christ."

Do not limit how much He has forgiven, supplied, and empowered you. Do not limit God in how exceedingly, abundantly, and beyond He can give you the desires of your heart. Do not limit God in how healthy and prosperous you can be. Do not limit God with small miracles or small requests. Do not limit God with small dreams. Do not limit God with what men say He cannot do. Do not limit God with human sensations. Do not limit God with what your eyes can see. Do not limit God in how excessively fruitful He can make every part of your life become. Do not limit God in how powerful the Spirit is able to make you. Do not limit God by limiting what faith can accomplish.

The gospel of Jesus Christ, with our new identity in Him and the blessing of Abraham, forces all Christians to reckon our lives to be like Gideon's. Gideon wanted to count himself out, even after God called, empowered, and appointed him. Gideon saw himself as the dumbest and smallest. Yet God empowers and glorifies us in Christ and tells us to march into Canaan and take the land. We cannot obey God while limiting how much He has empowered and authorized us to do. God has empowered you so

that all the things you once feared now fear you. But to make this happen, you must wield the weapons of faith and the Spirit. And the good news is that you already have them. All this power and authority is yours to use with faith.

In my experience, no matter how far-fetched a heresy may seem, it almost always limits God. The only exception is if the doctrine directly takes glory that belongs to God and assigns it to man. Because God's infinity is, well, infinite, and His sovereignty is direct and absolute, there is no bigger way to describe God and His ability than what the Bible teaches. Take, for example, the Mormon teaching on us becoming gods and owning a planet. Despite what it might look like, this is a slap in the face to God by limiting Him. Only one planet? You've got to be kidding me! Make it at least 100,000 planets, and then maybe the insult won't be so bad.

God will not give up His praise, and we will never be worshiped as God, but God has highly exalted and glorified man in the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:7, 3:22). In the next life, there is no limit to the good things God will give us. No man has seen or even considered how big it is. One planet? You might as well slap God in the face and be direct with your insults rather than play games like that. Reality, and even time itself, has been given to me in Christ, and you want to limit it to one small planet? Only a brain the size of a pea could think so small.

The lesson here is that all liberal theology—whether it's cessationism, free will, one planet, or evolution—directly attacks God by limiting Him, by limiting who we are in Christ, and by limiting what we are able to accomplish in Him. Because Jesus put no end to how much faith can accomplish ("you will do greater works"), we cannot err by asking too much or shooting too high. The only way to make a mistake is to shoot too low.

In a nutshell, don't put God in a box—or worse, a single measly planet. He's not running a cosmic garage sale with limited stock. Dream big, pray bigger, and let faith flex its muscles, because the only limit here is your imagination, and even that's too small for Him.

Take Your Choke Points Off

"But Moses responded to the Lord, 'There are 600,000 foot soldiers here with me, and yet you say, "I will give them meat for a whole month!" Even if we butchered all our flocks and herds, would that satisfy them? Even if we caught all the fish in the sea, would that be enough?'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Has my arm lost its power?'"
(Numbers 11:21-23 NLT)

God told Moses that He would feed the Israelites with meat (quail) for a whole month. Oddly, Moses' response was that such a thing was impossible, even for God. This is the same Moses who performed miracle after miracle and divided the sea with the Staff of God. This is Moses who, as God put it, was a god to Pharaoh. And yet, Moses could not believe God for this miracle food.

I remember Bill Winston in a sermon saying (as I paraphrase from memory), “God had reached Moses’ choke point. Moses could believe God for some things, but he could not believe God for this. Take your choke points off.”

He is correct. Even the heroes of faith still have choke points where they limit the Holy One of Israel. No one has perfect faith in this life, but it is our command from God to always live by faith and mature our faith to its greatest heights. Miracle food in large proportions, for some reason, was a choke point for Moses. It seemed impossible, even for God. God rebuked Moses and said, “Is My arm too short that I cannot do this?” or, in modern terms, “Is My power so pathetic to you that I can’t do this miracle?” Moses did not doubt God’s willingness to help but His power, and God rebuked Moses for this.

We often combat the abusive doctrine called “if it is God’s will,” and so we say, “God is always willing to help because of His love and because He promised to always provide if we have faith.” However, we can have choke points of doubt regarding God’s power. We might wrongly assume it’s about the topic of God’s willingness when it’s really about doubting His power. We all have our own dispositions, weaknesses, and strengths, so it will vary from person to person what might be a choke point of faith. I’ll try to use an example that might be more common to all. All Christians have faced those sins that more easily trip them up (Hebrews 12). What can happen with a besetting sin is that the experience can distort the mind to doubt God’s power to sanctify us.

If a person is blessed to have been ministered healing at their conversion, then asking God for healing would naturally be less of a choke point for them. However, they might find asking God for miracle money or transmuting material substance to be a choke point of doubt. Thus, we must find where we choke up with doubt and attack it as if it were a cancer on our heart.

I remember Billy, in response to Jesus’ statement that “anything is possible for the person who believes,” saying, “James and John asked for seats next to Jesus but were told those were already reserved by the Father. Therefore, we don’t know if our prayers will be answered because God answers them on the dictates of His own whims.”

We know that, apart from extreme examples that are categorically impossible or violate a command, there are no limits to what we can ask for. Even a fool knows not to ask, “God, I want you to make me immutable and infinite like You, or help me murder my neighbor.” The prayers we see answered in Scripture include resurrection from the dead, the multiplication and transmutation of material substance, healing, prosperity, military victory, relationship help, and the list goes on and on. Also, because we understand the blessing of Abraham (which we have in Jesus)—which includes prosperity, supernatural health and healing, military victories, fame, glory, and excessive fruitfulness in all parts of life—we know that Jesus’ command to ask for anything and get anything means what it means.

Billy’s response to prayer is an example of a person who doesn’t merely have a choke point or two, but who chokes at the entire idea of God helping and blessing them. This is a reprobate mindset. Such a person views God as if He were an outsider. They view God as if they have no covenant with Him. The idea of Jesus’ contract in blood is to remove any “case-by-case” situation. An insider status with God means that we always know how God will relate to us. An outsider status means we do not know how God

will relate to us because it's decided on the whim of God's choice, case by case. For example, a husband does not decide to love his wife on a day-by-day decision; no, the contract of marriage means you have made a promise to remove the case-by-case and will always love them. God has removed the case-by-case and has promised that if we have faith, we will receive what we ask for. This love is only promised to those with whom God is contracted. Outsiders of this contract do not have this privilege.

This contract, therefore, is able to remove all choke points for those with insider status with God. We already know from the example of the Gentile woman that, even without contract status, faith gives you access to what you ask for. God has a standing contract with faith. However, in our contract with Jesus, God cuts up His only Son in a bloody mess and says, "I will do what I promise." There is no room for doubting.

Removing our choke points is essential if we want to fully obey biblical expansionism in our lives. If we want maturity in expanding our own lives in righteousness, power, and visions, and in expanding the Kingdom of God, we must remove any points of doubt. And doubt here is the key word. Jesus said if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you will command a mountain to move, and it will obey you. Any Christian who has lived a few years and has been working on renewing their mind has more than a mustard-seed-sized faith. The reason they do not see answers is because of doubts that get mixed in with their faith. It's not that they have no faith, but the doubts mixed in are stopping the manifestation. The ins and outs of that are for another time; however, remember as you are attacking and removing doubts, do not forget that the main focus is always Jesus and His promises, not constant inward self-evaluation.

We must not put any limits on who we are in Christ and what we can accomplish by faith. Choke points can happen in places such as our vision for our lives. A Christian by faith might finally be out of debt and able to afford a nice home for his family. They even saw some miracles in finances where God helped. They're coasting, and life is good. However, when they were 17, God gave them a dream for a ministry and a business that reaches millions of people, and this is still a choke point for them. Some might be enjoying a big house and a family that loves God. But God's Word reminds them if they had enough money to buy 10 big houses, they could give that to godly ministries to help fund the gospel, and for them, this financial amount could be a choke point. If we take our eyes off ourselves and think about what we could do for the advancement of God's Kingdom, there is always more power, finances, and miracles than what we are currently able to do. But God is full of grace. If you seek to believe with no fear, you will find it.

Lastly, if you want to take off the limits and choke points, then you will need to say something with your mouth. Jesus said you will "say" to this mountain. Look at the heroes of faith, like Abraham and David. They spoke a confession of confidence in the promise of God. We believe, and so we speak. Do not just look at a choke point—speak to it. Say something. Speak the promises of God. Your faith confession is like Moses with the Staff of God. Your staff is your confession in God's Word. Say it. Tell it to get out of your way. Tell the sickness to leave.

Moses hit a choke point bigger than a quail buffet, but God's arm isn't limited—and so neither should your faith be limited. Doubt is the real buzzkill, and God's power is the life of the party. So, speak to your mountains, swinging that confession staff, and watch God flex. He is not here to play small ball with your big dreams.

Paul summed it up well: God answers our prayers exceedingly, abundantly, and beyond all that we ask or think. This is how an insider to God thinks about the world and what is available to them in Christ.

I will end this with an encouragement from Vincent Cheung that I have re-read many times.

Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God.” (Mark 11:22)

Jesus referred to faith as a topic in itself. He made it a subject of study. He was explicit about it. He was deliberate in teaching about it. He said to his disciples, “Have faith in God.” In other places, he said things like, “Fear not, only believe,” and “All things are possible to the one who believes,” and “According to your faith be it unto you.” Each of these statements is a sermon in itself. Think about what he said.

God wants us to live life thinking that there is no reason to fear, but that we should have faith only. God wants us to live life thinking that all things are possible to the one who has faith. And when Jesus said that, he was referring to a miracle, to something superhuman and supernatural. If someone disagrees with this, he disagrees with Jesus Christ. He disagrees with a central and obvious doctrine of the gospel. Take notice of him, because this person is a servant of the Faithless. Remove him from your life.

And God wants us to live life thinking that we can have whatever we believe that he will do for us. We cannot use God as an excuse for our failures and our sicknesses. We cannot claim to be victims of some unknown decree of God. No, Jesus said, what you believe God will do to you is what he will do to you. This is God’s will. This is God’s decree. When he said this, he was referring to miracles, to supernatural blessings and events. What you believe that God will do for you, even if it is a miracle, God will do it for you. This is the assumption by which we should look at the world and live our life.

You are never a victim. You are never limited. You are never doomed. You are never desperate. You are never alone. God will come to you. God will answer you. God will rescue you. God will heal you and prosper you. God will increase your spiritual power and fruit. God is the answer to all your problems. And beyond your problems, God will give you the desires of your heart. How can you know? Faith! The faith in your heart is God’s answer.³¹²

Defective Ethics

Harsh Rebukes

“Oshea, don’t be so harsh in your rebukes.”

³¹² Vincent Cheung. Have Faith In God.

Ok. I will just quote the Bible when I rebuke people teaching false doctrines.

Ezekiel 23:3,18 ,20 NET

They engaged in prostitution in Egypt; in their youth they engaged in prostitution. Their breasts were squeezed there; lovers fondled their virgin nipples there...

When she lustfully exposed her nakedness, I was disgusted with her, just as I had been disgusted with her sister...

She lusted after their genitals – as large as those of donkeys, and their [cum] was as strong as that of stallions.

Jude 1:10-13 NIV

Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct

—as [dumb] animals do—will destroy them. Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

Jesus, "Your bind morons." Matthew 23:19

Jesus, "Your father is Satan." John 8:44

Paul, "you teach a doctrine of demons." 1 Timothy 4:1

I could keep going but then the post would get long.³¹³

You Are A Child Of The Devil And An Enemy

Ques: "How do new covenant Christians understand and apply psalms 139:21"

Ans: 2 Timothy 4:14, Paul says, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds."

Acts 5:5-6 "You have not lied to men but to God." 5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last

Acts 13: 9-11, "Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand."

³¹³ For more see the book by, MINISTÉRIO PODER E LIBERDADE, called "Believers Also Curse."

Paul cursing Elymas (Acts 13:9-11), Peter's confrontation with Ananias (Acts 5:5-6), and Paul's prayer about Alexander (2 Timothy 4:14)—illustrate that the early church didn't shy away from invoking divine judgment against those who blasphemed the Spirit or hindered the ministry of the Word. Jesus' own words in Mark 3:29 about the unforgivable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit reinforce this. These aren't personal vendettas; they're responses to direct attacks on God's kingdom and mission. This shows us the imprecatory Psalms also apply to the church after the resurrection of Jesus and Him baptizing us with power.

The context is not about personal pet-peeves or personal hurts. When it comes to believers we are called to love and forgive each other as we have been forgiven in Jesus Christ. We are commanded to be long-suffering. We're commanded to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44) and forgive as Christ forgave us (Colossians 3:13).

However, the bible, even in the New Testament has a special place for those harming the church, and those directly hindering the ministry of the word and hindering or opposing the power of the Holy Spirit. In fact, Jesus goes out of His way to say those who blaspheme the Spirit will never be forgiven. If God will not forgive them, then I do not forgive either. Who am I to resist God? This would even have some application to governments, but because most Christians lose their minds over the subject I will reframe from this topic. I will only make one quick point. In chapter 4 the disciples ask for God to empower them to fight back at the Jewish government, who were trying to persecute them, by bold preaching, healing and various miracles. God approved of their request. One such miracle was an earthquake that broke prison doors. It damaged government property. The church ought to call on God to act against opposition to the gospel.

There are other ways to apply this, but I wanted to keep it short and on the applicable issue. Paul caused physical harm to a person hindering the gospel and called him cruel names. The Holy Spirit was the power that blinded the man, but Paul is the one who pointed the gun at the person and commanded the blindness, not God. Peter, by the Spirit, killed two people, in church. Paul prays, saying God will repay the coppersmith the harm he caused him in ministry.

Remember the Psalm you quoted? David loves God. Psalm 139 is a deeply personal psalm where David marvels at God's omniscience, omnipresence, and intimate care for him. Verse 21 arises in this context—David's zeal for God leads him to despise those who despise the Lord. Then says these wicked people mis-use God's name. In essence, David hates them, because they hate the God who David admires so much. It is fake love if you are not enraged at someone who hates and targets the object of your love. Imagine a parent who shows no concern when a person hits and abuses their child? You must have the same outrage over people who hate the God, you say you love so much.

In short: Psalm 139:21 calls us to love God so fiercely that we hate what opposes Him. The New Testament examples teach us to channel this anger by prayer and through the Spirit's power, not our own hands. We forgive personal wrongs but stand firm against assaults on God's kingdom. Because most do not have power or faith to get their prayers answered, they are left with two bad options. Just do nothing and make kindness your official religion, or become a political zealot. Neither is the way commanded in the book of Acts. When all you have is human power, your options are

limited to carnal outcomes. But if you have faith and the Spirit, a whole new world of possibilities opens.

Petition versus Dedication.

Prayer has two basic mode types: one is a prayer of dedication, and the other is petition. (Even praise could be categorized as dedication.) If you do one type, you cannot do the other. They exclude each other. You either do one or the other.

Dedication is asking God for His plans and will to be done.

Petition is asking God to do your plans and will.

It's true that sometimes we have overlapping desires. In our human relationships, even if there are mutual desires, if we want to be "sincere"—for example, in buying a gift for a family member—we will do all we can to buy the gift we know they want, not us. Therefore, if you are to be "sincere" with God in prayer, you must either offer a dedication prayer or a petition prayer and not mix them up. People will mix them up and play the part of a hypocritical Pharisee. They ask God to bless their will but, in order to appear humbler than they are, reverse their petition prayer into a dedication prayer by saying, "if it is Your will." Logically, such a prayer isn't even a prayer because the contradictory prayers cancel each other out. It's like saying to your husband, "I bought this dress for me, but not my will, but yours be done, therefore this dress is for you." Not only does it not make sense, it comes across as false humility.

You don't need to manipulate God like this. Pray with clarity and to the point. If you dedicate something like praise, time, money, or hard work to God's will and desires, then let it be just that. If you are asking God to bless your will and desire, then let it be just that.

God's will and plan is to bless your will and plan when they are asked in sincere faith, in accordance with God's promises. Because God gave promises to bless us, we know that God has already convinced Himself to bless our will and plans. He wanted this. If you have faith, the Father will give you what you ask. He wants to bless you. He likes faith. God does not like convoluted, contradictory, manipulated, or false-humility prayers.

Prayer's a two-lane road: dedicate or petition, no lane-switching allowed. Don't be a Pharisee weaving through traffic with a fake "Your will" bumper sticker—God's not buying it. Pick a direction, pray it straight, and watch Him deliver, because He's already RSVP'd "yes" to your faithful invite!

Ask and receive. It really is that simple. God likes this.

Ultimate Stupid Cessationist Arguments #1

Argument: "Miracles are to confirm messages from God. Jesus is the final message.

Signs already confirmed Him. No more messages are being revealed. Thus, there are no more miracles.”

This is like saying since the last episode of your favorite show aired, TV doesn’t exist anymore. Because typewriters are obsolete, writing is dead. If I were to forward such an argument in any other field, except Christian theology, I would be mocked and sent home. But theologians get away with it.

From childhood to non-Christians, workplace, and church, this must be one of the dumbest things I have ever heard.

For the sake of argument, let’s say sign gifts have ceased. So what? What logical relevance does that have to healing and miracles on demand of faith? It has no connection whatsoever. Just because a pizza doesn’t have olives doesn’t mean it stops being a pizza.

This is part of the informal fallacies relating to division and composition. Just because something is true of a part doesn’t mean it’s true of the whole.

Jesus healed the lady bent over for 18 years, saying it was “necessary” because “she was a daughter of Abraham.” Jesus’ statement means healing miracles are part of Abraham’s blessing, guaranteed to His descendants of faith. Jesus says this healing isn’t about confirming a message but about being faithful to an old promise of favor and blessings—two different categories. Jesus’ word to the gentile woman, “to take the children’s bread,” shows He saw healing as part of Abraham’s blessing to be freely given away, not to confirm a message. Paul argues something similar in Galatians 3, saying this blessing includes miracles and the Spirit. Thus, even after the advent of Jesus’ atonement, Paul says the blessing of Abraham is still in full force, which includes the Spirit (Baptism of the Spirit) and miracles. Even the cross of Jesus didn’t replace this promise—it only made it available to Gentiles.

Paul speaks of miracles in Galatians 3 as if they’re a common thing. Thus, common miracles are based on Abraham’s blessing, secured by Jesus’ atonement. This means even if sign gifts have stopped, and even if the gifts mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12-14 have stopped, the point is logically irrelevant to saying miracles are a common experience, because God being faithful to His promise to Abraham still stands. God hasn’t ceased fulfilling His promise to Abraham.

Jesus healed folks not just to prove a point but because they had a VIP pass from Abraham. Healing is like a spiritual inheritance, not just a divine marketing strategy. Think of miracles like family heirlooms, not limited-edition soda drinks. Miracles are part of the package deal with Abraham’s blessing, and they’re still part of the children’s DNA post-Jesus. It’s like saying the warranty on your car is still good even if the company launched a new model this year. Just because I got Spotify to stream Elvis doesn’t mean when I tune my FM radio, there’s nothing but static.

The only way for miracles to stop being a common experience for Christians is if God ceases His promise to Abraham. God would have to rip out Abraham’s blessing from the DNA of Abraham’s children for miracles on the demand of faith to stop. Jesus also says in John 14 that whoever believes in Him will do His miracles by faith—and even greater ones. Jesus makes such miracles in this passage about common discipleship faith, not gifts or signs. In this passage, Jesus says, “by asking anything and getting it,” it gives us joy and greatly glorifies the Father. Jesus mirrors the same extreme

faith teaching in places like Matthew 21:21. The sign gifts have no logical relevance to this. None.

And so, anyone who believes will do miracles—even bigger ones. No special gift required, just faith.

Dinosaurs were animals.
Dinosaurs have ceased,
therefore, animals have ceased.

People would never be so shameful or careless in normal speech to say something so irrational; yet, they'll dare to play such games with God's word. When a person handles God's word so demonically, it becomes an autobiographic mirror of their hearts.

Cessationists argue miracles retired with Jesus' finale, but that's like saying the pizza joint closed because they ran out of olives. Miracles aren't just God's old PR stunts—they're Abraham's family heirlooms, still cashing in on faith's demand. Sorry, theologians, your logic doesn't mean the zoo's empty.

Stupid Cessationism Argument #2

Jackie: *"Person 'X' says they believe in faith for miracles, but their spouse died of cancer, and (etc.). Thus, healing on the demand of faith is not true."*

Oshea: My math teacher made a few addition and division mistakes in class; therefore, addition and subtraction are not always correct. LOL!! If you think your argument is any less stupid, then you're delusional. Also, for your examples to be taken as a truth claim, you'd need to provide proof that empiricism as an epistemology yields truth and that induction/observation, despite being irrational, leads to valid conclusions. But Scripture rejects both empiricism and induction as methods to know truth. Therefore, I also reject empiricism and induction/observation. If you make an argument that uses them, I won't proceed further with you until you can prove they yield truth. This burden of proof is on you to make. They're your presuppositions, not mine.

This type of critique is very damning to the opponent because it shows their extreme level of disrespect and arrogance toward God. No one ever thinks to themselves, "Because my math teacher made an addition mistake, $2 + 2 = 4$ is not always correct." I've never met people who apply this type of irrational logic with sincerity in life (even if some might act this way, it's not common in my experience). However, when it comes to God, they'll attack His word with it as if their life depends on it. They wouldn't dare apply this stupidity to themselves, their teachers, or workers, but they'll slap God with it. Such attacks are an autobiographical description of the type of person they are and how they view God.

When there's an addition mistake, we assume the error is with the person, not math itself. However, God's promises are no less exact, faithful, immutable, and unyielding than math is. Thus, when there's a mistake in receiving a healing, we assume it's with the person, not God's promise to do what He said He would do when we believe.

Jackie's logic is like flunking math because the teacher spilled coffee on the chalkboard—absurd! Blaming God's promises for human fumbles is as rational as doubting $2 + 2$ because your calculator's batteries died. God's word isn't the problem; it's the doubters who can't add up faith.

“That Was Them,” Exegetical Fallacy

“The power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.” (Luke 5:17 NIV)

It wasn't Jesus' power; the power came from God—or more precisely, the Father through the anointing of the Spirit. Jesus was baptized in the Spirit to begin His ministry. We know the Spirit's baptism on Jesus was for “power” because Jesus said He “drove out demons” “by the Spirit of God,” not by His own power. He didn't drive them out by His name, but by the power of the Spirit. We see again in our original verse that the “power of God” was with Jesus to heal. It wasn't Jesus' power, but the Spirit's power. Jesus came as a man, born under the law, and even ministered God's power as a saint does—by the power of the Spirit. Jesus says in John 14:10, “It is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work.” Jesus didn't use “Jesus” power and authority, but ministered the works of the Father through the power of the Spirit.

Thus, after His resurrection, Jesus commanded the disciples not to minister or spread the news immediately, but to wait in Jerusalem until they were baptized in the Spirit for “power.” It was the same baptism of power He had. It's like Elijah and Elisha and the passing of the mantle of power. Elisha received a double portion, and Jesus, in a similar way, said anyone who believes in Him will do greater miracles (a double portion). As a human, Jesus received the mantle of power by the baptism of the Spirit; He did the Father's works by the Spirit. He was the forerunner. He showed us how to do it. He then ascended to heaven and handed the mantle of power to us, for us to complete the works of the Father. We're baptized in the same Spirit to do the same works of the Father—except for the work of redemption. We're baptized in the same power of the Spirit to do even greater works, not because we're greater in ourselves, but because Jesus now sits on His throne and, in authority, directs us to expand His kingdom.

In addition to this, Jesus gives us His Name to use and ask for all thing things we want (John 14-16). It is because Jesus is resurrected and sitting at the right hand of the Power, that we have the Power and authorization to us His Name, to do the same miracles He did and even greater. To rebuke the idea that we have less power and miracles than Jesus or the apostle is to reject the resurrection, and to reject that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Power.

The book of Acts, is not about the apostles; it is not defined by men. It is about Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Power, empowering His entire body to advance His Kingdom. It is about the Age of Jesus on the Throne, and not about men. Faithless men make things about the Age of Apostles and not about the Age Jesus at the Power's right hand, because it helps to hide the fact they have no faith in Jesus. It is odd that these people who are man focused, keep saying phrases like “God-centered.” They don't know what they are doing.

This is why it's dumb to say, "Well, that was Jesus, and this is us, so we can't do what He did."

Jesus did not flex His own muscles; rather, He rocked the Spirit's power like a champ, passing the baton to us with a double-shot upgrade. Saying we can't match Him is like refusing the keys to the kingdom's hot rod, just like the Israelites refused to be empowered to take a land full of giants.

The Devil Is Making You Sick, Not God

I've heard the example that Jesus is the type of shepherd who breaks the legs of a straying sheep to keep it from wandering off. This might sound compassionate in some teachings found in Eastern paganism, but it's nowhere in the Bible.

Some have this idea that God's out there playing orthopedic surgeon with sheep, breaking legs to teach them a lesson, right? Well, not in Bible; rather, the Bible flips the script, telling us it is not God playing cosmic chiropractor; it's Satan who's out there handing out sickness like candy on Halloween.

Let me ask a simple question. When Paul handed over the man who was sleeping with his mother-in-law, who did he hand him to? Paul said he handed this man over to have his flesh destroyed so that his spirit might be preserved. Paul was handing him over to have his legs broken, so to speak. But who did Paul hand him over to? Who was the one breaking this man's legs? Who was ministering sickness? Was it God or Satan? Paul handed him over to Satan. The devil was the one breaking his legs and making him sick, not God. The sickness, on the human level, was therefore the will of Satan, not the will of God.

And so, Paul handed a guy over to Satan for some serious family drama, letting Satan do the dirty work. The point? God's not your sickness Santa; that's Satan's gig.

This is an interesting example because it involves an extreme type of sin a believer could commit. It is not normal; it is an exception. Another example is the same Corinthians dishonoring the blood of Jesus by mishandling the Lord's Supper. Paul was "disciplining" the man, and you could say God was disciplining him through Paul for a severe sin, yet God wasn't the one giving the sickness. It was the devil.

God is sovereign over all things, so much so that He is the metaphysical author of sin and evil. God controls our thoughts and predestines all things in the same absolute and direct way, whether it is faith or unbelief, reprobation or election. God controls all things, even Satan, more than a programmer controls how and what his program does. However, the Bible denies pantheism, and it mostly deals with us on the human or relative level. Thus, Jesus didn't say, "It was God's will that healed this boy or blind man." No, He said, "Your faith saved you from your sins, and your faith healed you." We will do the same.

Even in the story of Job, who didn't have the New Covenant or Abraham's blessing, God wasn't the one who ministered sickness and destruction. It was Satan. God is sovereign, in that He was the one who mentioned Job to Satan, essentially enticing

Satan to go after Job. God orchestrated the whole thing. But it was Satan who ministered the sickness, not God. Thus, the sickness was the will of Satan, not the will of God. A similar situation occurred with King David. Scripture says it was both God and Satan who caused David to sin by taking a census. These address two different categories: God is the only real cause, but on the human level, it was Satan who ministered the sin, not God.

Therefore, even in Job's case, where God's like the director of a reality show called "Temptation Island," it is still Satan swinging the wrecking ball. And Jesus? He is not going around saying, "Here is a cold for your sins." Nope, He is all about, "Your faith got you covered—now walk it off."

The woman who was bent over for 18 years—who did it? Did Jesus Christ say it was the will of God? No. Jesus said it was the will of Satan. Satan ministered the sickness, and God, being faithful to the promise He made to Abraham, was ministering the healing. In fact, in Acts 10:38, Peter says it was the devil who was ministering sickness to all the sick people in the Gospels, and Jesus was the one ministering the healing. The devil is a priest to the darkness, so his ministry is one of sin and sickness. Jesus is a high priest to God, so His ministry is righteousness, wealth, and healing. He doesn't minister sin or sickness; He ministers healing and miracles. If you're an insider to Jesus, He ministers good things, not evil things.

Some might bark up and say, "But God does sometimes give sickness." This is true, as far as it goes, but there is an important context. What category of people does God give sickness to? The answer is God's enemies. God didn't send Satan to kill the firstborn of Egypt—no, He sent His angel. Why the sudden change? The category is different. Egypt is not a covenant insider to God; Egypt is God's enemy, and He is there for condemnation and judgment. It's personal for Him. He wants to destroy them Himself and not use something like the devil. God cursed the Philistines with cancerous tumors when they took the Ark of the Covenant. They weren't insiders; they were outsiders and enemies. Thus, God cursed them Himself. Their sickness wasn't the will of the devil; it in the direct and human level, the will of God.

This is significant because if you claim God, and not Satan, gave you a sickness, then you are identifying yourself as a reprobate Egyptian or Philistine. If you say your sickness is the will of God, you're claiming you are God's enemy. You're identifying yourself as under the curse of God. If God is giving you sickness, then indeed, God is your enemy, not your savior. He is attacking you, not saving you. Your immediate concern should be to be saved from hell, not healed.

There's one other category for sickness. Sicknesses come as a curse from the Fall of Adam and as a curse from the Law of Moses. However, in Jesus Christ, Paul says in Galatians chapter 3 that Jesus became a curse for us, so that in a substitutionary exchange, we get miracles and the baptism of the Spirit. We don't bear curses; rather, we bear the blessing of Abraham. Just as with forgiveness of sins, you receive blessings in exchange for sin by faith. If you doubt it, then don't expect to receive this exchange, as both Jesus Christ and James teach us. If you claim to have cancers and arthritis as curses from God, you are identifying yourself as still under God's curses and not under Jesus' atonement. If you are under the atonement, then you have been removed from being under curses.

If you are on Team Jesus, you're in the healing line, not the disease queue. Claiming God gave you the flu is like saying you're on God's naughty list—which, let us be honest, isn't where you want to be unless you are auditioning for a role in a divine drama.

This brings us back to the beginning. As a covenant insider, God doesn't minister sickness; He ministers healing and miracles. Sickness only comes to me in two ways: one is by Satan, and the other is by curses. I've been redeemed and rescued from both.

This is important because if you realize sickness is Satan's will, not God's, and comes from Satan, not God, you are not only freed to fight it but commanded to fight it. When Jesus says to cast out demons, it is not a suggestion from a spiritual guru—it is a command. When the Bible says to resist Satan and make him flee, it is not a suggestion but a command. Even if the sickness is from Satan as a discipline from God, as James says in chapter 5, with faith I will be healed, and I will be forgiven. Because it is Satan's will, not God's—even if it's in the context of discipline—the command to cast out Satan, resist him, and make him flee is a standing command from God. You are to always do this, and therefore, it is always God's will for your healing, as much as it is God's will for you to cast out Satan.

Therefore, you don't have the freedom to allow Satan to bulldoze over you with sickness, no matter the context. You always have the standing command to make Satan and the sickness go away. You are commanded to be victorious over the kingdom of darkness. You don't have the right, as a soldier of God's kingdom, to allow the kingdom of Satan to beat you. You are commanded to expand God's kingdom with truth and power. They are the ones who back up from attacks, not you. The only way to do this is with faith and power. You must take the authority and power of God and expand His kingdom by healing the sick, casting out demons, and commanding mountains to get out of your way.

In conclusion, if you're sick, blame Satan, for he is your unwanted health advisor. As a card-carrying member of the Jesus Club, you're commanded to kick Satan to the curb, resist like you are in a cosmic tug-of-war, and heal like you have got divine health insurance. Remember, in this divine comedy, you are strengthened to be the victor, not the victim.

God's not the leg-breaking shepherd or the sickness fairy—that's Satan's twisted side hustle. While God's directing the cosmic show, Satan's the one doling out flu shots to the naughty. But if you are in Jesus' VIP club, you've got a standing order to evict the devil and claim your healing—because in this divine sitcom, you are the hero, not the punching bag. As Jesus says in John 9:3, it wasn't God sovereignly causing the man to be born blind that glorified God, but the healing of the man that displayed the work and glory of God. Be like Jesus. You being the hero, is what brings God great glory and honor (John 15:7-8). You being steamrolled by Satan and his will of sickness, will give glory to Satan, not God. If you allow sickness to continue you are complicit allowing glory that belongs to God and giving it to Satan.

Sickness Is Satan's Glory, Not God's

The Arminians are wrong about God's sovereignty. God does directly and absolutely control and predestine all things. However, this is about ultimate metaphysics, which the Bible only mentions a little, while it mostly talks about the human level. That is the level where God commands us, relates to us, and where we deal with things day-to-day; it is how the Bible mainly speaks to us. We will follow that pattern here. Not talking this way most of the time means not talking like the Bible.

God says in Isaiah 54:15, "*They will surely gather against you, but not by Me.*" He quietly assumes His own sovereignty but speaks straight to us on our level. God is more God-centered than anyone, and He has no problem saying, "*I didn't cause them to gather.*" Jesus, the most God-centered man ever, said about both healing and forgiveness, "*Your faith saved you.*" In Acts 10:38, Peter says all the sick people Jesus healed were "victimized" or oppressed "by the devil." So, the Bible has no issue saying sickness isn't from God; it is from Satan or the curse.

This matters because if we think sickness comes from God, we won't fight it. That is one reason Jesus battled sickness so hard while tradition doesn't. Jesus saw sickness as Satan's direct attack on Him, His Father, and His people. So, He smashed it wherever He found it. The only time He didn't stomp out sickness—which Satan was causing—was when unbelief blocked Him. Think about that: unbelief stopped Jesus, but Satan couldn't. Jesus was a one-man wrecking crew against all the sickness the devil threw around.

So, sickness is Satan flipping the bird at Jesus' atonement. Healing is Jesus slamming His fist into Satan's face, again and again. There's a real war here. As Jesus said, if you're not with Him, you're against Him (Isaiah 53:4-5, Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38).

In the substitutionary atonement, Jesus took 39 stripes in exchange for our healing. It is already done. In the Father's mind, He decided our sicknesses were taken off us and put on Jesus as those 39 stripes. Jesus carried our sickness in our place. The verse before, as the Spirit explains through Matthew, says He "bore" (*nasa*) or took our sicknesses and diseases away. It is the same word used in verse 12 for Jesus bearing our sins, and in Leviticus 16 for the scapegoat, when the high priest transferred the people's sins to it, and it carried them off into the desert. It is a word for substitutionary atonement, and Isaiah 53 applies it to our sickness and healing.

Yet, many pin sickness on God—not just in the ultimate metaphysical or decree sense, but on the human, relational level. That is wrong. In our New Covenant with God, sealed by oath and blood, God promises to always deal with us in certain ways. We are promised forgiveness, imputed righteousness, but also healing, the blessing of Abraham, and constant good—like a fish for a fish, healing for healing. If Jesus is my High Priest and mediator forever, He doesn't switch in and out of that role. If He gave me sickness, He would be a minister of sickness in His ministry to me. If Jesus gives sickness, then His gospel ministry is one of pain and torment. But Jesus is only a minister of healing—He takes sickness away; He doesn't hand it out.

This last point stands out in one example. Jesus sometimes told certain Jews or crowds they weren't Abraham's children because they refused to believe—proof they did not belong. So, it's a big deal when He calls someone a child of Abraham. Take the woman bent over for 18 years. Jesus said she was a child of Abraham—not an outsider, but part of the blessings in God's covenant with Abraham. In that context,

He said Satan made her sick, not God. God's covenant with Abraham included supernatural healing, not sickness—it was the opposite. So, in God's relationship with her, Satan delivered the sickness, not God. Jesus used the Abraham covenant as the reason she had to be healed, saying it was necessary—not just a nice idea, but a must. God keeps covenants; He doesn't break them. The covenant with Abraham must include healing, or it wouldn't be necessary for Jesus to heal her.

Because she had a standing covenant with God for healing, and because Satan gave her sickness as a curse and middle finger against God's kingdom, Jesus wiped it out. Unless we see things like Jesus did, we won't hit sickness hard with God's healing power. If someone doesn't get their insider status with God—or that sickness is Satan's attack to ruin them and, by extension, a middle finger to God's kingdom—they will let Satan roll right over them. They will accept his attack, slap a “for God's glory” label on it, and call it a day. That's demonic.

When Satan attacks someone with sickness, it sidelines a Christian and stalls God's kingdom. As with warfare, an injured soldier also takes other soldiers away from the front lines to help carry and tend to the injured one. This is why in war it's often better to injure more than to kill. Satan plays the same war game tactics with Christians by attacking them with sickness. Just as injuries in our army are the glory of the enemy, sickness in Christians is Satan's glory, not God's.

A person's mind is seriously broken when they can't tell good from evil, God's glory from Satan's. When a so-called Christian doesn't attack sickness with God's healing power, they're letting Satan hammer God's kingdom—and they're okay with it.

Sickness is not God's autograph—it's Satan's victory lap. Jesus did not just patch up boo-boos; He threw haymakers at the devil's disease factory. If you are calling it “God's will” while Satan's racking up points, you are not just off-script—you're cheering for the wrong team in this cosmic cage match.

Not Chasing Prophecy, is Not Chasing God

“Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles.”
(1 Timothy 1:18)

“This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.”
(2 Timothy 1:6-7)

Paul commands Timothy to remember, the scripture? No, he said to remember the “*prophecy*,” regarding his life in ministry, and to remember the gifts and spiritual power God conferred on him when Paul prayed for him. By remembering these, Timothy will be empowered to fight the Lord's battles and be effective in ministry. This is how God, not man, but how God sets people apart for ministry. It cannot be faked, or given by man's recognition. The scripture is assumed here by Paul. Why was the

scripture not enough to fight the Lord's battles? Because the scripture tells us to be baptized in the Spirit for power and to chase after spiritual power and miracles. This includes specific prophecies given to us, that we are to follow and obey. Without it you will fail to fight God's battles in life and ministry.

If you are going to obey God, then you cannot chase Him fully, without also chasing miracles and healing. The bible assumes you need miracle power, healing and prophecy to make it and be victorious. If you don't need God's power in such things, it means you don't need God; this is arrogance on steroids.

Lasty: Imagine me saying something so ridiculous as *"If you believe, no matter how big it is, it will happen, reality will obey you, demons will scream, body parts will be whole, and material substance will transform into whatever you tell it to become."* Yet, this is exactly what Jesus said. You can call Him a liar, or not God-centered, but I will not. Jesus is God. He creates, controls and defines reality.