A photograph of two men sitting on large, reddish-brown rocks in front of a waterfall. The man on the left is wearing a grey jacket and dark pants, and is gesturing with his hands as if speaking. The man on the right is wearing a grey jacket and light-colored pants, and is listening. The background is a soft, golden light, suggesting a bright, sunny day. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

READY
TO GIVE AN
ANSWER

RICK DEIGHTON

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READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER

by

Rick Deighton

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.”
1 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am very thankful for easy access to the powerful Word of God, and especially for these excellent translations used in the pages of this book. They are as follows:

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I am also very grateful to dedicated servants of God, who put their thoughts in writing to teach and inspire the rest of us. Those I’ve quoted in this book have their names acknowledged in the text or in the endnotes. The chart entitled, “How Is Man Born Again?” I received from Kenneth Beckman, Professor at Boise Bible College.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I want to dedicate this book to the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom. I am deeply and eternally grateful for His amazing grace, for saving me and equipping me to serve Him.

To Della, my faithful wife, companion, co-worker, and best friend. Without her skill in typing and editing the original manuscripts, this book would not exist. Thank you, Della Lou! I love you.

To Amber, our computer-skilled teenage granddaughter, who has re-typed and formatted this English version into presentable form. Amber, you are a beautiful gem of a person, and I love you!

To Sandy, our competent and computer-skilled daughter who re-worked this English version into the proper format. I'm so glad we named you Sandra Joy, because you truly are a joy to us.

To my competent co-workers in the Kingdom at Commonwealth International University (Crimean American College) and Christian Center for Science and Apologetics. Without Georges Carillet and his skilled team of translators, and without Sergei Golovin and his quality co-workers in publishing, this book could not exist in Russian.

Thank you, Georges, for the vision to see the potential of the symposiums on "Man and the Christian Worldview" and the courage to carry the idea to reality. It was at these symposiums that most of these chapters were presented as my contribution towards a clear Christian worldview. And thank you, Sergei, for inviting me to come as a presenter and encouraging me to come back. Georges and Sergei, I treasure your friendship and thank God for the privilege to work together shoulder to shoulder in the Lord's harvest field.

Elena Shparuk deserves special thanks as the translator and editor, who has done the majority of the work to make this book available in the Russian language.

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Foreword – Part I

For many years Rick Deighton realizes a missionary ministry in Eastern Europe with great enthusiasm. He is actively involved in planting churches and helping children's homes. He is preaching from the pulpits and talks to the people in the streets, leading various workshops at the youth festivals and family conferences, having interesting meetings with college and university students, and academic discussions with their professors.

As a reliable ambassador of Christ, he diligently implores his interlocutors to reconcile with God. And like the early church apostles acts, Rick's work also produces a noticeable effect. It makes someone enthusiastic and another angry; but no one remains indifferent.

What is a secret of such a success? While traditional evangelists overload their listeners in bulk with the answers to the questions nobody asks, and the great commission "go and make disciples" is often practicing as "go get them," Rick, himself goes to those

who are in desperate need for Christ, and speaks to them in the context of their values, interests and understanding. With the students he speaks like a student, with parents—like a parent, with spouses—like a spouse and with Christians—like a disciple of Christ.

The book that you are holding brings us back to the original meaning of the word “homiletics”—the art of conversation. It is a collection of the talks Rick had with different people at different times and situations. However all of them have one thing in common—no matter what they are about, the main goal that Rick sets is changing the interlocutor’s worldview, transformation and renewal of his mindset, drawing him closer to Christ. This is the core of evangelism, the practical apologetics and the effective proclamation of God’s plan.

I recommend this book to everyone. For those who are unsure in the verity of Christianity, it will help to find the answers to the questions they have. For those who have already accepted Christ, the book will once again prove the validity of their beliefs and help them to stand more firm in the truth. As for the church leaders, the book will help them to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Sergei Golovin, Founder and President of the Christian Center for Science and Apologetics in Simferopol, Ukraine.

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Foreword Part II

Rick Deighton has a driving passion to share with others the clear evidences of the Christian faith. This book is one of the finest on that topic that I have ever read. It is clear, concise, and compelling. It is scholarly without being stuffy. Rick’s “15 Core Convictions” are worth the price of the book. Would God that everyone had such adamant convictions!

This powerful personal testimony comes from a man who was once an atheist. That’s why his “3 R’s” for believing in God are all the more convincing. Like Saul of Tarsus, once he became a Christian, Rick is firm in his faith and uncompromising in his stand for Jesus Christ, who is “the way the truth and the life.”

Perhaps my favorite chapter in the book is on the “Catastrophic Consequences of Darwinism.” Here Rick connects the dots between the godless theory of evolution and the ovens of Auschwitz, the gulags of the former USSR, and abortion mills in the United States. His take on capitalism (which is sometimes equated with Christianity itself) will challenge your thinking.

What makes Rick’s book so powerful and believable? Is it merely because Rick is well-read and writes with clarity, compassion, and conviction? I think it is because the material you are about to read has been field-tested in the learning laboratories of the former USSR. These are papers that have been presented at university symposiums where two-thirds of the audience were avowed Marxist students and professors. With unbridled enthusiasm and rock-solid faith, Rick took his stand and stood his ground.

In a world that has rejected truth for post-modernism and moral relativism, it is good to hear a “certain sound” that will prepare us for spiritual warfare. Rick has sounded the trumpet. Let us heed the call, bolster our own faith, and be always “ready to give an answer.”

Rick Deighton is an eternal optimist. You’ll see that in the final chapter, “Victorious Christian Living.” We must do more than just believe – we must live out our faith in every circumstance of life. The passive enjoyment of biblical truth can be spiritually injurious. Rick helps us back up our proclamation with demonstration.

Each chapter concludes with 10 provocative discussion questions. I heartily recommend this book to those who desire to strengthen their faith in God. I also want to recommend it to those who want to believe but have never been presented with sound reasons why they should believe in God. At one time Rick was without faith and hope in this world. If that describes you, then this book is definitely for you!

Victor Knowles, Founder and President, Peace on Earth Ministries, Joplin, Missouri, USA

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Preface

Fifteen Core Convictions of the Author

1. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He was God manifested in flesh and is the only hope of the world.
2. I believe that God has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that in Jesus dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and that in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
3. I believe that the Bible from Genesis through Revelation is the true Word of God! Its truths are worth diligently studying, accurately teaching, and doggedly defending. Doggedly defending the truth, however, does not give us license to spew venom on our opponents, for we must always “speak the truth in love.”
4. I believe that all Christians are commissioned to share the gospel and to be ready always to give an answer for the hope that is within us, and to do so with humility and godly fear (not arrogance and antagonism).
5. I believe that Christian leaders are called to equip all believers to minister in order to fulfill the great commission and the great commandment.
6. I believe that God is the perfect balance of absolute love and absolute justice; therefore, the accurate proclamation of the gospel will reveal the true nature of God.
7. I believe that proclamation of the gospel includes the death, burial, and resurrection and appearances of Jesus Christ as evidence of who He is. See 1 Corinthians 15. It is also necessary with proper timing to share how to respond to the gospel in faith, repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sin. See Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38.
8. I believe that the key to proclaiming the good news to non-Christian and post-Christian cultures is creation evangelism; i.e. we must begin with God as Almighty Creator to declare Him as Adequate Redeemer as Paul did at Mars Hill. See Acts 17:16-34.

9. I believe that we of the Restoration Movement are Christians only, but we are not the only Christians. We should not alienate other believers by acting as though we consider ourselves the only Christians.
10. I believe that every person on earth is valuable to God and is worth saving. This of necessity includes enemies of the gospel like hostile editors, evolution devotees, abortion doctors, Marxist and atheist professors, Muslim terrorists, pimps and pornographers. We are to be wise in the way we treat outsiders. We must remember that our real enemy is Satan and that the love-filled apostle Paul was the hate-filled Saul of Tarsus before his conversion.
11. I believe that prayer is our first and most dynamic strategy in breaking down Satan's strongholds. Prayer is not the only thing we are called to do, but until we have prayed and waited on God for direction, we are foolish to charge ahead on our own.
12. I believe that after prayer, love is our most powerful weapon to melt cold hearts and open closed doors. I believe that the New Covenant pivots on two commandments—Faith, which works by love! See Galatians 5:6.
13. I believe that Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-21 teaches us that unity in the Body of Christ is the most vital factor in reaching the world for Jesus. The world does not need us to teach them how to fight—that is one thing they are really good at. The world needs to look to God's church with longing eyes and say, "See how they love one another."
14. I believe that we cannot promote Christian unity by compromising God's truth, for in the same high priestly prayer Jesus said "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth!" John 17:17 (NKJV). Truth invites investigation and welcomes examination, but cannot tolerate contamination! Truth walks unafraid.
15. Therefore, I believe that to effectively evangelize our lost, confused, hostile world we must carefully balance and prayerfully walk the tightrope stretched between truth and unity. "Lord, fill us with Your Spirit, for we cannot accomplish this on our own."

*

Introduction **What Is the Purpose of This Book?**

Dear Friend,

As you read this small handbook of Christian evidences, which confronts some of the major objections and issues I've heard and read from skeptics, doubters, agnostics and atheists, my prayer is that you will read and digest these truths thoroughly, grow strong in confidence, and become a bold witness for Jesus Christ. The questions at the end of each chapter are designed to help you assimilate and remember the material covered and to give you a teaching tool for discipling other believers. It can be used one to one or in small groups and classes.

Some of these chapters were presented as symposium papers for the "Man and the Christian Worldview" conferences in Crimea at Yalta and Simferopol. The purpose of these conferences is to be an outreach to the "tribes of intellectuals in the former Soviet Union nations." Normally only about one third of the participants are deeply committed Christians, and the rest are various shades of doubters and unbelievers, including avowed atheists promoting Marxist philosophy. These conferences have powerfully influenced

some of these intellectuals for Christ. For example, I heard Dr. Vladislav Olkovsky, Professor, Academy of Sciences, Ukraine, publicly thank Georges Carillet and Sergei Golovin for these excellent conferences, which have so strongly impacted his life. He said approximately the following: "My science is still very important to me, but it is no longer the driving force of my life. Now my greater joy is sharing Christian evidences, and I am writing a book on apologetics." Dr. Nicoli Alyoshin is a scientist who works with rice from Krasnodar, Russia, who became a bold witness for Jesus, was falsely accused of being an American spy, and spent five months in Russian prisons. During his time in the various jails (or prisons), he taught and baptized 42 other prisoners. After five months he was released for lack of evidence, but this life-changing experience was not wasted. In God's providence, it was preparation for greater ministry. Joe Garman, founder of American Rehabilitation Ministry, has expanded to other countries and recruited Nicoli to become his prison chaplain for Russia. Praise God!

For a bit more comprehensive understanding of the combined influence of strong Christian apologetics coupled with the dynamic of Christian love empowered by the Holy Spirit, please consider these excerpts from a newsletter by Sergei Golovin following the Spring 2005 Symposium:

"The greatest event of the month was 'Freedom and Responsibility in Science, Medicine and Society' round table of our regular 'Man and Christian Worldview' symposium. It was the 20th one and it was the best one so far! We had quite a few new participants, but many old ones as well. It is a real joy to see how hearts of former strong atheists melt gradually and the strongholds of post-communist academia fall down step by step by the work of the Holy Spirit through the cumulative work of faithful coworkers in Christ. Our team was responsible for the technical equipment of the symposium and the book table as usual...."

"The greatest pleasure was to see the philosophy professor from Kiev who was coming several years to defend his Marxist ideology. He was aggressively anti-Christian all the time; but did not have peace and was coming over and over again. It seemed no argument can make him reconsider his dogmatic position. But the symposium is not papers and discussions only. He had fellowship with the professionals of his own level who are Christians, and their love and patience was stronger than any argument. He was able to see videos and listen to concerts, both with direct and indirect Christian messages, which we presented to the speakers as entertainment. He was provided with books on apologetics and various aspects of Christian worldview."

"This time we cannot recognize the person. His mentality revolved! He confesses that the last drop in the cup was the book, The Case for Christ, which we published several years ago in partnership with Literature and Teaching Ministries. He would never purchase it, but Rick Deighton, a missionary from Idaho, who has faithfully participated in the project for several years, gave it to him as a personal gift. The professor told us that he teaches his students from that book! Aren't the ways of our Lord amazing?"

Since Sergei is Regional Director for Good News Productions, International, their July 2005 paper gave this report:

"The symposium is organized by the Crimean-American College, Simferopol Medical University, and the Crimean Branch of the Ukrainian Academy of Science. As you have probably already realized, the people who take part in this symposium are the

highly intelligent, educated elite. They come mostly from Russia and Ukraine, although there are a few other countries represented. Their education sets them apart, and though they may come from different cultures, they are within themselves a 'tribe of intellectuals'. Their worldview is a product of education and intelligence. For a person of such educational status to accept Christianity, certain scientific truths must be proven. That is exactly what has happened over the years as the people who participate in the symposium submit theories, present their findings, and discuss the results."

Even though some of the chapters in this book were presented in an academic setting, they are mostly free of academic jargon and presented in an easy-to-read style. Please read, enjoy and share!

The astounding popularity of Rick Warren's book, The Purpose Driven Life (over 34 million copies sold worldwide by 2006), demonstrates the spiritual heart-hunger of human beings to know their purpose and feel their significance in this vast universe. However, multitudes have turned away from Biblical Christianity or never seriously considered it. Why? Partly because they want to avoid God's standards of morality, partly because they have never clearly understood the gospel of God's amazing grace, and partly because they believe in evolution and they don't believe Christians have answers to their questions and objections.

We cannot—we must not—compromise God's truth, but let us intentionally reach out to struggling souls all around us. In the midst of their pride, sin, shame, confusion, rebellion, hurts and heartaches, it is still true that God has put eternity in their hearts. See Ecclesiastes 3:11. Millions can be touched with the love of Christ and brought to the foot of the cross, and the Carpenter of souls wants to use our hearts, heads and hands as His tools to touch them. Let's give them solid answers and pray for the Holy Spirit to cut through their intellectual smokescreen to touch their hearts!

"If we Christians don't continue to share the gospel and push the envelope, the envelope will close on us. If we maintain a 'silent witness,' there will be no witness, and Christianity will die in America." ¹ Ray Thorne—Missionary to the persecuted church.

This is the truth—the stark reality that we face in America, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia and other nations around the world. If you are a committed Christian, but you are intimidated by the world and afraid to share your faith, here is a passage of power, which Paul wrote to Timothy: "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." ² Timothy 1:7 (NKJV).

Now in the power of the Holy Spirit, let's obey Him: **"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."** 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV).

Chapter 1

WHY I BELIEVE IN GOD

(Ready to Answer the Issue of Faith versus Doubt)

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”—Genesis 1:1

My family probably has more than its share of infidels and agnostics. Absorbing this spirit, at a very young age I said, “I don’t believe in God—I’ve never seen him!” However, such a cold philosophy of skepticism has melted in the sunlight of the reality of the presence of the Almighty in my life. I believe in God because I honestly cannot help believing. There are three basic reasons why I believe: 1. Reason; 2. Resurrection; 3. Relationship.

1. Reason

Reason tells me that every effect must have an adequate cause, therefore, I can reason that there must be an intelligent Designer, both because of the outside evidence around me and the inside evidence within me.

Creation—The Outside Evidence

I can’t help believing in God because of what I see. The crystal clear, murmuring brook, the fluffy white cloud, the waving sheaf of grain, the golden moon, the silvery white fleets of stars all form a united chorus of testimony proclaiming, “We are the wondrous works of God”. See Psalm 19:1-5. The famous scientist, Sir Isaac Newton, wrote, “This universe exists, and by that one impossible fact declares itself a miracle; postulates an infinite Power, a whole greater than any part; a unity sustaining all, binding all worlds into one. This is the mystery, the unquestioned fact that we know, implying every attribute of God.”² The Lord himself said, “Be still and know that I am God.”

The Apostle Paul wrote: “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’ The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” Romans 1:16-20 (NIV).

Ability to Reason—The Inside Evidence

I cannot help believing in God because of man’s ability to reason. Descartes questioned the reality of all things, but he could not deny his own existence, so he wrote, “I think, therefore I am.”³ From this basis he reasoned to God’s existence, because every effect must have a cause, and blind chance is a totally inadequate cause for the intricate functioning of the human mind. Helen Keller is a classic example of the validity of this argument, for she could neither see the wonders of the star-studded universe, nor hear the

beauty of the meadow lark's song, yet she knew within herself the reality of God. "Come now, and let us reason together," says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18

2. Resurrection

I cannot help believing in God because of the empty tomb. Only God can raise the dead. Few historical facts have any more solid confirmation than the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Those who deny the resurrection have no adequate explanation for the historical events surrounding it.

A myth is a make-believe story that normally begins many years after and hundreds of miles away from the events it supposedly describes. A myth has little or no historical evidence concerning names, dates and places.

The resurrection of Christ has none of the qualities of a myth. Just forty days after His crucifixion, Jesus commanded His apostles to go back into the same city that murdered Him and preach that He had risen from the dead. The results were electrifying. Instead of the mob stoning or crucifying the apostles, 3,000 souls repented the first day, and believers were added to the church every day thereafter until the number of men, not counting women and young people, grew to be about 5,000. This means that the total number of believers must have been at least between 10,000 and 20,000. From Jerusalem the gospel message spread throughout the Roman Empire to all classes of people in spite of cruel persecutions by both Jews and Romans. What explanation can be offered for such phenomenal growth if the resurrection is not a fact?

The theme of the apostles' preaching was that God raised Jesus from the dead and declared Him to be both Lord and Christ. "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—Him, being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it." Acts 2:22-24 (NKJV).

The resurrection proved Jesus' claim to be the Son of God and was thus preached as the crowning fact of the Gospel. The people who first heard it had every opportunity to examine the evidence. They had heard Jesus teach in the temple, had seen Him perform miracles, had felt the earth shudder at the repulsive sight of creatures torturing their Creator, had witnessed the blackness of midnight at midday when the sun refused to shine on the ugly scene below, and many of them had even seen Jesus in the flesh after His resurrection, for on one occasion He appeared to over five hundred at once. "After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep." 1 Corinthians 15:6 (NKJV). The apostles not only saw Him after His resurrection, but they heard Him teach and touched Him with their own hands, so they knew He was no imposter nor hallucination.

The enemies of Jesus executed Him by deceitful dealings, but they could not squelch the fact that He arose from the tomb. If there had been any flaw in the apostles' evidence, the Jews would have found it. The resurrection of Jesus was a devastating doctrine to the religious leaders, and it would never have gotten outside of Jerusalem if they could have stopped it. They would have gathered the citizens of Jerusalem before

the tomb of Jesus, produced the body and dissolved the resurrection story before the eyes of all inquiries—IF THEY COULD HAVE! But they could not disprove the fact, and they would not accept it, so they persecuted those who believed it.

Saul of Tarsus was one of the most zealous persecutors of early Christians. The Scripture says that he was “breathing out threatenings and slaughter against them.” But Saul saw and heard the resurrected Christ, was converted and became the zealous evangelist, Paul the Apostle. He became so thoroughly convinced that the resurrection of Jesus is a fact that he was willing to lay down his life rather than deny it.

Thousands of Christians endured almost every form of cruelty and death rather than renounce their faith. All but one of the apostles suffered a violent death because of their faith, yet not one of them recanted his position. Martyrdom alone does not prove a belief to be true, but it does testify that the martyr believed it to be true. The apostle John was not martyred for Christ, but he was exiled to the barren island of Patmos to suffer loneliness and hardship. Those who believed the resurrection to be absolutely true were the ones who had the best opportunity to know the fact and most carefully examine the evidence. If Jesus did not rise from death and empower His apostles with His Holy Spirit, how do you explain the sudden transformation of these followers into such bold witnesses? Remember that when the temple guards came to take Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, they turned into cowards and ran like rabbits from a fox.

The eye-witnesses of Jesus so strongly believed what they proclaimed that they lived and died sacrificially, yet joyfully, for Christ.

During the French Revolution, a skeptic named LePeaux decided to start a better religion than Christianity, so he wrote to the apostate bishop Tallyrand to ask his advice. Tallyrand replied, “You might begin by being crucified and rising again the third day.”⁴

3. Relationship

I can't help believing in God because of my own experience. I know the joy of my forgiveness, the blessing of peace within, and the power of the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit, for I have been born anew from above. I know the thrill of answered prayer and the Spirit of God bears witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. No one will ever convince me that there is no God, “for He walks with me, He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own.” There are some things that must be experienced to be understood. “Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!” Psalm 34:8 (NKJV). I have tasted and I know that He is good! I have a personal relationship with the Living God.

Creation, reason, history and my own experience testify to me by many infallible proofs that God is real. My unbelief was not really an intellectual problem, but a moral one. “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” John 3:19 (KJV). When I was willing to lay aside the sham intellectualism of unbelief and submit my life to the will of God, I found joy, peace, purpose, power and the true meaning of both life and death. I found how exciting life can be when a person walks with the King of the universe! With the overwhelming evidence before me, I would be a fool not to believe in Him. “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’” Psalm 14:1 (NKJV). Perhaps the reason for this strong statement of Scripture is that down inside each person's heart is an innate knowledge of God's existence. A fool denies what he knows is true. I have

read that Nikita Krushchev declared, “I am an atheist! I **am** an atheist!! **God knows I am an atheist!!!**”

*

From Atheism to the Almighty

(Rick Deighton’s Testimony)

By the time I was ten or eleven years old, I declared myself to be an atheist by saying, “I don’t believe in God—I’ve never seen Him!” It would have been so easy for me to remain and become hardened in this rejection of God and the Bible because I wanted to be “a real man”. My distorted view of masculinity probably stemmed from the fact that many of the men in my family were unbelievers and skeptical about the Bible. In retrospect, I realize that my motives for declaring my unbelief were really emotional, not intellectual. The problem wasn’t and isn’t that God has not left clear evidence of Himself and His Word. The major problem was that I knew I was a sinner, and I didn’t want to repent. If I admitted the reality of God and the truth of His Word, then I would need to face my sin problem and change. Instead, I denied His existence. Jesus had already accurately described the situation when He said, “...men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” John 3:19 (NKJV).

I am so thankful to God that He drew me out of that web of unbelief. He used Mom (who sent me to Sunday School, VBS and Christian Service Camp). He also used loving, yet strict teachers, and a powerful and faithful preacher of the Word to bring me to Christ. Through them and a dramatic answer to my first fervent prayer, the Holy Spirit convicted me of my sin and drew me to Christ’s love and forgiveness. In January of 1956 my dad lost his left arm in a horrible tractor accident. He was working far from town and lost so much blood before arriving at the hospital that the doctors thought they were working on a corpse! My family tried to shield me from the stark reality that my father wasn’t expected to live through the night by only telling me part of the story. They said Dad was in an accident and his arm was broken. That didn’t sound so serious, but later that evening I overheard some of my relatives whispering and was shocked into realizing the truth about his condition. Even though I had denied God’s existence, down inside my heart I knew He was there, so I prayed earnestly that God would save Dad’s life and felt a deep confidence that He was there and had heard me. Dad’s recovery amazed the doctors. One of them told Mom later that at that time he wouldn’t have bet a plugged nickel on Dad’s chances to pull through! God answers prayer! He demonstrated Himself to me and drew me to Himself. On April 22, 1956, I came forward at church and committed my life to Jesus. “I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” I confessed, and Talmage Pace baptized me into Christ for the forgiveness of my sin.

The God I worship is not only the majestic and powerful Creator of all things, but also the forgiving and compassionate Father, who listened to my prayer in my hour of desperation, even though I had denied His existence.

Several years ago during a communion service I wrote this note to Jesus:
“Dear Jesus,

I appreciate You because You took me as a lonely, confused, frustrated, heartsick, sinful kid, saved me by Your precious blood and gave me a purpose in life. All that I am, all that I have accomplished, and all that I ever will accomplish—I owe it all to You! I love You! Rick”

*

Questions for Chapter 1

1. How do the crystal clear, murmuring brook, the fluffy white cloud, the waving sheaf of grain, the golden moon and the silvery white fleets of stars all testify to the existence of God?
2. Did the famous scientist, Sir Isaac Newton, believe in God? Why or why not?
3. Fill in the blanks in this quote from the apostle Paul: “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been _____ so that men are without _____.” Romans 1:20
4. How did the French skeptic and philosopher, Descartes, come to the conviction that his own ability to think (reason) pointed inescapably to the existence of God?
5. Fill in the blanks: “Come now and let us _____ together says the Lord: though your _____ be as scarlet, they shall be as _____, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as _____.” Isaiah 1:18.
6. Why does the overwhelming evidence for the empty tomb of Jesus point us to the existence of God?
7. When the apostles and thousands of new Christian converts began spreading the report that Jesus arose from the dead, the powerful enemies of Jesus were upset and tried to stop them. One thing would have stopped the reports and killed the Christian movement, but they didn’t do that. What was that and why didn’t they do it?
8. During the French Revolution, when the skeptic, LePeaux, decided to start a new religion, what advice did Bishop Tallyrand give him?
9. Since the evidence for the existence of God is so convincing, why do many people still refuse to believe?
10. My own personal joy in walking with the King of the universe and experiencing the thrill of answered prayer is clinching evidence to me of the existence of God. Are you experiencing God personally?

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Chapter 2

THE PLACE OF CREATIONISM IN SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

(Ready to Answer the Materialists Who Assert That Evolutionism is Science and That All True Scientists Believe in Evolution)

The unity of science with faith—specifically Biblical Christian faith—is not just our hope for the future, it is actually our legacy from the past. During the time of Frances Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton and other prominent scientists who founded most of the major

disciplines of scientific study, the question was not asked, “What is the place of creationism⁵ in scientific knowledge?” They understood that the Creator was behind His creation. They understood creationism to be foundational to all scientific knowledge because they could see order, precision, and design in nature. Behind order and design is always a Designer, and behind laws is a Lawgiver. Therefore, they wrote frequently about “the laws of nature and of nature’s God.” The very reason the question is now asked, “What is the place of creationism in scientific knowledge?” is that the philosophy of Darwinism (materialism) has masqueraded as science and captured the centers of higher education with its deception. Darwinism is a Trojan horse—a deadly philosophy, which was cloaked outwardly as an intellectual scientific theory, but from its belly has come powerful destructive forces, which have taken the scientific community captive. Let’s break those bonds!

Charles Darwin’s formal training was in theology; he apparently became angry with God and sullen in his attitude because he could not reconcile the concept of the goodness of God with the suffering he saw in the world. This suffering intensified with the deaths of three of his own children. Also he seemed to have much inner conflict concerning the truth or falsehood of his own theory. So severe was his inner turmoil that in 1875 he wrote to Robert Hooker that he was ready to commit suicide.⁶

Darwin’s interest in scientific study was as an amateur with a hobby. Like Mr. Darwin, my formal training is in theology, and my interest in science is as an amateur pursuing a hobby. Unlike Darwin, I am not angry with God, because I recognize the Fall of man and the consequences of his rebellion against God as the cause of suffering in the world. Darwin did not truly evaluate the monumental and tragic consequences of man’s rebellion against God in the Garden of Eden.

Major Premise

My major premise for this chapter is that I believe that the place of creationism in scientific knowledge is at the very bottom. By this I do not mean that it belongs on the bottom because it is trivial, inconsequential or unimportant. I mean that it belongs at the bottom because it is foundational. Belief in creation and an awe of the amazing designs of the Wonderful Counselor, Who is our Creator, is the beginning of knowledge (science) and the beginning of wisdom (philosophy). “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV).

I believe that the place of creationism as foundational in scientific knowledge can be established historically, philosophically and factually. But first, it is good to distinguish between what is called “operational science” and what is called “origin science.” “Operational science” is the application of the scientific method to the building of new and better technology for the benefit of mankind (ideally). (In reality, we know that better technology can also be used for destroying mankind.) “Origin science” is the study of what happened in the past, and therefore, rightly belongs to philosophy, rather than science, because you cannot apply the scientific method to what happened before you existed. To be an established scientific fact it must be observable, repeatable and demonstrable. How could you observe what happened before you were born? Perhaps this is why God asked Job, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” Job 38:4. The next time someone declares to you that it is a scientific fact that the earth “evolved” or “was formed” about 4 ½ billion years ago, ask him, “Were you there? Did

you observe it? Can you repeat it? Can you demonstrate it?” If not, it isn’t scientific fact—it is a **belief system. It is your faith!**

I. Historically

The place of creationism as foundational to scientific knowledge can be established historically. The founder of the scientific method for acquiring knowledge, Lord Frances Bacon (1561–1626), was a creationist! Add to this the fact that most of the founders of the various branches of scientific research were creationists, and it exposes the fallacy of those materialists, who say that “all scientists are evolutionists,” and that “in order to be scientific, everything must have a purely materialistic explanation.” Such unjust statements have come from the widespread acceptance of Darwinism in our institutions of learning, but in spite of much social stigma and monetary pressure from those in positions of power, there are still thousands of scientists who do not bow the knee to Darwin. Some of the prominent creation scientists during Charles Darwin’s time were Michael Faraday, Samuel Morse, Matthew Fontaine Maury, William Thompson (known as Lord Kelvin), and James Clerk Maxwell. In more recent years of the 20th and 21st centuries some prominent names among creation scientists are Howard Atwood Kelly, Henry Morris, John Morris, Walter Brown, Carl Baugh, Sergei Golovin, Steve Austin, Ken Ham and Duane Gish. The number of creation scientists appears to me to be growing exponentially year after year, as the icons of evolutionism are exposed and cast down in the light of truth.

Here are the names of a few creationists who founded branches of scientific knowledge:⁷

Discipline/Contribution	Scientist
Absolute Temperature Scale	Lord William Kelvin (1824–1907)
Antiseptic Surgery	Joseph Lister (1827–1912)
Bacteriology	Louis Pasteur (1822–1895)
Barometer	Blaise Pascal (1623–1662)
Biogenesis Law	Louis Pasteur (1822–1895)
Calculating Machine	Charles Babbage (1792–1871)
Calculus	Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727)
Celestial Mechanics	Johannes Kepler (1571–1630)
Chemistry	Robert Boyle (1627–1691)

Sir Isaac Newton is considered to be the greatest scientist who ever lived, even by many scientists. Yet, according to the blatant claim of materialists, he wouldn’t qualify as a scientist. Are you aware that Isaac Newton was unashamedly a creationist and wrote more about the Bible than he did about science? And for those materialists who declare that everything has a naturalistic explanation and that they do not believe in miracles, please consider this quotation from Sir Isaac Newton: “This universe exists, and by that one impossible fact declares itself a miracle; postulates an infinite Power, a whole greater than any part; a unity sustaining all, binding all worlds into one. This is the mystery, the unquestioned fact that we know, implying every attribute of God.”⁸ I also consider Sir Isaac Newton to be a very great scientist, but not the greatest, because God Almighty is

the original scientist. He is not only Lord of lords and King of kings, but also Scientist of scientists!

So, my naturalist friend, do you believe that this universe exists? Good! You already believe a miracle! How did it get here? Did it create itself? If so, you believe a logical fallacy. In order to create itself, it had to exist before it existed or it could not create itself. I choose to believe in an eternal, almighty Creator, who does work miracles. So do many qualified scientists.

II. Philosophically

Evolutionism is not new, for the Greek philosophers had their system of belief in evolution several hundred years before Christ, and the Hindus before that. Therefore, it is not accurate to brush aside the historical evidence that most of the founding scientists for the various disciplines of science were creationists by saying that they had no choice in their time. As a matter of history, did you know that those who most strongly opposed Darwinism after “The Origin of Species” began to gain influence and popularity were the scientists? They knew at least some of the huge holes in his theory and the massive assumptions he needed to gloss over the differences between micro-evolution and macro-evolution. What is called micro-evolution is actually variation and adaptation within the set limits of created kinds, but it takes a massive leap of faith to believe that changes in the size of beaks on finches proves that the brain of Albert Einstein evolved from an amoeba! (And where did the amoeba come from?) **Micro-evolution is fact; macro-evolution is fantasy!**

The scientific method was not developed by a materialist who believed in random chance, but by a creationist, Frances Bacon. He believed that there is order in the universe and that there are laws of nature, because an orderly Creator designed His world with those laws. A materialist has no logical reason to believe that there can be order in the universe or laws of nature, nor does he have a philosophical basis for believing that he can reason or think logically. Can he demonstrate scientifically how order comes from chaos, how there can be a law without a lawgiver, or how there can be design without a designer? Darwin himself realized this and wrote that the very idea that the intricacy of the eye could evolve by random chance “seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree.”⁹ (This was perhaps the wisest comment Charles Darwin ever wrote!)

Soren Lovtrup wrote that he believes Darwinism is a myth which will someday be exposed as the worst and most deceitful hoax in the history of science.

III. Factually

The fact is that the icons of evolutionism are falling like flies after a hard freeze. Did you know that Darwin desperately hoped that the fossil record would confirm his theory by showing the transitional forms as more fossils were found. There have been huge, exaggerated claims and frauds, like Piltdown Man, Java Man and Nebraska Man, but the fossil record still stands solidly against Darwinism. The millions of missing links are still missing! Did you know that the major evidence at the famous Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925, was one tooth – supposedly from an ape-like hominoid called Nebraska Man? An artist pictured this ape-man with his family for the newspapers. But the fact is that when this same kind of tooth was found in a jawbone, it was the remains of an extinct pig. This was when a pig made monkeys out of the

evolutionists! However, the truth about the pig did not get the press coverage that the lie about Nebraska Man received.

Do you know that other proven frauds, which have been used as proofs of evolutionism, are still being published in school and college textbooks? Two glaring examples are: peppered moths pinned to tree trunks and Ernst Haeckel's distorted embryo drawings. Besides, evolutionists are constantly using circular reasoning in their dating methods, because fossils are dated by strata and strata are dated by the fossils. For details and documentation concerning these blatant frauds, see Icons of Evolution by Jonathan Wells, The Collapse of Evolution by Scott M. Ruse, Refuting Evolution by Jonathan Sarfati, Evolution of the Myth (How Man Became a Monkey) by Sergei Golovin and Evolution—The Tide Is Turning by Jerry Dillon.

Besides all this, are you aware that Charles Darwin's book, "The Origin of Species" does not even attempt to explain how species originated? His book simply explains his fantasy about how everything evolved. But where did it all come from in the beginning? You can believe that everything came from nothing and was created by no one if you so choose, but factually, there is still no scientific evidence for a design without a designer or an origin without an originator. What do you choose to do with the facts?

Conclusion

Wasn't it Frances Bacon, founder of the scientific method, who wrote that studying science is "thinking God's thoughts after Him"? Why would he make such a declaration? Because to the unbiased observer or researcher, the fingerprints of an Intelligent Designer are all over His creation, whether in the natural world around us or the starry heavens above us. "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork." Psalm 19:1 (NKJV).

William Paley's watchmaker argument has been contested, but never refuted because it is a basic law of science that every effect must have an adequate cause. Therefore, logic demands that every design must have a designer. Sometimes the question arises, "Who created God?" but the question simply demonstrates that the inquirer does not understand the definition of God. God is not an effect! He is the eternal, almighty First Cause.

As with Paley's illustration that anyone finding a watch in the sand knows that it is the work of an intelligent designer and did not just happen by random chance, so also it is clear that all creation shouts: "THERE IS A CREATOR!" Also, the fact that we are persons points to the logical conclusion that the Creator must be a Person. Where can personality come from except from a person? The place of creationism is at the foundation of all scientific knowledge. God Himself does not take this matter lightly.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Romans 1:18-20 (NKJV).

When Job was in deep grief because of his immense problems, he challenged God and said, "Oh that I could have my day in court with the Almighty!" But Job didn't like

it when he got that chance. God asked Job hundreds of scientific questions, one after another. Job confessed that he couldn't answer one of a thousand of God's questions. Let's be wise. Let's seek knowledge (science) and wisdom (philosophy) at the fountain of truth – the Creator Himself!

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Questions for Chapter 2

1. What is the very reason why the question is now asked, “What is the place of creationism in scientific knowledge?”
2. What discipline of study dominated Charles Darwin's formal training? Why did he become so sullen and psychotic? (in your opinion).
3. Why does creationism belong at the bottom in the pursuit of scientific knowledge?
4. What is the difference between operational science and what is called “origin science”?
5. How can the foundational position of creationism in scientific knowledge be established historically?
6. How can the foundational position of creationism in scientific knowledge be established philosophically?
7. How can the foundational position of creationism in scientific knowledge be established factually?
8. If a naturalist believes that the universe exists, doesn't he already believe a miracle? Why or why not?
9. Why does a naturalistic materialist have no logical philosophical basis for believing that he can reason or think logically himself?
10. Why do you think proven frauds are still being published in textbooks as proofs of evolution?

Bonus questions:

What was William Paley's watchmaker argument, and why has it never been successfully refuted?

Why is the question, “Who created God?” invalid?

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Chapter 3

CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES OF DARWINISM

HISTORICAL EVALUATION OF THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF AN EVOLUTIONARY WORLDVIEW

**(Ready to Answer the Issue of Evolutionism by Documenting Its Devastating
Consequences)**

Before we plunge directly into this subject, which can be highly controversial, let's look at a story which graphically illustrates what a difference perspective makes:

Sitting on the side of the highway waiting to catch speeding drivers, a State Police Officer saw a car pattering along at 22 MPH. He thought to himself, "This driver is just as dangerous as a speeder!" He turned on his lights and pulled the driver over.

Approaching the car, he noticed that there were five elderly ladies—two in the front seat and three in the back—the passengers were wide-eyed and white as ghosts. The driver, obviously confused, said to him, "Officer, I don't understand. I was doing exactly the speed limit. What seems to be the problem?"

"Madam," the Officer replied, "You weren't speeding, but you should know that driving slower than the speed limit can also be a danger to other drivers."

"Slower than the speed limit? No sir, I was doing the speed limit exactly...twenty-two miles an hour!" the elderly lady said proudly. The Officer, trying to contain a chuckle, explained to her that '22' is the route number, not the speed limit. A bit embarrassed, the woman grinned and thanked the Officer for pointing out her error.

"Before you go ma'am, I have to ask—is everyone in this car okay? These women seem awfully shaken, and they haven't muttered a single word this whole time," the Officer inquired. "Oh, they'll be okay in a minute, Officer. We just got off Route 119."

Since it is obvious that different people can look at the same object (like a highway sign) and see something different because of their perspective, we should recognize how vitally important our worldview is in the understanding and interpretation of facts. Your worldview is your basic system by which you interpret the world around you.

Worldviews in Conflict

To an individual saturated with Darwinism, macro-evolution is not just a system, a theory, or an hypothesis. To him it is the basic fact of all facts and the overarching truth to which every other system, theory, or hypothesis must bow and submit. He is inclined to consider the creationist ignorant or foolish and to scoff at the idea of "creation science" because it does not fit his paradigm of perceived truth.

On the other hand, the creationist, who loves God and accepts His Biblical revelation concerning creation, rejects Darwinism as a false paradigm and sees creation by Almighty God as the foundational truth to which every other system, theory, or hypothesis must bow. He believes: "*For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they know God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.*" Romans 1:20-21 (NIV).

Obviously these worldviews are in conflict and both cannot be true. Every attempt to reconcile these opposing worldviews is an exercise in futility.

Purpose: It is the purpose of this chapter to demonstrate from historical references that the wide acceptance of the biological theory of evolution quickly turned into social Darwinism, with devastating results. The seeping flood of evolutionistic philosophy has left in its wake the suffering, death, and destruction of multiple millions of human lives.

Definition of Terms

Science: It is important to note that the definition of the word “science” has shifted meaning since the publication of Darwin’s “Origin of Species” in 1859. This shift is from “operational science”, based on empirical evidence, to “origin science,” based on evolutionary philosophy. Actually “origin science” is philosophy, not science. We should return to the original definition of operational science as the field of study dealing with empirical evidence. To be truly science, it must be **observable, repeatable, and demonstrable**. What happened in the distant past cannot be observed, repeated, or demonstrated; therefore, theories about the past belong in the field of philosophy or theology (usually both).

Theistic Evolution: This is the theory that God created matter and started the process of evolution to produce everything else over billions of years. It is an attempt to mix the unmixable for two reasons:

1. Theistic faith and evolutionistic faith are diametrically opposed worldviews. Well over 100 years ago Charles H. Spurgeon correctly analyzed the situation when he said, “In all its bearings upon Scriptural truth, the evolution theory is in direct opposition to it. If God’s Word is true, evolution is a lie. I will not mince the matter: this is not the time for soft speaking.” (From a sermon preached 7/25/1886).
2. Many statements by leading evolutionists make it crystal clear that a God-initiated or God-guided process is not what educators mean by the term “evolution.” The famous evolutionist, George Gaylord Simpson, wrote that he believed man to be the result of a natural process which had no purpose or planning behind it.

Macro-evolution: When I speak of the theory of evolution, I am referring to “molecules to man” macro-evolution as popularized by Charles Darwin in “Origin of Species” (1859). Others had promoted the basic concept of evolution for centuries, but Charles Darwin and his colleagues created a wave of popular acceptance like never before. Therefore, I will use the term “Darwinism” as a synonym for the theory of evolution, even though modern evolutionists have rejected some of Darwin’s ideas.

Micro-evolution: “Micro-evolution is defined as small changes in the genome of an organism caused by random mutations in the DNA. The mechanisms claimed for micro-evolution as well as macro-evolution are random genetic mutations coupled with natural selection. Despite claims to the contrary, mutations have never been observed to result in a net increase in genetic information.” ~Dr. Bob Compton.¹⁰

Since mutations and small changes are observable, repeatable, and demonstrable, micro-evolution is science. However, it takes a major leap of faith to believe that these minor changes within fixed limits are proof of macro-evolution. Micro-evolution is fact; macro-evolution is faith.

What committed evolutionists fail to recognize or refuse to admit is that they have no evidence to show that it is even possible for either mutations or natural selection to add new information to the genetic pool. **And without new information added to the gene pool, macro-evolution is impossible because the idea of upward progress is**

basic and essential to the theory of evolution. So the bottom line is that micro-evolution does not produce a build up of new information in the DNA, which would be essential in order for macro-evolution to occur. (To pursue this deeper, I highly recommend the book, [In The Beginning Was Information](#) by Dr. Werner Gitt.)

Genetic Variation: Genetic variation results from sexual reproduction wherein existing genes are subject to a great variety of combinations. All the diversity and variation within a particular kind of animal is possible because God created each kind with a genome containing a rich potential for variety. The canine kind, for example, contains all the varieties of dogs from Chihuahua to St. Bernard and from wolf to dingo. It is possible to cross-breed all types of dogs, but you can never cross the dog kind with the cat kind to get a dat or a cog! There are set limits in genetic variation. This was recognized by evolutionists as Mendel's research in genetics became known. Because of this, evolutionists turned to genetic mutations and claimed them as their source for new information encoded in the DNA.

No Proof of Evolution either from Micro Evolution or Genetic Variation

God said that each of His creatures is to reproduce after its own kind, which has plenty of demonstrable scientific evidence, for such reproduction happens constantly. Darwin's famous example of the varying sizes of beaks on finches is simply genetic variation and no proof of evolution. It actually has nothing to do with his major premise, for finches are still finches. Neither Darwin nor anyone else has shown dinosaurs turning into finches or changing into other creatures, in spite of all the false bravado that "evolution is a fact."

By changing the definition of evolution to mean simply "change over time", evolutionists can point to minor changes within a certain kind of animal and declare that these minor changes prove evolution. They declare that when extrapolated out these minor changes become macro-evolution. False. Actually these minor changes are caused by either mutations or genetic variations. Mutations are nothing but miniature copying mistakes in DNA. Genetic variation is variety through information pre-programmed into the genetic pool of each kind of animal by our Creator. I believe micro-evolution is a misleading term, because it implies Darwinian evolution, but in reality it does not bring upward progressive changes. Upward progressive changes could only happen if new information were added to the gene pool. I use the term "micro-evolution" only because we are stuck with it.

In "The Sound of Music" Julie Andrews got it right when she sang, "Nothing comes from nothing—nothing ever could." For some reason those committed to the philosophy of evolution find this fact hard to swallow.

Definition of the Battle

Evolutionists and their media colleagues often portray the battleground between creation and evolution as a conflict between religion and science. Of course, they categorize belief in creation as religion and belief in evolution as science. **This is a false premise. The battle between creationism and evolutionism is the conflict of**

opposing worldviews (philosophies), and both of these worldviews are religious. The reason many secular humanists get so upset when creationists expose the flaws of the theory of evolution is that their religion is under attack.

To make this point very clear, I want to refer you to an article by a secular humanist named John Dunphy. His article was entitled, “A Religion for a New Age” and was published in the “Humanist” magazine for Jan. – Feb., 1983. On page 26 he wrote that the battle for the future of mankind must be carried out in the public school classrooms by teachers promoting humanism as their religion, and that they must clearly understand that they are promoting and recruiting disciples to their “new” faith. This faith believes that there is divinity in every human being. (Doesn’t this remind you of Satan’s temptation to Eve, “you will be like God, knowing good and evil”? Genesis 3:5). The “new” faith of humanism is not new at all – it is as old as the Garden of Eden. Also, John Dunphy urged these teachers of the humanistic faith to be as selfless and dedicated as the most zealous preacher. Therefore, the common myth that religion is not allowed in public schools is a thinly veiled lie. The fact is that secular humanism is the entrenched and exclusive religion of our American public schools. Since evolutionism is a basic tenant of secular humanism, and since they don’t like competition, the proselytizers of this “new” faith howl and clamor whenever anyone tries to teach intelligent design as an alternative theory to evolutionism. Hypocritically, they loudly denounce bringing religion into the public school classroom – even though intelligent design is taught from scientific evidence.

Belief in evolution is clearly spelled out in the Humanist Manifesto as one of the essential basic tenets in the religion known as secular humanism. Even the Supreme Court of the U. S. A. has officially recognized and declared humanism a religion.

It is a fact that many people are thoroughly committed to their belief in evolution, and they earnestly contend for their faith. (There have been thousands of debates between evolutionists and creationists.) **Has it ever occurred to you that it is inconsistent for an evolutionist to contend for anything to be true? If we are the products of random chance with no plan or purpose, then the human brain is also a product of random chance and cannot be trusted to produce rational thought.** It’s obvious that evolutionists don’t trust the thinking of creationists, but logically speaking, they should not trust their own thinking either, because they must admit that their own thinking is also based on random chance with no intelligent design or purpose. Besides, since such evolutionists usually contend that all things are relative and that there is no absolute truth, why do many of them contend that the theory of evolution is not just a theory, but an absolute fact? **The real reason they contend for the view of modern relativism is that evolution has become their religion.**

Historical Consequences

Now, with these definitions and clarifications clearly in mind, let us look openly at some of the historical consequences of believing in evolution. While it is true that these conflicting worldviews involve scientific issues, it is also true that they unquestionably involve moral issues, for each worldview forms the foundational perspective upon which morals and values are built. I openly acknowledge that many people who believe in evolution are very nice people with good social skills, but the

major reason for this fact is that they have inherited many moral and social beliefs and benefits from Biblical Christianity. In this respect they are not consistent with their own philosophy. If everything evolved from nothing by random chance, there would be no objective foundation for moral choices and behavior.

Now let's view some of the catastrophic consequences caused by those who believed the lie of evolution and consistently applied the moral implications of this worldview.

I. Heartless Capitalism

Although the seeds of greed and exploitation have always been present in the tainted history of man since the Fall, there arose and grew a form of heartless capitalism in the late 1800's and early 1900's that can be directly traced to social Darwinism. The biological dogma of "the survival of the fittest" as the mechanism of natural selection was quickly applied by greedy capitalists to ruthlessly destroy the "unfit" and "weaker" competitive companies. They also used it to justify the child labor and sweat-shop conditions of their factories.

There is some debate over the issue of whether the pre-existence of such unrestrained capitalist practices in England set the stage for the wide acceptance of the theory of evolution, or whether the acceptance of the theory of evolution from Erasmus Darwin, Charles Darwin and others set the stage for selfish capitalism. There is no doubt, however, that it provided mental and social justification for the brutal capitalists who practiced the law of the jungle—the "survival of the fittest" (also known as the law of tooth and claw).

American capitalists such as Andrew Carnegie also adopted Darwinism and used it to justify their practices of driving smaller competitors out of business and exploiting their workers with grueling labor and unsafe, unsanitary conditions. "Survival of the fittest" was their social policy because of an evolutionary worldview. Two of the most famous novels ever written vividly describe the miserable plight of the oppressed working class and the greedy self indulgence of the heartless capitalists. A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens was written in England, and In His Steps by Charles M. Sheldon was written in America to expose injustices of capitalism during the industrial revolution. In spite of the well-known philanthropy of some capitalists, the cold facts remain that many of them built their financial empires largely on the blood, sweat and tears of their underprivileged workers and the smaller competitors they bulldozed to extinction.

Like many other powerful individuals, including Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Hitler, Andrew Carnegie had once accepted Biblical principles, but abandoned them when he became a close friend of the famous social Darwinist, Herbert Spencer, and accepted evolution as his philosophy. In his autobiography he wrote: "I came fortunately upon Darwin's and Spencer's works...I remember that light came as in a flood and all was clear. Not only had I gotten rid of theology and the supernatural, but I had found the truth of evolution. 'All is well since all grows better' became my motto, my true source of comfort. Man was not created with an instinct for his own degradation, but from the lower he had risen to the higher forms. Nor is there any conceivable end to his march to perfection." (1920, p. 327)¹¹

The Rockefeller family, although they liked to maintain a Christian front, actually categorized the early books of the Bible as myths and fully accepted evolution as their philosophy. They lived by the “law of the jungle” in the business world! Where is there room for Jesus’ teaching about compassion for the weak, helpless, and downtrodden in the law of fang and claw? John D. Rockefeller, Sr., as a young man, was driven by greed and lust for power. By age 33 he had earned his first million dollars; by age 43 he controlled the biggest business in the world; by age 53 he became the richest man in the world and the only billionaire. But in his drive for power and wealth he, like Scrooge, had few (if any) friends and had driven those in the oil fields of Pennsylvania to hate him so much that they hanged him in effigy. He had also driven himself almost to extinction and his emaciated body was dying. One night when he couldn’t sleep, he suddenly realized that when he died, he couldn’t take even one dime of his vast wealth with him. He decided that his wealth should be shared for the benefit of others. By his conversion to Christ which changed his mindset from getting to giving, he blessed millions, and in return he was blessed with restored health and lived to be 98 years old. It’s too bad that all of his family did not follow in the positive example of his latter years. (See Chapter 23, “A Lesson from John D.” in None of These Diseases by S.I. McMillen, M.D.)

Capitalism, as a system, began in the late eighteenth century as a corruption of the Biblical principles of free enterprise, ownership of private property, honesty, integrity, hard work and its rewards. The commands “You shall not steal” and “you shall not covet your neighbor’s ...ox...donkey...etc.” can only have meaning in the context of ownership of private property.

Free enterprise and ownership of private property, while good in themselves, can and did degenerate into self-centered greed. Such greed was then justified with the Darwinist motto: “the survival of the fittest.”¹²

In contrast to selfishness, Jesus taught us to love others and practice generosity. **He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”** Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, **that he may have something to share with those in need.**” Ephesians 4:28 (NIV). **This is free enterprise with a heart of compassion. It is the Biblical way. The motivation is love.**

II. Brutal Naziism

The formation of Adolf Hitler’s deranged philosophy is no mystery, for he simply combined the atheistic philosophies of Nietzsche and Darwin, mixed in occult Aryan beliefs, and carried out this deadly mixture of atheism and Satanism to its logical conclusions. Through his impassioned speeches and iron-fisted policies, Hitler wooed millions of Germans with his philosophy and coerced millions of others into silence in spite of horrible atrocities, because they knew that to oppose him or his well-oiled Nazi Gestapo meant imprisonment, torture, and death.

Darwinism gave Hitler the psychological and social justification for treating people like animals because, according to evolution, human beings are simply highly evolved animals and merely products of time and chance. Evolutionism is strongly racist to the core, which can be easily documented by the full title of Charles Darwin’s famous book: On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection; or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life. Hitler’s view was that Jews were inferior culls of

human society and were the cause of the economic problems of Germany. He believed that Germans were the pure Aryan race, who would become the “*uber mensch*” (super man). This Darwinistic perspective gave him the justification to destroy the Jews for the greater good of the human race. This was also the justification for using Jews and other so-called culls of human society, like Gypsies and Poles, for inhumane medical experiments. Because of this evolutionary grading system, Darwinism fosters racism and intolerance. The Biblical perspective, in contrast to evolutionism, teaches that God “has made from one blood every nation of men”. Acts 17:26 (NKJV). He loves every nationality and wants us to love them as well.

We should be honest enough to recognize that the destructive prejudice of evolutionism is at work in our Western society, for Darwinism was used as the justification for abortion in the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision of 1973. It was asserted that the development of the unborn baby is a re-capitulation of the evolutionary process and not truly a human being until later stages, when it becomes “viable”. The blood of over 47,000,000 innocent babies stains our record as Americans because of this infamous decision.

If you have ever stood in the eerie death camps of Dachau and Buchenwald, Germany, or near Salispils, Latvia, as I have, and if you have viewed the pictures of emaciated human corpses stacked like firewood to be burned or pushed into gaping common graves, you have sensed the presence of Satanic evil and felt its cold chill in your heart. I beg you to look at the evil philosophy of evolutionism behind these atrocities. Do not refuse to recognize the truth that applied social Darwinism caused this suffering and destruction.

III. Ruthless Communism

Karl Marx was so enamored with evolution that he offered to dedicate his book, Das Kapital to Charles Darwin, who was at least smart enough to reject the dubious honor.

It is no secret that in every nation where communism has conquered as the ruling philosophy, it has been preceded by the saturation of the society with the teaching of biological Darwinism. **Social Darwinism and ruthless communism rest on the same foundation—the philosophy of evolutionism!**

The devastation perpetrated by Hitler, Goehring, Himmler, and Hess with their gruesome gestapo has been exceeded many times by the practitioners of ruthless communism such as Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Mao, Pol Pot and Chauscheskye. They perpetrated mass murders in the guise of “progress” and under the banner of biological and social Darwinism.

Leon Trotsky, the propagandist and military leader of the communist forces that seized power in Russia after the revolution of 1917, became the leader of the Society of the Godless because of his total uncritical acceptance of Darwinism and abounding faith in Marxism. He wrote that the idea of deterministic evolution took complete possession of him after he read Darwin’s Origin of Species and his Autobiography. Trotsky would probably have been the next dictator following Lenin if Stalin had not proved to be the “fittest” who survived by having Trotsky murdered.

Leon Trotsky was assassinated in 1940 in Mexico where he had fled for safety, but was stalked and killed by a hit man of Josef Stalin, another who had been led into an

atheistic worldview through Darwin's writings. Both Trotsky and Lenin were functioning in harmony with their presuppositions from evolutionism. You see, if we are merely evolved animals, we have no higher value than stray cats and can be eliminated when we become a nuisance. If I believe that there is no Creator who made me, then He does not own me and I am not accountable to Him. Therefore, there is no absolute standard for right or wrong; there is nothing wrong with murdering one or many or multitudes of people if it serves what I consider a greater purpose. No wonder Stalin became one of the world's worst mass murderers.

Jeffrey Dahmer—homosexual, torturer, murderer, cannibal—was converted to Jesus Christ in prison. After his conversion he admitted that evolutionism had been his worldview, which had deadened his conscience so that he could commit such horrible atrocities.

Conclusion:

What do the miserable sweat shops of the industrial revolution, the death camps of Germany, the gulags of Russia, and the forced labor camps of China or Vietnam have in common? **The philosophy of evolution is the mindset under girding all of them! The catastrophic social consequences of the widespread acceptance of Darwinism have been horrible almost beyond imagination.** While the bloodbath of ruthless social practices was on the surface over differing economic and political systems, the historical facts point to the underlying philosophy of evolutionary thinking as the actual cause of all these heartless systems and practices!

Therefore, in order to make positive social changes in our strife-torn world during this 21st century, I recommend that these necessary steps be taken:

1. **“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven...”** Lamentations 3:40-41 (NIV). Without a return to the worship of Almighty God and acceptance of Jesus as the Prince of Peace, I see no hope for positive change!
2. **Pray for God to open the eyes of those who have been blinded by the philosophy of evolution** (those who seek truth only in purely naturalistic causes). Their philosophy has trapped them in the paradigm of rejecting even the possibility of supernatural intervention for the creation of the universe in the past or for positive change in the present. They have no true basis for hope in the future. Following two world wars, the evolutionary illusions of creating our own utopia have sunk into a nihilistic philosophy of despair and anarchy. **Those who are analyzing the causes for school shootings in America need to seriously look at the hopelessness of this philosophy being taught in school, including its inherent lack of respect for human life.**

Isn't it ironic and tragic to you that a high school student may go directly from a psychology class, where he is being taught self esteem, into a “science” class, where he is taught that he is the product of random chance with no meaning or purpose and that his ancestors slithered from the slime? **After children are taught by evolution that they are nothing but animals, why are we so surprised when they act like animals?**

3. **We must abandon and vigorously expose the fallacies and hoaxes of Darwinism.** These fallacies and hoaxes are well documented in books such as:

- a. Icons of Evolution by Jonathan Wells
- b. Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation by Dennis Petersen ¹³
- c. The Lie by Ken Ham
- d. Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds by Phillip Johnson
- e. Refuting Evolution and Refuting Evolution 2 by Jonathan Sarfati
- f. The Genesis Flood by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris
- g. The Collapse of Evolution by Scott M. Huse
- h. Why Do Men Believe Evolution Against All Odds? by Carl E. Baugh
- i. The Origin of Life Equipping Course by Mike Riddle and Dr. Bob Compton
- j. Origins – Linking Science and Scripture by Ariel A. Roth
- k. In the Minds of Men by Ian Taylor

Other excellent sources of information are “Answers” magazine, published quarterly by Answers in Genesis, “Acts & Facts” published monthly by Institute for Creation Research, and a wealth of information in Russian by Christian Center for Science and Apologetics (Sergei Golovin’s Ministry) in Crimea.

The best summary of macro-evolution I’ve ever heard is from Frank Peretti: **“From the goo to you by way of the zoo!”** And the best evaluation of its scientific value is: **“Evolution is a fairytale for grown-ups. It has helped nothing to the progress of science.”** ~ Statement by Dr. Louis Bounoure, Director of Research at the National Center of Scientific Research in France. Mark Twain was not a Christian philosopher, nor was he a scientist, but he was a keen observer of people (including scientists). One of his characteristically witty sayings was that science is that discipline of study wherein you could get such a rich return of speculation from such a meager investment of facts. This observation is not only humorous – it is accurate and pertinent to the issue of macro-evolution. Evolutionism is speculation. It is humanistic religion. It is “science falsely so called” 1 Timothy 6:20 (KJV). **It is not true science!**

4. **We also need to vigorously promote human dignity and the sanctity of human life.** To do so requires that we recognize the fact that we cannot consistently promote either human dignity or the sanctity of human life from an evolutionary worldview, because the basis for both concepts is the firm conviction that human beings are created in the image of God. Both the Constitution of the United States of America and the Bill of Rights reflect the fact that the framers of these original documents understood this perspective. It is expressed in such phrases as **“all men are created equal”** and **“endowed by their Creator.”** Here are these phrases in context: **“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. That they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”** ~ Declaration of Independence, 1776
5. **The most vital step we can take to make positive change in our 21st century is to promote the honor of God as our Creator, our Redeemer, and a very present Helper in troubled times.**

“Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, ‘My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by

my God'? Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Isaiah 40:26-31 (NIV).

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, and flock under his care." Psalm 95:1-7 (NIV).

"For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness." Psalm 107:9 (NKJV).

Final Statement of Hope and Challenge:

The everlasting gospel (good news) of hope in Jesus as our Redeemer is built solidly upon the foundational truth that our Redeemer was first our Creator!

Revelation 14:6-8 says, "Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had **the eternal gospel** to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said in a loud voice, 'Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come. **Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.**'" (NIV).

In order truly to worship Him in spirit and truth, each one of us must turn back to the Heavenly Father like the repentant son did in the story of the prodigal (Luke 15:11-32). "You have made us for Yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You." ~ Augustine. "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man that only Jesus Christ can fill." ~ Pascal.

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Questions for Chapter 3

1. The purpose of this lesson is to demonstrate from history that the wide acceptance of the biological belief of evolution quickly turned into social Darwinism with _____ results.
2. True science examines empirical evidence and must be observable, repeatable and _____.
3. When we accurately define "science" we realize that evolutionism does not fit the description. Why?
4. Micro-evolution is _____; macro-evolution is _____.
5. Without new _____ added to the gene pool, macro-evolution is _____ because the idea of upward progress is basic and essential to the theory of evolution.

6. The battle between creationism and evolutionism is the conflict of opposing _____, and both of these _____ are religious (faith systems).
7. If we are the products of random chance with no plan or purpose, then the human brain is also a product of random chance and cannot be _____ to produce rational thought.
8. Darwinism provided the mental and social justification for the brutal capitalists who practiced the law of the _____.
9. Darwinism gave Hitler the psychological and social justification for treating people like _____.
10. Social Darwinism and ruthless communism rest on the foundation of the philosophy of _____.

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Chapter 4

THE FOUNTAIN OF TRUTH

**(Ready to Answer Those Who Ask, “How Do I Know What is True?”
or “How Can We Know God Has Spoken?”)**

How do I know what is really true?

Through the centuries certain men have risen to levels of learning far surpassing the general public. Many a scholar has given his life over to a diligent search for ultimate truth, and in so doing has attained a scope of knowledge broader than the majority of human beings would gain in ten lifetimes. Among such individuals could be named Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Descartes, Kant, Hume, Kierkegaard and hundreds of others. However, the attainment of vast realms of knowledge does not solve the problem of gaining ultimate reality, for if it did all of these prominent philosophers would harmonize in their conclusion to the question, “What is truth?” The philosophers do not agree about what truth is. To the contrary, they sharply disagree and represent such extremes in thinking as solipsism, the view that the individual self alone exists (each mind makes up its own reality); and skepticism, which asserts that knowledge is impossible. Gorgias, a Greek skeptic, declared that nothing exists, and that if it did, we could not know it. He asserted that even if a man did know anything, he could not impart this knowledge to his fellows. Doesn’t this make you wonder, “Why did he write this?” Such educated ignorance is revolting and brings to mind the words of the apostle Paul, “Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?” 1 Corinthians 1:20 (NIV). Human wisdom is incapable of knowing ultimate truth without divine revelation. (See Francis Schaeffer’s Escape from Reason).

Basic Assumption

In order for a man to know anything, he must first hold an assumption, which is a prelude to all knowledge—he must believe that he is a rational being capable of attaining

knowledge. Gorgias denied rationality, and thus came to deny even self existence. Most of us, however, will have no problem in assuming that we are capable of thinking, reasoning, and gaining knowledge.

Limits of Space and Time

God is unlimited and all knowing, therefore not hampered by the confusing factors of space and time; but man, His creature, is a finite being held by the restraining elements of a mortal body and stuck “in time”. It is impossible for a human being to be in more than one place at a time. No person can be simultaneously cheering at a football game in New York City and teaching school in St. Louis, Missouri. Our modern methods of communication have widened tremendously man’s sphere of knowledge, but have by no means freed man from the restrictions of space and time. Every human being’s knowledge is limited to what he can personally experience and learn through various methods of education during his lifetime upon the earth. A man cannot possibly know everything that is happening, that has happened, or will happen on the earth or in the heavens. Man does not and cannot know the future (without supernatural revelation).

I believe that the distinction between knowledge and wisdom is that knowledge is the acquiring of information, and wisdom is the ability to accurately and effectively apply that information in the proper setting and with good timing. Many of us have been deeply hurt by professors, ministers, doctors or others with barrels full of knowledge, but not a thimble full of wisdom about how to properly use their knowledge.

Sources of Knowledge

Although there may be many sources of knowledge, the purpose of this chapter is to examine four primary sources of knowledge and show how God has used each of these sources of knowledge to reveal Himself and His truth to us. Each of these methods has its assets and its limitations, and each has its advocates who seek to elevate it far above all others. These methods are: 1. Personal experience; 2. Testimony; 3. Reason; 4. Intuition. Let us consider each of these in order.

1. Personal Experience:

Most of what we know is learned through what we see, hear, touch, taste and smell. This is called “empirical knowledge”. A child learns that night is dark, fire is hot, and water is wet through personal experience. The memories that fix themselves most permanently in our minds are the memories of those things which we have experienced. Empirical knowledge is obtained by forming ideas in accordance with observed data. Personal experience is a prominent and valid source of knowledge, but it is not the only source.

When I was a young boy, perhaps four or five years old, my grandmother told me that most of the earth’s surface was covered with water. I thought she was terribly confused. According to my personal experience I knew she was wrong, because rivers, lakes and mud puddles do not cover most of the earth’s surface. (I had never seen an ocean then.) My reason was based entirely on empiricism, and it illustrates vividly the fact that empirical knowledge alone is never enough. It is reported that when Marco Polo related to those in a tropical area who had never seen ice, that in his homeland the water would become hard and people could walk on it, they considered him a bold-faced liar.

Why? Simply because his testimony did not fit into their realm of experience. Many people reject the resurrection of Jesus and the other miracles recorded in the Bible on the same basis. As a prisoner to the limits of space and time, how foolish for finite man to pass judgment on the infinite, Almighty God!

Empiricism is the philosophical view that we can know only what we have found out through the senses. Thomas the disciple was an empiricist. He rejected the testimony of the women who had seen Jesus in His resurrected body; he would not believe the emphatic declarations of his closest companions that they had seen Jesus; he even refused to consider Jesus' prophecies concerning His resurrection. He said to the other disciples, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand in his side, I will not believe it." John 20:25 (NIV). Jesus proved to Thomas that personal experience is not the only valid method of learning, and He pronounced a blessing on those who had faith enough to accept valid testimony without personally seeing, hearing, or touching him. "Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; see my hand. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.' Then Thomas said to him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'" John 20:27-29 (NIV)

2. Testimony

How do we know that George Washington was the first President of the United States? How do we know Napoleon Bonaparte tried to conquer the world? How do we know Martin Luther ever lived? By testimony, my friend, by testimony! History is merely a compilation of written testimony, and we rely upon the truth of historical records day by day. When historians agree, when ancient records agree, and when compiled evidence agrees upon any person, event, date, or place, we accept the testimony as fact. Both ancient and modern court systems are based upon testimony. A solitary witness is almost without value, but there is force in numbers. Paul instructed Timothy not even to consider an accusation against an elder unless it was by the mouth of two or three witnesses, which was based on Old Testament law.

Testimony has its grave dangers as well as its values and a person must always consider three things about an authority before accepting his testimony: 1. his competence, 2. his honesty, 3. his agreement with other authorities.

3. Reason

Can we really believe that $2+2 = 4$? Can we really know that if $a = c$ and $b = c$, then $a = b$? Yes, we can if we accept the postulate that man is capable of reason and simple logic. Reason is basic to all thought, and without it all the information we could gain would be a disorganized jumble of facts leading nowhere. Reason enables men to systematize facts and draw the necessary conclusions. We may take the law of cause and effect and reason by simple logic that there is a God. The intricate design of a flower, a snowflake, and the entire universe each point to a Designer. Every effect must have a cause. Law, order, and design do not happen by chance. Every scientist will agree that there are laws of nature, yet some of them ignore the fact that these very laws demand a Lawgiver.

Many philosophers have elevated human logic far above its proper sphere and have actually enthroned reason as their god. These thinkers hold to a system known as rationalism—the view that knowledge consists of concepts which we have thought out. They believe that knowledge is attained only by comparing ideas with ideas.

Rationalists fail to acknowledge the limits of reason. The philosopher's mind becomes the final criterion of truth. The finite character of man is practically ignored and mind is elevated and esteemed as infinite. One day these men will stand speechless in the shadow of the Almighty. What will they say when God asks, "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. . . . Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been shown to you? Have you seen the gates of the shadow of death? Have you comprehended the vast expanses of the earth? Tell me, if you know all this." Job 38:4, 16-18 (NIV). They, as Job, will be unable to answer even one of His questions.

Men must recognize that some things are beyond human perception. When we humbly acknowledge our limitations and remove the image of self from the throne of adoration, then, and only then, can we begin to appreciate God as the King of Scholars and the Prince of Wisdom. We will then open our mouths and pour from our hearts words such as those of Paul: "O the depth of the riches, the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his adviser?' 'Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen." Romans 11:33-36 (NIV).

4. Intuition

Intuition has been defined as the "knowing of an object in a manner not determined by any previous act of reasoning. It is the direct apprehension of truth apart from any reasoning process." Birds migrate south in the fall and north in the spring; salmon forge their way from the sea to the high mountain streams, and spiders spin their webs by intuition or instinct. Some humans have the innate ability to sense when danger is near to the family. Some twins know by intuition what is happening to the other twin. There is no denying that intuitive knowledge does have its place.

While intuition must be recognized as a possible source of truth, it is a poor test. Before intuition in any instance can be admitted as valid it must be examined in the light of evidence and accepted or rejected on the basis of its correspondence with the known facts. If not checked and harmonized with reality from other sources of knowledge, it can reach absurd proportions. Many religious leaders have claimed intuitive knowledge or direct insight into truth by the revelation of God. Some have even claimed to be infallible, and religious denominations have been founded on their "revelations", yet none of them harmonize with each other or with tested facts. Often one "infallible" leader contradicts another "infallible" leader. How inconsistent! Truth will never contradict truth! One of the most powerful evidences of the truth of the Bible is that it consists of the compiled writings of over forty different men, who unite their voices in harmony, which blends into a great crescendo of truth and power.

VALIDITY OF REVELATION

In the revelation of God is found harmony and ultimate reality. God has revealed Himself to man through every possible source of knowledge! He has not left a leaf

unturned in the catalogue of communications as He seeks to reveal His divine love and redemptive power to a people lost in sin. God is the foundation of ultimate truth. Mankind has deep inside his soul an intuitive knowledge of God. Paul said to the Romans, “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.” Romans 1:18-19 (NIV). God has also appealed to the reason of man through the wonders of nature. “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” Romans 1:20 (NIV). David said, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.” Psalm 19:1-2 (NIV). Through the ages God has communicated his message by means of both oral and written testimony. The Bible is the compiled testimony of all God’s inspired speakers and writers, and they are complementary to and harmonize with each other. Rather than contradicting one another, they all blend their voices together and build to one great crescendo of truth. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” John 14:6. This is the fact to which all of the Old Testament prophets pointed, and of which all the New Testament writers testified. God the Son stepped down from the throne room of the universe and trod with sandaled feet the paths of temptation, trial, hardship, and death that men might personally experience Him. The apostle John wrote, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.” 1 John 1:1-4 (NIV). God sent His only begotten Son with outstretched hands and a bleeding heart all the way to Calvary to win our love. If God has not done enough, my friend, to convince our minds, convict our hearts, and win our souls to Him, we are hopelessly lost. God is not like the man who knocks his mule down with a two by four to get his attention (although we human beings can be even more stubborn than a mule), but He has clearly manifested Himself so that anyone who truly seeks Him can find Him. The response to the manifestations of His power, wisdom, glory and love is ours.

HOW DO WE RESPOND?

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Acts 16:31 (NIV).

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” Acts 2:38 (NIV). Belief, repentance and baptism form a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace might increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a

new life. If we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him through baptism in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.” Romans 6:1-7 (NIV).

We see that in the Bible the word “baptism” means immersion, because in **baptism we are buried and resurrected with Christ!** (If that has not yet happened to you, then you have not yet been baptized in the Biblical sense.) The Greek word for baptism even means “immersion.” That is important because the New Testament was first written in Greek. It is also clear, even without a knowledge of Greek, that the word “baptism” as used in the Bible means “immersion” or “washing.”

“Now John was also **baptizing** in Aenon near Salim, **because there was much water there.** And they came and were baptized.” John 3:23 (NKJV). If the word “baptism” had not meant immersion, John the Baptist would not have needed “much water”. “Jesus answered, **‘I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.** Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.” John 3:5-6 (NIV.)

By being born anew of the water and the Spirit, we become children of God. God gives us His Holy Spirit to form us step by step into the perfect image of His Son, Who is our pattern. “But whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. **But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory,** just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”

2 Corinthians 3:16-18 (NASB). Yes! How wonderful that the more we concentrate on Jesus, and continue looking to Him as the Author and Finisher of our faith, the more His Holy Spirit transforms us into His likeness. As we seek, knock, and ask for greater glimpses of His majesty, power, love, and grace, He answers our prayers because we are praying in the Spirit and according to His will. As His effulgent glory fills our vision and we become more and more enraptured with His presence and His purpose in our lives, we let go of the petty indulgences of sin which so easily ensnare us and we no longer need to clamor for self-glorification or self-actualization. Self-esteem is not the issue! Jesus’ esteem is THE issue! In all things He is to have preeminence! When He has preeminence in our purpose, plans, and preoccupations the result is purity, power, and productivity for His glory. “Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” I John 3:2-3 (NKJV)

CHRIST—The Wisdom of God

CHRIST—The Power of God

CHRIST—The Love of God

It is appropriate to note that the only person referred to as “reverend” in the Holy Scriptures is God Himself. Psalm 111:9 (KJV) says, “...Holy and reverend is HIS NAME!” The next verse says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” We who are teachers of the Word are mere men. We are only servants of the Most High.

Let's be wise enough to refuse to wear descriptive titles of honor that belong to God alone! Yes, I recognize that many people seek to be courteous and respectful by giving us such titles of religious distinction. Sometimes the term "Reverend" has been printed with my name without my prior knowledge or consent. Whenever possible, however, let's politely decline and refuse to wear such titles.

Jesus brought these truths sharply into focus when he said, "But you, do not be called Rabbi: for One is your Teacher, the Christ; and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for one is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be abased; and he who humbles himself shall be exalted." Matthew 23:8-12 (NKJV).

James wrote, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." James 1:5 (NASB). If you truly want wisdom, seek for it in the right place—in the person of Jesus Christ! May Christ, who is the Wisdom of God and the Power of God become the captain of your salvation. (See 1 Corinthians 1:24-25).

"...Behold, now is 'THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,' behold, now is 'THE DAY OF SALVATION—'" 2 Corinthians 6:2 (NASB). Let us seek the Lord Jesus Christ with all of our hearts while it is still the acceptable time!

Jesus said, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:38 NASB)

THE FOUNTAIN OF TRUTH IS JESUS CHRIST!

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Questions for Chapter 4

1. How do we know that gaining vast amounts of knowledge does not mean gaining truth in order to know ultimate reality?
2. What basic assumption must an individual hold in order to learn anything and know anything?
3. What are the four sources of attaining knowledge?
4. What is the weakness of the philosophical system known as empiricism?
5. What three factors must we consider about an individual giving a testimony before accepting it as true?
6. Although logic and reason point us to the existence of God, yet the rationalist philosophy has a weakness. What is that weakness?
7. Intuition is similar to instinct and is a valid source of knowledge, but it also has its weakness. What is the weakness?
8. Briefly describe how God has revealed Himself to us through intuition.
9. Briefly describe how God has revealed Himself to us through reason.
10. Briefly describe how God has revealed Himself to us through testimony.

Bonus question:

Briefly describe how God has revealed Himself to us through personal experience (empirical knowledge).

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Chapter 5

THE POWER OF PERSPECTIVE

(Ready to Answer Objections of Secular Philosophy and Post-Modernism)

This year's theme for the symposium is "Maintaining Moral and Physical Health in Times of Cultural Change." Since moral health dramatically affects physical health in many ways, my focus in this paper will be upon moral health. I believe that the source of our moral health must come from objective moral standards given by God Himself. Also from God Himself we can receive forgiveness and a new start, because all of us have sinned and fallen short of God's moral standards. Therefore, belief in God is essential to moral health for two reasons.

1. God is the source of objective moral standards.
2. God is the source of forgiveness and inner peace when we break those moral standards (even though physical and legal consequences may still remain).

I understand that one thing most psychologists agree on is that anywhere from 70 to 90 per cent of all patients in mental institutions could walk away free if they would do two things:

1. Accept forgiveness.
2. Forgive others.

I believe that they desperately need God and His grace to do both.

The deepest psychological needs, as well as the deepest philosophical questions of the human heart are answered only by the Word of God. A human being ponders and searches to know "Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" "What am I doing here?" "Is there purpose and meaning to life?" "How can I live a significant life?" "Is there life after death?" Truly God has put eternity in our hearts. When many of Jesus' disciples turned back from following Him, Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" Then Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." John 6:67-68 (NKJV). However, some people seem to believe that God's Truth is too restrictive, so they are searching in the philosophies of men, including post-modernism.

Post Modernism

One dominant post-modern concept is the idea that people can hold conflicting beliefs and yet both can be right. "You have your truth, and I have my truth. That's okay. We can both be right." This idea violates the basic logical law of non-contradiction, when we are discussing facts, but it can be accurate about opinions. For example, two individuals may view the same piece of artwork and one says, "It's great!",

but the other shrugs and says, “I think it’s very poor quality.” In this case each man’s “truth” is merely his subjective opinion.

In modern culture where tolerance of almost anything and everything has become the only virtue, it isn’t polite to tell someone he is wrong. However, I’m not so concerned about what is polite, but what is true. We cannot have morality without truth!

I read of a case where a ship had hit a pillar of a bridge, causing a portion of the bridge to collapse on a foggy night. Fourteen cars went over the edge before a fisherman from a boat below ran up onto the bridge and waved a flare in front of a truck driver who was headed for the edge. He was warning the truck driver that he was headed for destruction. To his credit and safety, the truck driver took heed to the warning and stopped just before the broken edge. What if the truck driver had said, “You believe there is something wrong with the bridge. That’s your truth. I believe the bridge is fine. That’s my truth”? His belief system would have plunged him to destruction because it was wrong. The reality—objective truth—was that the bridge was out.

Major Premise

My major premise is that the basis for all moral truth is the Word of God, the Bible. Therefore, those who reject God’s truth and accept a humanistic perspective are headed for moral chaos and destruction. The over-arching theme for these conferences is “Critical Concerns from a Christian Perspective.” Therefore, it is my conviction that I must share with you a Christian perspective by warning that to reject God’s Word for human opinion leads to moral disaster. Is homosexuality wrong? Is pornography wrong? Is abortion wrong? Is murder wrong? Is rape wrong? Is stealing wrong? Why or why not? If you do not have the Word of God as the objective standard for your belief, then all you have is your own opinion.

My critical concern is that in our post-modern, swiftly changing culture most human beings are ignoring the one and only objective standard for our moral health—God’s Truth, the Bible. The results of neglecting God’s answers are immorality, frustration, despair, addictions, divorces, suicides, fighting, jealousy, confusion, etc.

If the Bible is not the absolute and objective standard for determining morals, then who has the authority to declare, “You shall not commit murder”? Indeed, even as we speak, innocent babies are being legally murdered by abortion, and infanticide has become acceptable. In such a climate of moral free fall, who can say that Hitler was wrong to murder Jews? He considered them non-human scum and the cause of Germany’s economic problems. Therefore, killing them was a virtue according to his perspective.

During one of our symposiums a woman professor of philosophy began her paper by declaring that all truth is relative and that there are no absolutes. In the conclusion she asserted that each society is responsible to set its own moral standards and there is no higher authority. During the question time I asked her if she was absolutely sure that there are no absolutes, because she had just made a very strong absolute declaration. Then I set up a role-play scenario to examine her conclusion. “The year is 1939. The place is Germany. I am Heinrich Himmler, and you are a Jewess. According to your own philosophy, can you give me one good reason why I should not sentence you to a

concentration camp?” To this question she gave a politician type answer—a volume of words with no substance and no real answer.

The fact is that perspective is powerful. Those who accept human wisdom as supreme tend to reject God’s truth and mock Christian believers as simpletons. However, the Bible says that the wisdom of men is foolishness with God. You must choose whom you believe.

The Foolishness of the Cross Wisdom and Foolishness—A Matter of Perspective

The apostle Paul preached a powerful message on Mars Hill, but for most philosophers at Athens the preaching of the cross was utter foolishness. Yes, they were ready to listen to what Paul had to say (they would listen to anyone once), but they would not accept the truth of the gospel. When Paul told them that Christ died on a Roman cross and rose from the dead the third day, a few believed, but most of the others began to mock. They would not examine the evidence Paul offered, for he had preached the “foolishness of the cross.” Yet Paul absolutely refused to make the vain philosophies of this world the basis of his appeal, for by doing so he would make void the power and the wisdom of the cross. Notice his words to the Christians in Corinth:

“For the message of 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; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.’

“Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher 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 Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.” 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (NIV).

The Wisdom of Men

The word “philosophy” means the love of wisdom. When I enrolled in a philosophy class in college, I expected something much more impressive as a course of study than what I found it to be. I expected to be dumbfounded by the great wisdom of the learned philosophers. But instead, the wisdom of men was chaff after feasting on the wheat of God’s Word.

Vanity of Vanities!

Here are some examples of the highly esteemed “wisdom” of the Greek philosophers that I encountered. Heraclitus reasoned that everything in the universe is in a constant state of fluctuation, and the only thing that is permanent is the law of change. His disciple, Cratylus, took it one step further and decided that since everything is constantly changing, not even the law of change could be permanent. Therefore he concluded that since even the meanings of the words we use are in constant flux, it is senseless to attempt to carry on a conversation. He reached the point where his only response, when spoken to, was to wiggle his finger to indicate that he had heard.

Phyrrro, “greatest” philosopher of the third century B.C. Platonic Academy, became so skeptical that he decided it was impossible to distinguish between truth and falsehood in any realm. With this view he determined that the only logical thing for a man to do was to suspend all judgment. Thus it is reported that once when he was walking straight toward a cliff, his disciples had to divert him to keep him from walking over the edge.

Solomon evaluated practically every basic human ideology and wrote, “vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” (Read Ecclesiastes in the Bible for a full clarification of his premise). Human wisdom without divine revelation to enlighten it is utterly vain because it can never answer the ultimate questions of life as to where we came from, what our purpose is upon earth and what happens to us after death.

Moral Relativism = Moral Chaos

Humanistic philosophy has now led us into the maze of moral relativism. Do you realize that moral relativism is actually self-contradicting? C. S. Lewis once commented that the same man who declares that there are no fixed moral laws or absolutes will gripe if you steal his orange from his lunch. In America the moral climate has become so confused that a young unmarried couple only got two years in prison for murdering their baby by smashing his head with a brick and throwing him in the trash. Yet a man in Chicago was sentenced to ten years in prison for killing cats. That is despicable! It shows how distorted human morals become without the Word of God as our standard.

The line of reasoning behind these decisions shows a clear shift away from Christian morality, which honors the intrinsic value of human life because we are created in the image of God. In humanistic thinking, which is based on evolutionism, human beings are only animals and are not an endangered species; therefore, there is no intrinsic value in a human baby over a cat, a rat or a whale. A human being is only valuable if someone wants him. The young couple didn’t want their baby and their crime in killing the baby was waiting until after he was born. There is no punishment for murdering a baby by abortion even when in the process of delivery. The man who killed cats made the legal blunder of killing cats someone else wanted; therefore, his animal cruelty was deemed far worse than cruelty to an unwanted baby. Do you realize that this is the same warped humanistic philosophy that Hitler used to justify exterminating people he didn’t want? **Notice the power of an evolutionistic perspective, for Hitler was acting out his belief system, and so were the judges who gave such distorted decisions!**

Rejecting God’s Light is a Moral Issue!

True philosophy is beautiful and leads us into the open arms of Almighty God, but much humanistic philosophy is no more than a futile effort to reason around the truth and identity of Almighty God. The sham intellectualism of unbelief is merely a cover-up for what is actually a moral issue.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” John 3:16-21 (NIV).

The Wisdom of God (True Philosophy Loves God)

Actually there is no secular humanistic system of philosophy that rightly deserves the title “philosophy” because all true love for wisdom brings us to the One who is Wisdom. Just as Christians must face and challenge the “opposition of science, falsely so called” (1 Timothy 6:20), so also must we face and challenge the oppositions of philosophy, falsely so called.

“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.” James 3:13-17 (NASB).

Conclusion

Whose wisdom do you choose to follow, apply, and promote for your own moral health and the moral health of our nations—God’s wisdom with its solid basis of objective moral standards or man’s wisdom, which is constantly changing with the winds of cultural shifts? Which perspective promotes moral health—a God-honoring perspective, which accepts His moral standards revealed in the Bible, or a humanistic perspective, which inevitably slides down into moral relativism?

Dostoevsky wrote that if there were no God, then anything would be permissible. The more our society has rejected God’s standards and accepted secular humanistic ideals, the more permissive toward evil we have become. The legacy of the sexual revolution of the 1960’s has been the continuing degeneration of moral standards running parallel with the sharp rise of divorce rates, crime rates, and the proliferation of

despicable and violent pornography. It is only logical and tragically evident that the more homes there are that are broken up by pornography and adultery, the more lonely, hurt, angry kids there are wandering our streets getting involved in drugs, gangs, prostitution, homosexuality, and every type of crime. Dostoevsky spoke truth!

When I was growing up, homosexuality was rarely mentioned, but I did hear about one strange man in our hometown, who liked to dress like a woman. Now “gay rights” activists demand that homosexuality should be considered normal and marriage between same sex individuals should be legalized so that they can have both the social approval and monetary benefits of marriage. However, marriage according to the Word of God is true unity with diversity, because it is the unity of male with female in a covenant union of one man with one woman for life. The purposes of marriage according to the Word of God are for mutual companionship, legitimate satisfaction of sexual desire, reproduction of children, and the training of those children to be godly, responsible human beings. Children who grow up in stable homes with both a mother and a father are far more likely to be healthy, happy, and productive citizens of society. The purpose of marriage can never be fulfilled by legalizing the sexual deviancy of man with man or woman with woman and calling it “marriage.” You can put a Mercedes hood ornament on a Fiat and call it a Mercedes, but changing the hood ornament and the name does not change the reality. Calling the immoral union of same sex individuals “marriage” does not change the reality that it is perversion. God’s Word calls homosexuality an abomination. (See Leviticus 18:22 and Romans 1:18-32. Especially note verses 26-27.) Truly we read and see the evidence of such perversion during “gay rights” parades, when homosexuals “glory in their shame,” strip themselves bare, and openly perform despicable acts. Yet Jesus Christ died for sinners and His arms are open to those who come to Him in repentance.

When I was a child, I heard the word “gay” used according to its true meaning of being carefree and bubbling with happiness. Homosexuals captured this word for their advertising campaign and have distorted it. Some of the most angry, hostile and suicidal individuals are those promoting this perversion. They are not gay! However, the arms of Jesus Christ are open to all repentant sinners. Those who come to Him for forgiveness experience true joy and peace, so they can bubble over with happiness.

All moral standards must have a foundation. On which foundation do you choose to build—God’s wisdom or man’s wisdom? Moses said to his people after reviewing God’s laws: “...*I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life...*” Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (NIV).

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Questions for Chapter 5

1. List two reasons why belief in God is essential to moral health.
2. Most psychologists agree that 70% to 90% of all patients in mental institutions could walk away free if they would do two things. What are those two things?
3. One dominant post-modern concept is the idea that people can hold conflicting beliefs and yet both can be _____.
4. This idea violates the basic logical law of _____.

5. How does the illustration of the collapsed bridge illustrate the foolishness of post-modern thinking?
6. The one and only objective standard for our moral health is _____
7. Paul absolutely refused to make the vain philosophies of this world the basis of his appeal, for by doing so he would make _____ the power and wisdom of the cross.
8. The word 'philosophy' means the love of _____, therefore all true love of wisdom brings us to _____, who is wisdom.
9. Human wisdom without God's revelation is utterly vain because it can never answer the ultimate questions of _____.
10. C. S. Lewis once commented that the same man who declares that there are no fixed moral laws will complain if you _____ his orange.

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Chapter 6

DOES THE BIBLE CONTRADICT ITSELF CONCERNING SALVATION? (Ready to Answer Those Who Say the Bible is Full of Contradictions)

Introduction:

Have you ever heard someone brazenly assert, "The Bible is full of contradictions!"? A good response is to simply ask, "Oh, really? Can you show me one?" Then hand him a Bible. Often the one making such a bold claim is only repeating what he has heard and cannot give even one example.

However, if he does give an example of a supposed contradiction, it can usually be explained and clarified simply by reading what the Bible actually says. Emphasize CONTEXT! Read the passage in the immediate context of the chapter in which it is found; then consider its truth in the larger context of the book of the Bible and the message of the Word of God as a whole.

If someone does show you a problem you cannot answer immediately, this is simply an opportunity to set up a Bible study appointment by saying, "That is a very good question, which deserves some research. Can I get back to you after I study and ponder this question?"

Now, I want to delve into an apparent contradiction, which has troubled even many sincere believers. Does the Bible contradict itself concerning salvation?

Have you ever noticed that the question, "What must I do to be saved?" has been answered three times in the book of Acts and each time a different answer is given? Why? The answer cannot be that there is a different gospel for the Jews than for the Gentiles, because the apostle Paul said there is only one gospel. "*But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*" Galatians 1:8 (KJV). The gospel of the cross of Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles, changed enmity into peace, and made both one body in Him. See Ephesians 2:11-17. The answer

to this apparent dilemma is found in the context of the following verses: Acts 16:31; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!

In Acts 16:31, Paul and Silas were answering the question of an unbeliever who had asked them the question, “**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**” This Philippian jailor was a pagan and probably knew little, if anything, about the one true God and His only begotten Son. Therefore, the preachers told him, “**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**” However, they did not tell him, “This is the only thing you are to do in order to be saved.” The record says, “*Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.*” Acts 16:32-34 (NKJV). (This obviously was not infant baptism, for they all believed. An infant is already safe in the arms of Jesus. He is not capable of believing or obeying the gospel.) **This man demonstrated that he really believed the Word of the Lord, for when he heard the gospel, he obeyed it that very hour of the night [midnight].** Notice that the man rejoiced after he had obeyed. Notice also that the preachers did not tell him to wait until Easter to receive baptism and church membership. This is commonly practiced by many churches because it is so much more convenient than midnight baptisms and it makes a better showing to have lots of people to baptize at one time. Let’s forsake such man-made schemes and return to the simple example of the apostles! They knew the urgency of obedience to the gospel! Do we?

Repent and Be Baptized

On the day of Pentecost Peter preached a powerful message proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord to the thousands of Jews gathered in Jerusalem for the feast. Before he could even finish some of them cried out saying, “*Brethren, what shall we do?*” Acts 2:37 (KJV).

“*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”* Acts 2:37-38 (NASB).

Why didn’t Peter tell them to “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” as Paul and Silas told the jailer? Simply because they already believed Jesus to be Christ, the Son of Almighty God, and they were cut to the heart for crucifying Him. They believed so strongly that they interrupted Peter to ask what to do! Notice that he didn’t tell them “only believe”. These were the people who worshipped the one true God, had heard Jesus teach and preach His great message, witnessed His mighty miracles, saw the sky turn black and felt the earth tremble when He was crucified, and many of them had even seen Him in the flesh after His resurrection. The very scene before them, prior to Peter’s message, was an electrifying manifestation of miraculous power, for God had poured out His Holy Spirit with a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, tongues with the appearance of fire that came down and hovered over each of the apostles, and the tongues of the twelve Galileans were loosed so that they were able to speak clearly and praise

God in the languages of many different nations. These people had seen and heard so much that they couldn't help but believe in Jesus Christ! Those with honest hearts accepted Him. Those with dishonest hearts persecuted the believers. But God wasn't through!

Arise and Be Baptized!

When the persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, met Jesus in a blinding light on the road to Damascus, he fell down trembling and astonished before Him. He asked, "*What shall I do, Lord?*" Acts 22:10 (NKJV). Jesus told him to go into Damascus and there it would be told him what he must do. For three days and three nights the Lord left Saul in total darkness with blinded eyes so that the heinous nature of his crimes might loom before him. God allowed him time to fully come to grips with an agonizing conscience. "**Godly sorrow leads to repentance.**" 2 Corinthians 7:10. When Saul could bear his sins no longer, the Lord directed Ananias to him with these words:

"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash your sins away, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16 (NKJV). Saul, the persecutor, obeyed the gospel and became a powerful evangelist, Paul the Apostle.

The Clear Answer

Why did the New Testament preachers give different answers to the same question? **Because they took a man where he was and led him to where he needed to be.** Unbelievers were told to believe. Believers were told to repent and be baptized. Repentant believers were told to be baptized without delay while calling on the name of the Lord. May all preachers of the gospel follow the example of these divinely inspired messengers!

Trust and Obey

Yes, the **gospel must be believed**, but it **also must be obeyed** if we expect to stand before the throne of God with our robes washed white in the blood of the lamb on the day of judgment. "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" John 3:16 (KJV). True belief involves obedience! The Word of God makes this very clear. In fact, all you have to do is read to the end of John 3, where you will find this verse: "**He who BELIEVES in the SON has eternal life BUT HE WHO DOES NOT OBEY THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, but the WRATH of God abides on him.**" John 3:36 (NASB). (The obedience factor is clearer in this translation.)

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 also shows the **absolute necessity of obeying the gospel** and amplifies the truth concerning the terrible consequences awaiting those who **obey not** the gospel: "*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 (KJV).

When we realize that the gospel is not only something to be **believed**, but also something to be **obeyed**, the logical question is, "**How do I obey good news?**" The answer lies in understanding that the gospel is the good news that Jesus died, was buried

and rose again to save us from our sins. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8. By **obeying God in repentance and baptism we die to sin, are buried with Christ in baptism, and rise from the grave of water to walk in the newness of life.** Romans 6:1-7. Only at this point can it be said that we have scripturally obeyed the gospel. No wonder Jesus said, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* Mark 16:16 (KJV). Some scholars reject the ending verses of Mark’s gospel and consider them as merely an interpolation. While it is true that in Mark 16, verses 9-20 are missing in Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus, nearly all other manuscripts of Mark contain them. It is not surprising to me that the ending of much used scrolls would get worn off. I accept Mark 16:9-20 as valid and part of the inspired Word of God. **Have you ever met Jesus Christ? Have you by faith and in true repentance surrendered to His authority by allowing your old self to be buried in a grave of water so that you could rise to walk in the newness of life?** It is a personal decision and a test of your faith and humility.

The Word of God says: *“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’”* Acts 8:35-36 (NKJV). When you preach Jesus, do people respond by asking to be baptized?

“For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body...” 1 Corinthians 12:13 (KJV). The Holy Spirit is truly the only one who can add members to or sever them from the body of Christ. I can dip a person under water and bring him up again, but if his heart is not right with God, the Holy Spirit will not add him to the body. If his heart is right, the Holy Spirit is actually the one who is baptizing him into Christ as I dip him in water. Would you be free from your burden of sin? Bring that burden to Jesus and let him wash away your sin!

A Contradictory Statement?

In view of all this, why did the apostle Paul write, *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel”*? 1 Corinthians 1:17 (KJV). I believe he said it because that’s what he really meant to say. **I feel the very same way, for if Christ sent me merely to baptize, I would get a couple of strong men to help me and we would go out baptizing people, protest or no protest.** Why go to the trouble of preaching the gospel and trying to persuade people to believe in Jesus if Christ sent us merely to baptize? In the fourth century A.D. Emperor Constantine made the serious mistake of commanding his army to march through the river for “baptism” when he professed allegiance to the cause of Christ. His intentions may have been good, but by doing so he filled the church with unconverted souls, changed the course of history, opened the door for other serious doctrinal errors and corruption, and helped send the church plunging into what we now know as the “Dark Ages.”

The verse, *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel”* does not mean that Paul, or the Lord who inspired him to write, considered baptism unimportant. **Jesus included baptism in the Great Commission just before he ascended into heaven.** Matthew 28:18-20. A man’s last words before he departs from this earth are usually held to be what he considered highly important. We should be very careful not to get baptism out of proportion with the other truths of the gospel by either over-

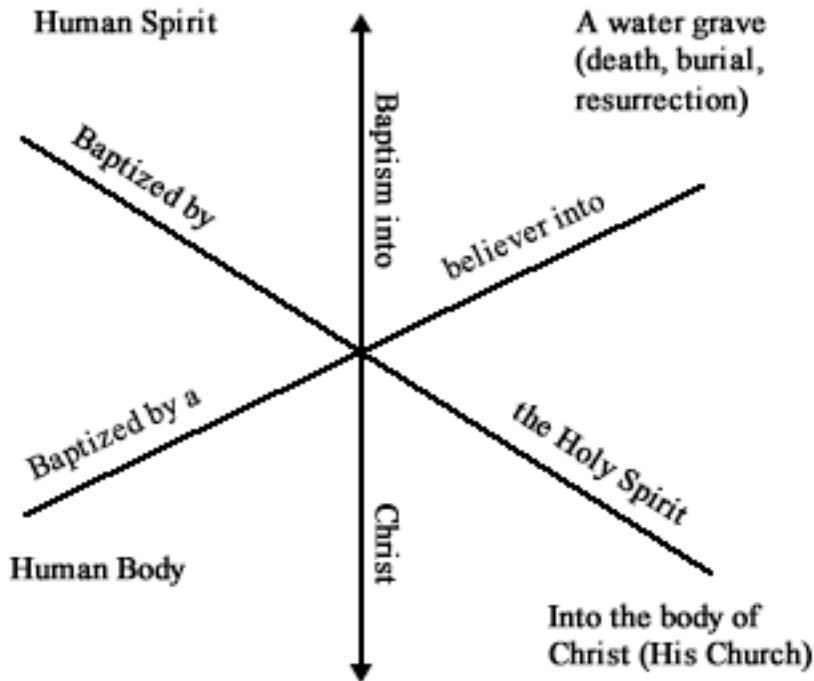
emphasizing or under-emphasizing its importance. **Salvation is a free gift of God's grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9), **and it is available to us through the death of Christ.** **Romans 6:3 (NKJV)** says, **"...that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death."** **The merits of Christ's death are applied to us when we are baptized.** Since Romans 6 does not mention baptism in the Holy Spirit, we should understand the word 'baptism' in this chapter to have its normal, obvious meaning—immersion in water. Let it be clearly understood, however, that there is no mystical power in the water to wash away our sins. The power is in the blood of Jesus! **We are washed in the blood of Jesus Christ when we are baptized into His death!**

Paul said he was glad he had not baptized more of the Corinthians, and he tells us why: *"I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name."* 1 Corinthians 1:14-15 (NKJV). The Corinthian church was wrangling and squabbling and choosing up sides with great leaders in the church. Paul rebuked them for this and told them that they were carnal and following men instead of Christ. He knew that Jesus was the one and only Savior and did not want any man calling himself a Paulite. *"And there is salvation in no one else: for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."* Acts 4:12 (NASB).

"For we are all sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ! For as many of you have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ!" Galatians 3:26-27 (KJV).

"Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life!" Romans 6:3-4 (NASB).

Baptism Into Christ in the One Baptism



**Human Soul Cleansed by the Blood of Christ
(Romans 6:4, Revelation 1:5)**

**Christ is God's Plan of Salvation
How do we accept Christ?
HERE IS GOD'S ANSWER!**

Baptism versus Grace?

Does the Biblical teaching that repentance and baptism are “for the remission of sin” (Acts 2:38) violate the basic Biblical principle that salvation is by grace through faith? As sinners we do not deserve salvation and there is nothing we can do to earn our way to heaven.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV).

Salvation is a gift, but this does not mean that there is nothing for us to do to receive the gift. Suppose a man offers me a gift of a million dollars on two conditions: first, that I come to his house to receive it, and second, that I sign a receipt stating that I received the gift. If I say that I believe him, but never show up at his house, I have

demonstrated my unbelief. If I do go to his house and sign the receipt, I have complied with the conditions necessary to receive the gift, but I have not earned the million dollars. Salvation is not earnable, but it is conditional. We cannot be saved by works, but neither can we be saved by a dead faith that has no desire to please God. Romans 4:2-5 and James 2:14-16. A person who professes faith, but does not demonstrate it, in reality has no true faith at all. If a boy is at the window of a burning house and his father is below crying, “jump, son, I’ll catch you!”, the boy demonstrates his trust only by jumping into his father’s arms. If he says, “I believe you,” but doesn’t jump, he only demonstrates his unbelief and he will perish!

If a person says he believes in Christ, but will not repent, he demonstrates his unbelief. If a person says he believes, but refuses to be baptized, he demonstrates either that he has not yet understood God’s command or that he is not willing to submit his will to the will of God. True baptism is a humbling act of submission, not a work of righteousness in which we can glory.

Baptism is not so much something we do, but something we allow someone else to do to us. It is a sign of our submission to Jesus Christ as Lord. There is no logical reason for baptism in the eyes of the unbeliever. He can see the need for good works, such as caring for the sick and suffering and helping widows and orphans, but baptism—what sense does that make? It only makes sense when we believe in Jesus and understand that baptism pictures the gospel—the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Baptism is meaningful to a believer because God said to do it.

True faith involves commitment, love for God, and a recognition of our own unworthiness. Until we recognize our own sinfulness and helplessness to save ourselves, we are not willing to come to the cross of Christ, and we are not ready to be baptized! If the boy in our illustration jumps into his father’s arms, he shows that he believes him by obeying him, and he is saved; but he did not save himself! Does the fact that the boy had to do something to be saved leave him any room to boast? Of course not! His father saved him!

Will you demonstrate your faith by jumping into the arms of Jesus? That is saving faith!

Even the demons believe, but they do not have saving faith because they do not have the faith which moves at God’s command. The faith chapter of the Bible, Hebrews 11, repeatedly shows that saving faith involves obedience. “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear (reverence), prepared an ark to the saving of his house...By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed...”(verses 7 & 8).

It is the most fundamental fact of the gospel that only by faith are we saved—if it is faith in Jesus Christ that works by love. Our actions **show** whether or not we have saving faith. Faith without works is dead, and works without love are dead. “You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.” James 2:24 (NASB).

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.” Galatians 5:6, (NASB).

It won’t work for you to substitute the word “baptism” for the word “circumcision” in the latter verse. The apostle said what he meant and he meant what he said. Circumcision was the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham. Baptism is the sign of God’s covenant with the Christian. It is true, however, that baptism is a spiritual circumcision upon the heart. At baptism we are promised cleansing from sin and all the

fullness of God in Christ. Baptism is faith in operation! At our baptism we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and are sealed with the Holy Spirit, for the Holy Spirit is God's seal upon us that we are His and have entered the new covenant. See Acts 2:38, Romans 8:9, and Ephesians 1:13.

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity (Godhead) lives in bodily form, and you have this fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In Him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of your sinful nature, not with a circumcision alone by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ. In baptism you were buried with Him and raised with Him through your faith in the power (operation) of God, who raised Him from the dead” Colossians 2:9-12 (NIV—Inserts are from KJV).

At baptism, Christ, the Great Physician, performs a spiritual operation on the heart of the believer to cut away the cancer of sin. In view of this fact, wouldn't it be rather foolish to say, “I was saved before I was baptized. I know because I felt it!” I do not doubt that you have repented, but you cannot know you are forgiven until God says you are. Put your faith in the testimony of God's Word—not in your feelings! If we do not believe God is at work in baptism cutting away our sins, we lose the specific, Biblical purpose for baptism, and it is likely to become a meaningless ceremony or simply an initiation into a particular church or denomination. God says we are baptized into Christ!

Often I have heard the phrase “baptism is an outward sign of inward cleansing” quoted as though it were Scripture. Although that phrase is not found in the Word of God, it does express a truth if we understand that the outward sign and the inward cleansing TAKE PLACE SIMULTANEOUSLY.

There are so many who say that baptism is only an outward act. You will not find such an emphasis in the Word of God! There are also many who spread the so-called “New Morality” of “free love” who say, “A wedding ceremony is not important – it is only an outward act,” or “Marriage is not important.” This is simply not so!

The church is the bride of Christ. Baptism can be considered a wedding ceremony with the Lord, and it is important. It is also a personal decision. Baptism is a test of faith and of love for Christ. Making grace versus baptism is like making love versus marriage! It is making two things seem contradictory that are actually complimentary! The wedding ceremony highlights the love that already exists between a man and his bride and shows the beginning of a new relationship. The same is true of baptism—it is the ceremony documenting our covenant union with Jesus Christ.

Certainly there is love before marriage (if there isn't, there is something drastically wrong)! Certainly there is faith and love before baptism (if there isn't, the baptism is void of meaning—this is the problem with infant baptism)! Certainly there is emotion involved before the ceremony! Certainly there is the point of decision when a couple says “yes” to each other—but they do not yet belong to each other as man and wife. Certainly a person must make the decision to say “yes” to the loving appeals of Jesus before baptism, but it is after his baptism that he can truthfully sing, “Now I belong to Jesus; Jesus belongs to me! Not for the years of time alone, but for eternity!”

Romans 8:9 says, “And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.” (NIV). When does a person receive the Spirit of Christ? Acts 2:38 tells us—when he repents and is baptized! When a man receives Jesus Christ, he receives the right to become a child of God. John 1:12. When he, by faith, repents and is

baptized, he becomes a child of God, he becomes a member of the church, the bride of Christ, and thus he belongs to Christ! Just as a man seals his vows to his bride with a ring at his wedding, so Christ seals us with His Holy Spirit as His mark of ownership upon us when we are baptized. Since baptism is an act of faith and submission to the authority of Christ, there is no contradiction between Acts 2:38, which tells us we receive the Spirit when we repent and are baptized, and Ephesians 1:13, which tells us we are sealed with the Holy Spirit when we believe.

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:13-14 (NASB).

I cannot understand the logic of fundamental, Bible-believing people who emphasize the Biblical teaching concerning the importance of marriage and de-emphasize the biblical teaching concerning the importance of baptism. It just doesn’t add up. Someone has deceived them somewhere along the line! Why is it that all evangelicals are willing to preach and teach Acts 16:31, but most are not willing to preach and teach Acts 2:38 nor Acts 22:16? These verses are all a part of the same apostolic message. Of course, the reason usually given for not teaching what these verses say is, “We are saved by grace through faith; therefore, there is nothing to do to be saved but believe.” As you have probably seen by now, this is the skin of a truth stuffed with falsehood. The truth is that we are saved by grace through faith, but the falsehood is that there is nothing for us to do but believe. When the Jews on the Day of Pentecost believed Peter’s message about Jesus and cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter did not say, “There is nothing for you to do but believe.” He said, “Repent and be baptized...” If we are not teaching this, we are not telling the whole truth about salvation. If we really believe God, we will obey Him without quibbling and we will teach His Word without changing it.

Certainly we are saved by grace through faith! Repentance is faith changing the direction of our lives. Baptism (immersion under water – see Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the New Testament Words – page 96) is simply faith uniting us with Jesus. The apostles never considered baptism a work of the law, but an integral part of faith in Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:24-27 (NKJV) says: “Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

Thus we stand before God clothed with the pure righteousness of Christ rather than the filthy rags of our own righteousness. Isaiah 64:6. What a cause for rejoicing! No wonder the Ethiopian eunuch went on his way rejoicing after his baptism into Christ. Acts 8:39. But let’s make sure our rejoicing is in the Lord—not in our baptism! Isaiah wrote:

*“I will rejoice greatly in the Lord,
My soul will exult in my God;
For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness...”*
Isaiah 61:10 (NASB).

By grace through faith Isaiah was clothed with a robe of righteousness long before God ever commanded baptism, but this does not change the point for us. Isaiah did many things we are not required to do because he lived under the Old Covenant. Isaiah was not baptized because God never told him to be! God has told us to be baptized, and He tells us that this is the place where we are cleansed of sin and clothed with the pure righteousness of Christ! Acts 2:38 and 22:16.

God has always imputed His righteousness by grace to those who trust Him. In Romans 6, Paul very clearly shows that baptism, as a New Testament ordinance, does not conflict with the principle of salvation by grace through faith. Baptism, as an act of faith, puts us into Christ, thus into grace!

“Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life.” Romans 6:3-4 (NASB).

One point that I want to make very clear, however, is that saving faith is faith in Jesus Christ—not faith in baptism or anything else. He who is trusting his baptism to save him has a false, misplaced trust—there is no salvation in it! CHRIST IS THE SAVIOR—NOT BAPTISM! Baptism is simply the God-ordained place where He saves us by His grace—through our faith in Christ!

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12 (NKJV). AMEN!

Whom do you believe?

Satan has been twisting God’s Word ever since the Garden of Eden and deceiving people into believing his lies (slight changes in what God said). Do you realize that Satan quoted Scripture when tempting Jesus to sin? (And, believe it or not, he does the same thing to you, my friend!) But Jesus answered him every time with the unadulterated Word of God. Jesus rejected Satan’s misquotations, his twisting of the Scripture, his subtle misapplications. If we are wise, we will follow Jesus’ example. Let us take a good look at some of the ways Satan has deceived people into accepting his twisted variations of what God said about baptism.

Some denominations that practice sprinkling infants for baptism teach, “He who is baptized and later believes shall be saved!” Do you believe that?

Some denominations that practice immersion teach, “He who believes and is saved shall be baptized.” Do you believe that?

Jesus Christ said, “HE WHO BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED WILL BE SAVED.” Mark 16:16 (NKJV). Do you believe Him?

Paul wrote, “I know whom I have believed, and He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12 (KJV). Can you say that?

All Christians accept Abraham as a prime example of a man who had saving faith. What was that saving faith? The Scripture says, “Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you will I curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’” Genesis 12:1-3 (NASB).

I see a parallel in this to what Jesus said: “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.” Matthew 10:37-38 (NASB).

How do we know Abraham believed God? Scripture says, “So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him.”

Abraham believed God when He promised him multitudes of descendants, even though his wife was barren and he was beyond the normal age for fathering children. Humanly speaking, the situation looked hopeless. An unbeliever would have considered it ridiculous to believe the promise of God. Yet Abraham believed! It is in this context that the Scripture says, “then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.” Genesis 15:6 (NASB).

Later, after God had fulfilled His promise to give Abraham a son in his old age, He tested him. Abraham even believed God when He said to him, “. . .take now your son, your only son, who you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.” Genesis 22:2 (NASB).

Abraham did not react by saying, “Lord, you can’t mean that! I don’t believe you would say a thing like that! I must have misunderstood you! That just isn’t like my concept of God! God is love, you know. I just don’t feel God would expect such a thing!” No! Abraham’s faith moved him to obey without quibbling and without delay! The Scripture says: “So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.” Genesis 22:3 (NASB).

I want to say this as kindly, yet as plainly as possible. My friend, if you are quibbling with God (no matter what the particular issue – baptism or something else), you don’t have the faith of Abraham! If you are making excuses and delaying your obedience, you don’t have the faith of Abraham! If you say, “I just don’t feel that God will condemn all those people who don’t trust Him enough to obey Him in baptism according to His Word, you don’t have the faith of Abraham! Abraham believed God meant exactly what He said. God saw his faith and spared his son (but His own Son He could not spare and still save us, for He had said, “The wages of sin is death”, and He meant it. He let Jesus pay our penalty). If Abraham had trusted his feelings instead of God’s Word, he would never have left his homeland! He never would have believed the impossible (that he and Sarah would have a son)! He would never have been willing to sacrifice his own son! In fact, if Abraham had trusted anyone other than God Himself, he would never have been willing to do such a thing—human sacrifice is murder! There was only one reason Abraham was willing to do this—BECAUSE GOD SAID SO! Abraham’s faith was in God—not in his feelings and not in other people! If you are trusting your feelings or human opinions instead of God’s Word, you don’t have the faith of Abraham! Read Genesis 22.

What Is Saving Faith?

1. Belief is faith changing your mind about Jesus. You may have doubted Him, denied Him, or even scoffed at Him before, but now you trust Him and love Him.

2. Repentance is faith changing your heart toward sin. Now you see your sin as God sees it—vile and corrupt—so you are deeply sorry for offending our Holy God with your selfish sinfulness.
3. Confession is faith changing your speech. Once you may have used the Name of Jesus as a vile curse word; now you speak His Name as the treasure of your heart.
4. Baptism is faith changing your position (or condition) from darkness to light. As an unborn baby is alive, but in darkness before birth, so new life stirs in the soul of the repentant believer, and baptism is the new birth, which transfers him from the darkness into the kingdom of light. Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” John 3:5 (NKJV). The context of this verse shows that Jesus was talking about baptism for three reasons: (1) He was answering Nicodemus’ question, “How can a man be born when he is old?” John 3:4 (NKJV). (2) Immediately after Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus the Scripture says, “After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.” John 3:22 (NKJV). (3) Jesus spoke bluntly to Nicodemus when He ignored his compliment and immediately confronted him with the statement, “...no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” John 3:3 (NIV). Why was Jesus so blunt? Because Nicodemus was a Pharisee—one who had rejected God’s purpose as already commanded by John the Baptist. Consider this clear message: “(All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized by John. But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God’s purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)” Luke 7:29-30 (NIV).

Saving faith believes God, accepts His Word without changing it, and acts on it without delay! “Obedience is a willing, glad-hearted response to the God who loves us extravagantly and has our best interests at heart.” ~ Anonymous. Do you have saving faith?

What About Exceptions?

It is easy to think of possible exceptions. What about the thief on the cross? ... the man in the desert? ... the one who repents and calls out to God before a fatal accident? There are several truths we should remember concerning exceptions.

1. **The truth about the nature and character of our God.** “God is love.” “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” 1 John 4:8 and Genesis 18:25 (NKJV).
2. **The truth that God Almighty can call “that which is not as though it were.”** Romans 4:17 (KJV). Therefore, God can count an unbaptized individual as baptized whenever He so chooses.
3. **The truth that an exception does not change the rule.** For example, the Scripture says, “if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9 (NKJV). Was this passage of Scripture given to prove that an individual who is a deaf-mute cannot be saved because he cannot confess with his mouth that he believes in Jesus? Of course not! His

case is an obvious exception, but it does not provide an excuse for someone who will not confess with his mouth.

Is Jesus your Lord?

If you have been honoring God with your lips but dishonoring Him with your life or your teaching—confess your sin to God and forsake it, that you might have mercy! Proverbs 28:13. Have you been dishonoring the Lord Jesus Christ by teaching the doctrines of men concerning baptism, by clinging to the precepts of men instead of the sure Word of God, or by refusing to obey this or any other sacred command of the Savior? You see, baptism is not the real issue—although baptism often brings out the rebellion in the human heart. The real issue is the authority of Jesus! When you truly accept His absolute authority as your Lord and Savior, you will accept His Word concerning baptism and every other subject!

Baptism is no more a work of righteousness, whereby we can earn salvation, than is believing! In the New Testament “baptism” and “work” are never connected.

Jesus said, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one whom he has sent.” John 6:29 (NIV).

It is not baptism which is hard for human beings—it is believing God that is hard! But the fact of the matter is that no matter how hard it may be for you to trust God and submit to his will, you can never, never, NEVER, earn your salvation! Salvation is a gift which you receive by surrendering!

Submission is love demonstrated! Through submission we experience the love of God! Jesus said, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” John 14:23 (NIV). WOW! God with us!! God in us! What a privilege! What love! Praise the Lord! Jesus said, “Those whom I love I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent. Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.” Revelation 3:19-20 (NASB).

Do you want to experience the love of God? Will you accept the discipline of the Lord? Will you repent? Will you open the door of your heart to Jesus?

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH JESUS?

The most important question you will ever face is “What will I do with Jesus?” What **will** you do with Jesus? He loves you more than you will ever realize! He gave his life for you! He wants to be your Savior! Someday he will be your Judge! He is waiting with outstretched arms and nail-pierced hands to receive you. What is your answer to him? The decision is yours!

“Behold, **now** is the accepted time! Behold, **NOW** is the day of salvation!” 2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV).

Are you afraid of what people will think if you take this step of faith? The Word of God says, “The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord will be safe!” Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV).

“We must obey God rather than men!” Acts 5:29 (NIV).

“Through Him and for His name’s sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.” Romans 1:5-6 (NIV).

As my friend, Jim Brown, says, “The deepest longings of the human heart are to be loved, and to know it, and to love, and to show it!” That’s what it means to belong! “We love Him, because He first loved us!” 1 John 4:19 (KJV). Augustine prayed, “You have made us for Yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in You!” God is calling you to belong to Him! Will you accept? Then you will know the security, love, joy and peace of being “accepted in the Beloved!” See Ephesians 1:6.

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My load is light.” Matthew 11:28-30 (NASB).

How is Man Born Again?

John 3:5		Romans 6:1-6
Natural Birth	Spiritual Birth	Scriptures
Place for reception of life Womb of woman	Heart, Intellect (Mind), Will, Conscience, Emotion	Matthew 9:4 2 Corinthians 9:7 Acts 2:37 Matthew 22:37
There must be a father	God	1 Peter 1:3 James 1:18
Life must be planted	Word of God	John 6:63 Luke 8:11
Need means of communication of life	Written Word, Preaching	1 Peter 1:23 Romans 10:10-17
Evidence of life before birth	Repentance, love, confession—desire to do right	1 John 5:15 1 John 3:9
Birth	Immersion in water and coming forth in newness of life	Romans 6:4 1 Peter 3:21 1 Corinthians 12:13

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Questions for Chapter 6

1. When someone says, “The Bible is full of contradictions!” what is a good way to respond?
2. If someone does show you an apparent contradiction for which you have no immediate answer, what is a good way to respond?
3. The question “What must I do to be saved?” is answered three times in the Book of Acts and each time the answer is _____.
4. Acts 2:38 tells us, “Repent and be _____ every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the _____ of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
5. Acts 16:31 tells us “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be _____.
6. Acts 22:16 says, “Get up and be baptized and wash your _____ away.”

7. We should read the _____ and understand that Jesus and the apostles took a man from where he _____ to lead him to where he _____ to be.
8. We must consider the Biblical understanding of faith.
 - A. Belief is faith changing your _____.
 - B. Repentance is faith changing your _____.
 - C. Confession is faith changing your _____.
 - D. Baptism is faith changing your _____.
9. Instead of remaining bogged down in the controversy about baptism with false definitions and doctrines of men, let's just return to the Word of _____.
10. Be certain that your trust is in the _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Him alone!

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Chapter 7

THE SOURCE OF FREEDOM

**(Ready to Answer the Question, "How Can I Find True Freedom and Lasting Joy?"
and the Question, "Why Should I Follow Christ?")**

Introduction:

Paul Harvey, a popular radio commentator in America, once told a story about a team of scientists who sought to train a chimpanzee written communication. After 14 years of diligent effort, the scientists gathered around the chimpanzee's cage and watched in near breathless anticipation to see what message their highly trained and pampered chimp would give them as he arranged the letters they gave him. To their dismay, the direct three-word message was "LET ME OUT!" Actually this is only a joke. My friend, John Murphy, read the report of this experiment, and the true account documented that the chimpanzee was incapable of arranging even one coherent word. I share the joke version of this story because it does illustrate that for many animals, and definitely for human beings who are created in the image of God, the yearning for freedom is even stronger than the desire for security.

But what is the source of this freedom? From a Christian perspective the ultimate Source of Freedom is Jesus Christ, our Lord. His book, the Bible, tells us, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 2 Corinthians 3:17 (NKJV). Jesus said, "If you abide in My Word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32 (NKJV). What truth is it that makes us free? It is the truth about who Jesus is and what He can do in our lives to free us from the bondage of our own guilt, fear, addictions, lust, and greed. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me." John 14:6 (NKJV). This is a blatant claim, which is either true or false. Each of us is free to choose whether or not we believe what He said. English scholar and former atheist, C. S. Lewis, after extensive research into the claims of Jesus and the evidence for the veracity of these claims, wrote in his book "Mere Christianity" that a man who was only a man, yet made the bold and blatant claims that Jesus made, would not be a great moral teacher. A great moral teacher does not go around declaring that he is God in human flesh unless

He is God. We have only three choices—He is a liar; He is a lunatic; or He is Lord of all. C. S. Lewis made his choice; he chose Jesus to be his Lord. Now the choice is yours. What will you do with Jesus?

When Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate, Pilate asked Him cynically, “What is truth?” Ironically, Pilate did not accept Truth standing right in front of him.

Jesus not only brings freedom from our sins and hang-ups when we follow Him, but He also teaches us to balance our freedom with responsibility. There is no unlimited freedom, because freedom must always function within boundaries. For example, I am free to swing my arms to exercise, but I am not free to swing them so close to you that I hit your face with my fists. To do so would be irresponsible because I would be violating your right to be free from attack. Athletes on the soccer field can exercise great freedom to run, jump, and kick, but if they misuse their freedom to violate the rules or intentionally harm others, they will be disqualified. Just as our physical freedoms must function within boundaries of responsibility, so also moral freedoms must function within boundaries of responsibility. Edmund Burke said, “There must be some restraining influence upon the wills and passions of men, and the less there is from within, the more there must be from without.” This statement corresponds perfectly with the words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy:

“But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:8-17 (NKJV).

Historically speaking, it is evident that the powerful Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, persecutor of Christians, did a complete turn around to become Paul, the Apostle, the greatest and most effective missionary of the Christian faith. Why? By his own testimony, it was the truth about Jesus Christ and His amazing grace which freed him from his sins, including murder and blasphemy. This same man, who had violently terrorized Christians before his conversion to Christ, wrote to the believers in Corinth: *“.....If I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.....Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is*

not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.” 1 Corinthians 13:2, 4-5 (NIV). What a transformation! Jesus Christ was his Source of Freedom from pride, anger, and terrorism. And Jesus taught him to use freedom with responsibility.

I want to testify that Jesus Christ has given me freedom from my fears and guilt and taught me to use my freedoms with responsibility. As a child I became so frustrated with the turmoil in our home when my parents were fighting and threatening divorce that I sometimes felt like lying down in the street to let a car run over me. But Jesus Christ has freed me from such fears and given me joy and purpose in life. He is my Source of Freedom with responsibility.

Three of the most difficult areas of our lives to learn to balance freedom with responsibility are: 1. Sexuality, 2. Money, 3. Power. Let's look briefly at each of these.

1. Freedom and Responsibility Concerning Sexuality

I grew up learning about sexuality from neighbor kids and felt that anything pertaining to sex was dirty and wrong. However, from the Bible, Jesus has taught me that sexuality is a gift from God to each of us. God Himself invented sex, for He made each of us male or female. We should guard this gift as a precious treasure and handle our freedom with careful responsibility. He is the author of marriage and gives us freedom to express sexual love only within the boundary of marriage. This is to protect the unity, respect, and bond of love with each couple and to build a secure home for children. Concerning guarding the gift of sexuality, the Word of God says:

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you, and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.” 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (NIV).

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.” Hebrews 13:4 (NIV).

I am a happily married man, and I try to diligently guard the covenant union with my wife, Della. I often travel when Della is not with me, so I must be careful in my contact with other women so as to be friendly, but not flirtatious. Also, I must avoid looking at the scantily-dressed women, immoral movies or magazines which can incite lust, because I want to be mentally true to my wife. By exercising our freedom with responsibility within the boundaries given by God Himself our marriage relationship has grown better and better through the years. Our commitment to Jesus as our Source and our commitment to each other in honoring our vows makes our marriage a joy.

2. Freedom and Responsibility Concerning Money

Unfortunately money is often used as a measure of an individual's worth as a human being. So money is valued not only for what items it can buy, but for the status it

brings to the owner. Therefore, in America many people misuse credit to buy things to make them look more prosperous than they really are.

The misuse of money or credit often leads to multiple heartaches, including stress in marriage, drug or alcohol addiction, and bankruptcy.

Too much money can be as stressful as too little—especially when gained by shady practices or by gambling. Jack Whittaker has been learning this the hard way. At age 57 he gained a fortune by gambling, when he won \$314.9 million in the lottery December 25, 2002. That day he was smiling and planning to give some (or much) of his winnings to his church and good causes. Two years later he looks depressed and beaten. He has been the constant target for thieves. He has faced charges of drunk driving, inappropriate behavior with women, and assaulting a bar manager, while threatening to kill him. Besides all this, his precious 17-year-old granddaughter was found dead—her body wrapped in a tarp outside her boyfriend’s house. Drug overdose was given as the cause of her tragic death.

Jesus Christ is the Source of our Freedom from bondage to money. He frees us to enjoy what He provides without greed and envy. His Word not only warns us to beware of the love of money, which is the root of all kinds of evil, but in the same context His Spirit inspired Paul to write that it is God “who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment”. 1 Timothy 6:17. Also in Hebrews 13:5-6 we read:

“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” (NIV)

When we trust and obey Him, we can enjoy the balance of freedom with responsibility. We are free to enjoy the measure of wealth He provides for our personal needs and those of family, as well as being free to generously share with others to help with their needs.

3. Freedom and Responsibility Concerning Power

Power-hungry tyrants have squelched liberty and massacred millions to achieve their own selfish goals. The names Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin and Mao Tse Tung come to mind when we consider the lust for power. However, when we are honest with ourselves, the desire to control others or to have our own way is strong within most of us. Therefore, it is my conviction that each one of us needs Jesus Christ as his or her Source of Freedom from the lust for power.

The United States of America was founded, not by tyrants seeking to dominate, but by Christians seeking to protect its citizens from domination by tyrants and to reach the Native American tribes with the truth and freedom of Jesus Christ. Those who came to exploit and dominate were not true Christians, nor were they the original founders. Patrick Henry, the Christian patriot who declared, “Give me liberty or give me death”, also said, “It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians—not on religions, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ! For this very reason, peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here.”

Why do people from all over the world desire to come to America? Prosperity? Yes, I’m sure. Freedom? Most definitely. Look to the Source of that Freedom and you

will find Jesus Christ. America was founded by Christians who understood freedom with responsibility. Therefore, they established three branches of government with checks and balances to keep any one branch from becoming too powerful.

Ironically, the atheists and other anti-Christians, waging the cultural warfare in America to eliminate Christian influence from public life, are exercising the freedom of speech which was established in America by Christians.

Michael Newdow is the atheist lawyer who has sued to have “Under God” removed from our pledge of allegiance, prayer removed from our presidential inauguration, and “In God We Trust” removed from our money. If Michael Newdow went to live in Saudi Arabia, would he initiate a lawsuit against Allah and openly state that he believed Mohammed to be a false prophet? If he were living in India, would he try to initiate a lawsuit against sacred cows and openly advocate butchering them to eat? If he were living in North Korea, would he feel free to criticize openly the actions or policies of the government leaders? I don’t believe so! Those countries do not have a foundation of freedom from the Source of Freedom, nor do they have a high respect for the sanctity of human life, which is based on the belief that we are created in the image of God. His life expectancy would likely be drastically reduced in one of those countries. I’m praying for Michael Newdow to meet the Truth, Who sets us free, and to be transformed into another proponent of Truth instead of being His enemy.

Conclusion:

We have briefly considered three of the most driving forces in the human heart and how Jesus Christ as the Source of Freedom makes the difference in each of these powerful forces. Are you personally tapping into our Source of Freedom to experience liberty and victory in your own struggles with these powerful driving forces and temptations in your life?

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Questions for Chapter 7

1. What is the purpose for the story about the chimpanzee?
2. What is the source of freedom and how do we know?
3. Jesus Himself said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” John 14:6 (NKJV). This is a blatant claim, which is either _____ or _____!
4. English scholar and former atheist, C. S. Lewis, did extensive research into the claims of Christ. According to Mr. Lewis, what option did Jesus not leave open to us?
5. Do you believe C. S. Lewis was right in his assessment of Jesus’ claims? Why or why not?
6. Jesus not only brings freedom from our sins and hang-ups when we follow Him, but He also teaches us to balance our freedom with _____.
7. How does the Word of God teach us to handle our freedom with responsibility concerning sex?
8. How does the Word of God teach us to handle our freedom with responsibility concerning money?
9. How does the Word of God teach us to handle our freedom with responsibility concerning power?

10. What does Michael Newdow not understand concerning the freedom we enjoy in America?

Thought Question:

What is the best thing we can do for Michael Newdow and other atheists?

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Chapter 8

VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING

(Ready to Give an Answer to Those Who Ask, “How is it Possible to Live Up to Christ’s Standards? I Could Never Do That—I Would Just Fail!”)

I. Living Victoriously by Focusing Moment by Moment on the Presence of God

Are you longing for the filling of the Spirit that will enable you to love with God’s love and forgive with God’s forgiveness, yet at the same time you fear that it won’t last? Are you tired of a roller-coaster Christianity with its emotionally charged highs and its depressingly deep lows? Do you pant for the presence of God as an exhausted deer pants for the water brooks? Do you really want to walk with God? Do you earnestly desire to live, move, and have your being continually—not spasmodically—in the shadow of the Almighty? Take heart! You can! Brother Paul tells us how:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” Philippians 4:4-9 (NKJV).

The faith God desires is filled with the consciousness of His presence moment by moment. This relationship produces genuine help and love. True Christianity is not an ice cube of cold intellectualism, nor a vapor of hot emotionalism, nor a bubble of superficial enthusiasm. No! No! No! A thousand times No! The ice will melt, the vapor will vanish, the bubble will break, and when they do, there will be nothing left! That is precisely what has happened to the “faith” of so many deluded souls. True faith is not an ice cube, a vapor, nor a bubble, but a fountain of living water springing up within us and flowing to others in streams of grace and love. Real Christian faith is a combination of intellect (it is based on facts, which are both understood and believed), emotion (it loves God with heart, mind, soul and strength, and is fervent in spirit, serving the Lord), and will (it will stand firm to its commitment and convictions even when the emotions are

worn to a frazzle and the intellect cannot grasp nor understand why things are happening as they are). True faith believes that God has everything under control even when it looks like everything is falling apart!

We walk by faith and not by sight! Jehovah wants us to put on the whole armor of God so that we will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and to stand through the heat and cold, the wind and the rain, the storm and the holocaust, and when the battle is over, still to be standing firm! See Ephesians 6:10-18. Our Father wants us to be steadfast!

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:58 (KJV).

The Rock of Gibraltar will someday melt with fervent heat and vanish away, but Almighty God wants to form YOU into a ROCK that will abide forever (as He did Peter). He wants you to be strong and of good courage, not in your own strength, but by His grace and the power of the Holy Spirit. Will you yield to His sustaining hand? If you fear God, you have nothing else to fear!

“If God is for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31 (NKJV).

“He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” 1 John 4:4 (NKJV).

“This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4 (NKJV).

Following are several apostolic prayers, which express my heart’s desire for you:

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Ephesians 3:14-21 (NKJV).

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.” Colossians 1:9-12 (NKJV).

“May the God of hope fill you with great joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13 (NIV).

There are two reasons why I pray for you to know the joy and peace of continually dwelling in the presence of God and loving His Word.

1. No matter what trials you face, you will never stumble and fall away from Christ as long as you dwell in His presence and love His law. “Great peace have those who love Your law; and nothing causes them to stumble.” Psalm 119:165 (NKJV).
2. The greatest evidence of the validity of Christian faith to many skeptics and doubters is to see the joy and peace of believers in spite of heavy trials. Why else would they ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you, unless they see that hope shining through the dark clouds of suffering and trials? Peter was writing to believers suffering persecution when he wrote, “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV).

II. Living Victoriously by Trusting Constantly in the Providence of God

Years ago my wife and I traveled 2,000 miles, which severely tested our patience, and yet in the end, greatly strengthened our faith in God’s personal concern for our problems. I truly hope we never have to experience another trip like that one, yet I rejoice in the renewed trust in God’s care, which we gained by our experience. Our car and trailer gave us no end of trouble, yet for every trial we experienced, God provided an abundant measure of grace.

Take our tires for example. They were under terrific pressure because the trailer was overloaded and the car was packed to the ceiling. One of the trailer tires and two of the car tires blew out (perhaps I should say exploded) between Boise, Idaho, and Lamar, Colorado. Considering the load we were pulling and the way each of the tires blew up, it seems a wonder of God’s grace that we came out with no loss of life or property—not even tires! Yes, that’s right, for we did not lose even one tire—in fact we gained one! At Lamar, Colorado, we stopped to visit a Christian couple, Mr. and Mrs. Giles Strong. Brother Strong gave us four tires to replace the three that had blown out. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

We had such a heavy load that the second gear of our transmission wore out on Logan Pass in Utah. We plugged along with low and high gears until we reached Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where we contacted a mechanic who had access to a used Ford transmission which he thought would fit; but we had to wait for him to order it from another town. Three or four days later he called out from under the old Merc, “Oh, oh! This is altogether different. It won’t work!” Disappointed? We certainly were!—but not for long. God knew how He could save us \$47. At Longmont, Colorado, I was able to buy a transmission for \$3.00 and my brother-in-law and a friend helped me put it in.

The bolts on our trailer hitch broke loose out on the Wyoming freeway about 10:00 p.m. on July 6. I felt the jerk, glanced in the rearview mirror, and witnessed a fiery shower of sparks that would rival any Fourth of July display. Then came a second jerk and I could feel a sickening dread in the bottom of my stomach, for I knew one tow chain had been broken. Practically everything we owned was loaded in that trailer—and now the only thing holding our trailer was one undersized tow chain. But was it really that little chain that held? I firmly believe it held by the power of the Almighty. He knew we could not afford to replace our trailer and the goods it held. We did have to pay sixty-six

cents for some new bolts and a washer, however! It seemed the Lord knew the limits of our budget! (Besides, we were within 200 yards of a service station—so rare in the lonely stretches of Wyoming—and I reached the attendant just as he was locking up to go home.)

I have listed only a few of the many examples of God's grace which were demonstrated to us during our trip from Boise, Idaho, to Joplin, Missouri (home of Ozark Christian College). From these we have learned vividly the great truth that the Lord is interested in every detail of our lives, and He will do what is best for us.

III. Living Victoriously by Letting the Peace of God Rule in Our Hearts

It was Saturday afternoon, October 29, and I was just opening the mail. There was a bill from the Bible publishers for \$555.56 to add to our other bills. "Lord, why is there always more month than money?" There was a statement from the bank containing a bounced check from one of my customers. "Lord, why is it that the harder we work the the behinder we get?" Just then our son was coming in the back door with the cardboard wood box filled when the bottom dropped out of the box, spilling dirt and sawdust on our newly cleaned floor. Della, my wife, (who was already frustrated because she had planned more for the day than she could possibly do), was obviously irritated by the additional interruption and the dirt on her clean floor. So we all joined in to help Randy get the mess cleaned up. Returning to my desk, I found at the bottom of the stack of mail a request from Victor Knowles that I write an article for ONE BODY entitled, "What is the peace that passes understanding?" He even wrote, "I think you'll do a great job on this one, Rick." I was flattered, but really began wondering about his timing for such a request. Truly "our times are in His Hands." Thank you Lord!

My heart and mind began to focus on the scriptural truths that have brought peace to our troubled hearts many, many times in the midst of far more serious problems than the above-mentioned minor irritations.

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28 (NKJV).

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13 (NKJV).

"And my God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19 (NKJV).

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28 (NKJV).

Paul described the righteousness which comes from God as being "from faith to faith" or "faith from first to last". See Romans 1:17. God allows us to move through our lives from one test to another and from one faith-building experience to another in order that our confidence will grow in the fact that we really can trust Him. Without faith it is impossible to experience the peace of God. The peace that passes understanding accompanies a deep, abiding trust that God is faithful to deliver what He has promised and that He truly will work out literally ALL THINGS to our good and His glory. As long as our hearts remain in bondage to things, people, or philosophies, rather than relying solely and wholeheartedly on the Living God, we will remain bound to frustration, anxiety, and worry.

What is the peace that passes understanding? It is peace in the midst of turmoil, not peace in the absence of trouble. Jesus said:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27 (KJV).

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 (NKJV).

I’m reminded of the story of two artists who were commissioned to paint a picture of peace. One painted a peaceful farm scene with a cow grazing contentedly in the pasture and birds singing in the trees. The other, a Christian, painted a crashing waterfall with a little bird peacefully resting in the shelter of the rock of an overhanging ledge. Jesus is our Rock, our shelter in the turbulence of a world shaken by earthquakes and violent storms, torn apart by grim, senseless warfare, and threatened by nuclear holocaust.

What is the peace that passes understanding? It is supernatural peace. “The fruit of the Spirit is...peace.” Galatians 5:22. “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit!” Ephesians 5:18 (KJV). This isn’t polite advice, my friends. This is a positive divine command! When the man of the world reaches for his liquor to calm his shattered nerves, you reach out to Jesus and let Him fill you with His Spirit—His peace. Then you will know what is the peace that passes all understanding.

Friend, if you have never yielded your heart to God on His terms, (sincere faith in Jesus Christ, deep repentance, and turning from sin and true Christian baptism—immersion in the Name of Jesus and the resurrection in newness of life), it is impossible for you to experience God’s peace in its fullness. Jesus made it plain to Nicodemus that he could not get into the Kingdom of God through a back door—he had to come God’s way or not at all. See John 3:1-22. Are you tired of that nagging guilt? That gnawing insecurity? That churning in the pit of your stomach? Sleepless nights? Hectic days? Do you want your sins forgiven? Do you want the gift of the Holy Spirit? If so, take heed to God’s Word.

“Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every 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.’” Acts 2:38 (NIV).

IV. Living Victoriously by Allowing the Spirit of God to Control Our Tongues

In Tennessee there is one particular religious sect which believes strongly that they must demonstrate the truth of God’s Word (Mark 16:18) and show their own faith by handling live rattlesnakes. I believe this is similar to Satan quoting scripture and tempting Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple. But, I also believe there is something far more dangerous to the entire Body of Christ than rattlesnakes! I mean the sloppy, ungodly way we have ignored the words of our Lord about how we are to handle hurt feelings. I suggest that you handle offenses as you would handle live rattlesnakes—VERY CAREFULLY!

I am absolutely convinced that if we would handle offenses as Jesus taught us to, it would practically eliminate the atrocity of church splits. Even in a case where a church must disfellowship an erring brother, it probably will not cause a split if Christians clearly understand and carefully obey what Jesus said.

My friend, if you are offended, or if someone else is offended with you, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE! You need to heal the wound before it festers and gangrene sets in. Jesus never left you the option to sit back and wait for the other person to come to you. That is pride—unvarnished, ugly, abominable PRIDE. It is one of the seven sins which God hates. See Proverbs 6:16-17. Don't hesitate longer than it takes to carefully pray and evaluate the situation. Consider the words of Jesus:

“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.” Luke 17:3-4 (NKJV).

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24 (NKJV).

We are a people prone to offering invitations. Why don't we start practicing what these verses teach by reading them every Sunday and offering an invitation to reconciliation before we enter into the worship of communion and collections? Is it not clear from the Word of God that it is hypocritical defilement to attempt any such worship of God as long as we have any offenses with brethren, which we have not tried to reconcile?

Jesus very plainly outlines in three not-easy steps how we are to handle offenses. (No, they are not easy, but Jesus never called us into a cowardly way of life. It is the back-biting cowards who tear up churches because they refuse to take Jesus seriously and refuse to obey Him.)

FIRST STEP:

“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.” Matthew 18:15 (NKJV). (I'm convinced that most offenses would be cleared up this first step if we practiced it.)

SECOND STEP:

“But if he will not hear you, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” Matthew 18:16 (NKJV).

THIRD STEP:

“And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.” Matthew 18:17 (NKJV).

Have you ever heard of a church that carefully followed this procedure and still ended up with a church split? I haven't.

In full view of the Word of God, if you are offended with a brother or sister and go to anyone else other than the person who offended you, you have sinned. You disobey a direct command of our Lord. If you unsheathe a sharp, critical tongue and cut down a brother behind his back in someone else's presence, you are guilty of vile, abominable sin. You have committed one of the seven sins which God hates. You are as guilty as the street-walking prostitute, for God says, “He that soweth discord among brethren is an abomination.” Proverbs 6:19 (KJV). If you recognize in your life the sin of gossip and honestly repent, don't despair! Come to Jesus in humble confession. His arms are open to you and His grace is sufficient to forgive you, cleanse you of the abomination, and

give you victory over the gossip habit. He can transform you into a peacemaker instead of a piece maker!

I formerly believed that our sexual glands were the most dangerous members of our bodies in tempting us to sin, but the Word of God has taught me otherwise. It tells us that the tongue is by far the most dangerous member of the body. Psalm 52:2 tells us that a mischievous, deceitful tongue is like a sharp razor. James is graphically descriptive of the dangers of the tongue. See James 3:5-10.

The wise man, Solomon, also had much to say about godly and ungodly speech. Consider this pertinent example: “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.....An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire. A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.” Proverbs 16:24 & 27-28 (NKJV). “Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.” Proverbs 21:23 (NKJV).

The Holy Spirit also inspired the Apostle Paul to write: “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:29-32 (NIV).

Admittedly, dealing with offenses and taming the tongue are not easy, but they are essential to unity in the Body of Christ. However, before you confront one who has offended you, you need to take some preliminary steps in preparation.

1. First you need to evaluate why you feel offended. Perhaps the real problem is with you and not with your brother. Remember, love—true, Christ-like love—is not touchy, “not easily provoked.” 1 Corinthians 13:5. Take a good look inside and be willing to pray, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24 (KJV). If in your honest soul searching you find that the real problem is your own touchy, wounded, over-inflated ego, then bring it to the cross, confess, and accept God’s forgiveness. If the problem is internal, there is no reason for you to trouble your brother, unless it is to practice what James says: “Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16 (KJV). Such confession and mutual prayer brings great results in emotional healing.
2. If after evaluation, you are still convinced that your brother or sister has wronged you, confront him in the Spirit, not in the flesh. Consider that there are at least three possibilities for interpreting what your brother has done that offended you:
 - a. It may have been a misunderstanding.
 - b. It may have been intended for good.
 - c. It may have been maliciously intended.

God does not give you the license to attack your brother with a flood of angry accusations. Turn your tongue over to God, ask Him to fill you with His Spirit and pour out His love in your heart. Then confront your brother privately and speak the truth in

they love one another.” (If we truly wish to be effective in giving answers to unbelievers, we must honestly confess to them that we are grieved over the unnecessary divisions over trivial matters, but that we cannot gloss over the errors of those who forsake the essentials of Christian faith.)

14. I believe that we cannot promote Christian unity by compromising God’s truth, for in the same high priestly prayer Jesus said, “Sanctify them in thy truth. Thy Word is truth!” John 17:17 (KJV).
15. Therefore, I believe that to effectively evangelize our lost, confused, hostile world, we must carefully balance and prayerfully walk the tightrope stretched between truth and unity. “Lord, fill us with Your Spirit, for we cannot accomplish this on our own.” (In order to deal with both offenses and divisions in the body of Christ and to speak the truth in love, we must allow the Spirit of God to control our tongues.)

Conclusion:

Yes, it is possible to live the abundant life that Jesus came to give us. Not only is it possible, but He expects us to do so because He died that we might live—abundantly! We live it not in our own strength, but in His strength by the continual filling of His Holy Spirit. Not only are we saved by His grace, but we are also kept by His grace. We can live victoriously by focusing moment by moment on the presence of God, by trusting constantly in the providence of God, by letting the peace of God rule in our hearts, and by allowing the Spirit of God to control our tongues. In order for us to live abundantly, we must reject the lies of the thief who comes to steal, kill and destroy and keep “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV).

We can all use a renewed dose of Calvary Love. Please consider the following prayer from Amy Carmichael:

CALVARY LOVE

“If I belittle those whom I am called to serve, talk of their weak points in contrast with what I think of as my strong points; if I adopt a superior attitude, forgetting ‘Who made thee to differ?’ and ‘What hast thou that thou hast not received?’, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If I can write an unkind letter, speak an unkind word, I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If in dealing with one who does not respond, I weary of the strain and slip from under the burden, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If I am afraid to speak the truth lest the one concerned would say, ‘You do not understand,’ or because I fear to lose any reputation for kindness; If I put my own good name before the other’s highest good, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If a sudden jar can cause me to speak an impatient, unloving word, then I know nothing of Calvary love. For a cup brimful of sweet water cannot spill even one drop of bitter water, however suddenly jolted.

“If I say, ‘Yes, I forgive, but I cannot forget,’ as though God who twice a day washes all the sands on all the shores of all the world could not wash such memories from my mind, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If monotony tries me, and I cannot stand drudgery; if stupid people fret me and little ruffles set me on edge; if I make much of trifles of life, then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“If I ask to be delivered from trial rather than for deliverance out of it, to the praise of His glory; if I forget that the way of the cross leads to the cross and not to a bank of flowers; if I regulate my life on these lines, or even unconsciously my thinking, so that I am surprised when the way is rough and think it strange though the Word is, ‘Think it not strange, count it all joy,’ then I know nothing of Calvary love.

“That which I know not, teach Thou me, O Lord, my God.”¹⁴

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When the passion of Christ at Calvary becomes the passion of our lives and our focus is upon Him, the Spirit of God moves in our lives to filter every desire, every passion to bring glory to Him. There is nothing boring about the abundant, victorious life Jesus died to give us—it is a life filled with purified passion! I must continually ask myself, “What is my passion?”

### **What Is My Passion?**

I don’t know about you, but I can’t afford to have a bad day. When I’m tempted to sink into the “bad day” syndrome because of prevailing evil, outrageous politicians, time pressures, and the encroachment on our freedom of speech by unbelievers who want to eliminate “under God” from our Pledge of Allegiance and eliminate “In God We Trust” as our national motto, etc., then it’s time to remember that our God calls us to “number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.” In view of eternity I have only a few days on earth, so I want to revel in each one of them and make it count to the glory of God. Glorious spring days of lavish sunshine, cool breezes, brilliant blossoms, and singing birds make it easier for me to love life, but at a deeper level I am committed to living my life with a passion even when the rain is horizontal and the raging wind tries to rip the coat off my back.

Not only do I love life with a passion, but I also love my wife with a passion, for both are glorious gifts from God. I am committed to seeking out creative new ways to show Della that I cherish her. Although my love for Della is richer and deeper than the



day I said, “I do” years ago, yet I’m stretching for the mark of showing to both Christians and non-Christians how much Jesus loves His Bride by how I treat Della.

I also have a passion for sharing solid evidence for Christian faith and for proclaiming the Word of Truth with clarity and conviction. Those of us who have experienced the exhilaration of sharing God’s Word with responsive listeners, whether in personal evangelism, a small group, or an audience, know there is hardly a more thrilling experience in life. However, I must evaluate constantly if my passion for sharing God’s truth is for a sense of self-importance or truly for the glory of God and the edification of the Body of Christ.

I have a passion for life, for my wife, and for sharing truth, but all of this is insignificant if I do not first and foremost have a passion for God Himself. Often we sing, “As the deer panteth for the water, so my soul longeth after Thee.” Is this truly my deepest longing, or am I only mouthing the words? Asaph, in Psalm 73:25 wrote, “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.” (NIV). Wow! That’s powerful! Can I say that? Augustine wrote, “Thou has made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until we find our rest in Thee.” Yes! I agree. My rest is in Him. My hope is in Him. My joy is in Him. I do have a passion for God Himself, but I want that passion to intensify until it burns out the dross of my life.

What about you? What is your P. Q.? (That’s Passion Quotient.) In His presence is fullness of joy. Here’s wishing you a passionate, joy-filled life as you share the evidences you have learned in this book, and especially the truths you have observed directly from the Word of God. ***“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”*** 1 Peter 3:15 (KJV).

When someone asks you, “What do you know for sure?” why not say, “I know that Jesus Christ is Lord and that the evidences for His resurrection are overwhelming?” You may be amazed and thrilled as you see how God opens doors of opportunity for you when you are ready and willing to be a bold witness for Him.

“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.” Colossians 4:5-6 (NKJV).

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### Questions for Chapter 8:

1. The first way to live victoriously is by focusing moment by moment on the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. True faith believes that \_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_ under control when it looks like \_\_\_\_\_ is falling apart.
3. Real Christian faith is a combination of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A second way to live victoriously is by \_\_\_\_\_ constantly in the providence of God.
5. Have you seen evidence of God’s providence in your life? Can you tell how He provided for you or how He answered a specific prayer?
6. A third way to live victoriously is to be letting the \_\_\_\_\_ of God rule in our hearts.

7. Why do you think God allows us to experience trials and troubles?
8. A fourth way to live victoriously is to allow the Spirit of God to control our \_\_\_\_\_.
9. I suggest that you handle offenses as you would handle live rattlesnakes—VERY \_\_\_\_\_.
10. What steps should you take before confronting someone who has offended you?

**Bonus Questions:**

What steps did Jesus tell us to take when it is necessary to confront?  
What is Calvary Love?

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**CONCLUSION/FINAL QUESTION**

**Shouldn't We Take The Word of God Seriously?**

Since our Creator is real and He has revealed Himself to us abundantly, both by outward evidence and inward reason, since Almighty God has used every source of knowledge to reveal to us His fountain of truth, and since that revealed truth (the Bible) is an objective source of truth for standards of morality, shouldn't we take the Word of God seriously?

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth.**" 2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV). Doesn't this passage teach us to take the Word of God seriously and to be extremely careful how we handle truth?

Since confession is good for the soul, I want to confess that sometimes I feel strong frustration with what I see and hear in Christendom—and even among true Christians. Have you also observed a lot of inconsistent thinking—compromised positions—double standards (especially the practice of adopting another standard of "truth" which conflicts with the Bible, while professing truly to believe the Bible)? It could be the Bible plus horoscope—or—plus "Watchtower"—or—plus Vatican—or—plus a "Living Prophet"—or—plus evolutionist assumptions and assertions.

This last one is especially prevalent within churches and Bible Colleges which claim to be conservative and Bible believing. They often assert on one hand that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, yet on the other hand ignore or reject what the Word of God plainly teaches in the early chapters of Genesis. Why? Because they have adopted another plumb line—another standard—"science". (Perhaps they have missed what Paul wrote to Timothy about "oppositions of science falsely so-called". See 1 Timothy 6:20 (KJV). Because they assume that "science" has proven the universe to be 17 billion years old and the age of the earth to be 4½ billion, they often adopt some compromised position such as the gap theory or the day-age theory and try to read it into the Bible. Every compromising theory ends up teaching that suffering and death existed in the world before Adam sinned—which is a blatant contradiction of God's Word. This

is a cursed earth because of the rebellion of our original parents. See Genesis 3:17-19 and Romans 8:18-23.

Exposition is drawing out from the Bible what it actually says—not reading into it what you want it to say in order to fit in with some pre-conceived notion. Many Christians have bought into believing in millions or billions of years without considering the implications Biblically, historically, or factually. Why? Because they have heard so often that the earth is billions of years old, and they assume it has been proven scientifically. Therefore they feel they must harmonize this so-called “science” with Scripture. Let’s examine this assumption Biblically, historically and factually.

**1. Biblically.** Does the Bible teach that God created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh? Absolutely! Just read it in Genesis 1! Were they literal days? Why would we think otherwise unless trying to compromise with evolutionism (and not look foolish in the eyes of the world)? Yes, I know that God didn’t make the sun until the fourth day, but on the first day He created light. The sun is simply a light-holder. Are you aware that every place in the Old Testament where God puts a number with the word “yom” (Hebrew word for “day”), He was speaking of a literal day? So in Genesis 1 He had Moses write 1<sup>st</sup> day, 2<sup>nd</sup> day, etc. And to punctuate what He was saying, He had Moses write “and the evening and the morning were the first day,” etc. Very clear. Do we get it?

Years ago when we were missionaries in Germany, a theologian at a conference began expounding his theory that the early chapters of Genesis were merely allegory, adopted from other ancient writings. One astute missionary wife asked him, “When you begin cutting, where do you stop?” He didn’t give her a direct answer, but I do remember him saying, “Perhaps if you had read what I have read, you would believe what I believe.” I remember thinking, “I hope not!” and “If I ever come to believe what he now believes, I hope I will have the integrity to resign and get a different line of work!” If I didn’t believe the Word of God, why would I continue as a teacher or preacher? Did God intend for us to write off the early chapters of Genesis as mere allegory, or does He take those chapters seriously as true history? What type of writings are the first five books of the Bible? Law! History! How do you read law and history? Literally—unless dealing with an obvious figure of speech. Consider this weekly news from Answers in Genesis, February 18, 2006:

*“Genesis is quoted from or referred to in the rest of the Bible more than any other book of the Bible.*

*“In the New Testament alone, there are at least 200 quotations from—or references to—Genesis. In fact, there are over 100 citations or direct references in the New Testament to the first eleven chapters of Genesis. And every one of those eleven chapters is referred to somewhere in the New Testament.*

*“Not only that, but each New Testament author refers somewhere in his writings to Genesis, chapters one to eleven in particular. And Jesus Himself quoted or referred to the first chapters of Genesis on six different occasions.*

*“If Genesis isn’t true, then Jesus Christ would have been lying. Also, the rest of the Bible collapses, since every biblical doctrine of theology—directly or indirectly—is founded on the book of Genesis.*

*That's why Genesis is referred to so often throughout the Bible. Believing Genesis is the key to fully understanding God's Word."*<sup>15</sup>

If the plain, strongly emphasized statements about the days of creation are not literal, what logical basis do we have to believe that Adam and Eve were literal? If the first Adam was not a literal, historical figure, was sin and the curse literal? (Please carefully and prayerfully re-read Romans 5:12-21.) If the first Adam was not literal, what about the second Adam, who came to take away the curse? If the days of creation in chapter one of Genesis were not literal, how did they get literal by Exodus 20:11? (Or are we to understand that God was telling the Israelites that they were to work six long geological ages before they were to rest for one long geological age?) If we cannot take the early chapters of Genesis as literal history, what logical basis do we have for believing that the later chapters are literal history? And if Genesis 1:29-31 doesn't mean that there were no carnivorous beasts before the curse, what does it mean? Can we take the Bible seriously or not? If not, should we just regard it as another piece of ancient literature with legends like the Gilgamesh Epic or Greek and Roman mythology? Liberal churches have done that for years, and now they often refuse to take seriously what the Bible says about homosexuality and other moral issues.

In "The American Atheist" magazine G. Richard Bozarth wrote that Christianity fights "science" and will continue to fight "science" over evolution, because evolutionism as a belief system destroys completely the reason why Jesus' life, death and resurrection were necessary according to the Bible. Evolutionism destroys belief in Adam and Eve as literal human beings, who committed the original sin, which brought this earth under the curse of sin and death. Therefore, it also destroys the need for Jesus, Who came to take away the curse of sin and death by giving Himself as the sinless sacrifice. What is Christianity without these fundamental doctrines? Nothing!

Although I strongly disagree with G. Richard Bozarth on his idea that evolutionism is scientific, I do believe that he has a much clearer perception than many Christians concerning the vital nature of understanding Genesis as true and literal history. How sad that some Bible colleges and seminaries are so spineless about upholding a literal Genesis because they don't want to appear "unscientific"!

2. **Historically.** Are you aware that historically the estimated age of the earth has doubled every 20 years for the past 80 years or so, according to the speculations of evolutionists? Why? Do you know where the geology chart used by evolutionists came from? Terry Mortinson did his Ph.D. research on this subject and has a very enlightening DVD available from Answers in Genesis. I will summarize simply by saying that the geology chart is not based on scientific research, but on philosophical assumptions. The only place that the rock strata exists as shown on the chart is in the textbooks.
3. **Factually.** If you assume that the evolutionists have strong evidence for their assertions that it takes millions of years for fossils to form or for objects to become petrified, please open your mind and reconsider. Are you aware that there are fossils of one fish swallowing another fish and an ichthyosaur in the process of giving birth to its young? Such fossils had to have been formed instantly in a catastrophe (such as a worldwide flood). If petrification takes millions of years, how do you explain a

petrified hat, a petrified ham, a petrified clock and a petrified pair of cowboy boots? If dinosaurs died out millions of years ago, how do you explain dinosaur bones discovered in both Alaska and Montana with red blood cells still in the marrow?

Have you heard over and over that it took millions of years for the Grand Canyon to form? Are you aware that a miniature Grand Canyon was formed in a few hours near Mount St. Helens from an aftershock of the May 18, 1980, explosion? Logically, there is no way the small amount of water in the Colorado River could form the Grand Canyon no matter how much time was involved, but a massive flood could have done so in a short time.

For verification of these and other fascinating discoveries you may want to contact one or all of the following:

- 1) Creation Resource Publications, (503) 626-4447 or (866) 225-5229  
[mail@creationresource.com](mailto:mail@creationresource.com) [www.unlockingthemysteries.com](http://www.unlockingthemysteries.com)  
(Dennis Petersen)
- 2) Answers in Genesis 1-800-778-3390 or [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org)
- 3) Institute for Creation Research 1-800-628-7640 [www.icr.org](http://www.icr.org)
- 4) "It's a Young World After All" <http://www.creationism.org/ackerman/>
- 5) Creation Evidence Museum [www.creationevidence.org](http://www.creationevidence.org) (Carl Baugh)

### **What Difference Does It Make?**

You may be wondering, "What real difference does it make anyway?" Is this critical or trivial? Please consider this letter published in the February Answers in Genesis newsletter:

*"A few years ago, I was at a crossroads in my life. I felt so empty. I wanted to believe. I even spent a considerable amount of time at my local bookstore, reading through Christian books that dealt with origins. Yet, all I saw was a pitiful attempt at trying to fit evolution into the Bible. I was greatly disheartened. No one seemed to take the Bible seriously. If this was the best Christianity had to offer, I wanted no part of it.*

*"On a rare occasion, I still gave into my mother's urgings and went to church. One Sunday I looked in the bulletin and learned that a neighboring church was giving a seminar on science and the Bible. Ken Ham was giving a two-day lecture on creation and evolution.*

*"I was completely blown away [when I attended]. Ken asked: 'Isn't it great being a Christian?' I remember my eyes welling up with tears. For the first time since early childhood, I thought it was great being a Christian, because if the history of the Bible was true, then the Savior was true also.*

*"That night, everything changed. I could take Christianity seriously. I bought the 'Creation' DVD mini-series, and my youth pastor gave me a copy of 'Refuting Evolution'. I studied vigorously and learned all of the arguments. Since then, I have shared the reason for my faith in nearly all the classes I had in undergraduate school. As a result, I saw many half-hearted Christians become fully confident in the Scriptures and many others came and inquired about the Faith.*

*“On top of all of these blessings, I am now in my third quarter at seminary, studying to be a pastor!*

*“A few years ago, I never would have dreamed that I would be a Christian, let alone have such confidence in Jesus Christ. Thank you for your wonderful ministry. Without it, I might have been lost forever.”*  
T. T., St. Louis, MO<sup>16</sup>

### **Back to the Bible as our Standard!**

Let's build our worldview and our convictions solidly on the Word of God and let it be the plumb line of truth. Be strong! Be bold! Stand for truth! Keep praying for spiritual awakening in society and for spiritual renewal in the Kingdom of God.

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### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>Quotation from Extreme Devotion, Voice of the Martyrs, page 196. Used by permission

<sup>2</sup>Newton, Sir Isaac, *Wonder Worlds*, Voice of Prophecy Printing Dept. Glendale, California, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Popkin, Richard and Stroll, Avrum, *Philosophy Made Simple*, Doubleday and Co., Garden City, New York, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup>I found this quotation by Tallyrand in a tract by Phillips, John, *Why Not Start Your Own Religion?*, Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois.

<sup>5</sup>I use the “ism” with creation as creationism to designate a belief system, just as evolutionism (Darwinism) is a belief system. R. D.

<sup>6</sup>See “Was Charles Darwin Psychotic?”, Jerry Bergman, Ph.D., Impact Article #367, ICR, P. O. Box 2667, El Cajon, California 92021. It is a very thought provoking article.

<sup>7</sup>For a more complete list, see Appendix C in “the Collapse of Evolution” by Scott M. House, p. 184. Used by permission, Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, ©1983, 1993, 1997.

<sup>8</sup>Newton, Sir Isaac, “Wonder Worlds”, Voice of Prophecy Printing Dept., Glendale, California, p. 12.

<sup>9</sup>“Origin of Species”, p. 168

<sup>10</sup>This definition of micro-evolution was given to me verbally by Dr. Bob Compton. He is the co-author, along with Mike Riddle, of “the Origin of Life Equipping Course”.

<sup>11</sup>Carnegie, Andrew, 1920. *Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie*, ed. John C. Van Dyke. 1986, reprint, Boston: Northeastern University Press.

<sup>12</sup>For documentation and clarification on this subject, see “*Darwin’s Influence on Ruthless Laissez-Faire Capitalism*” by Jerry Bergman, Ph.D. published in Acts and Facts, published by Institute for Creation Research, El Cajon, CA.

<sup>13</sup>”Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation” by Dennis Petersen both exposes the fallacies of evolution and builds a comprehensive Biblical worldview in a captivating style suitable for young teens through adult readers. If you would like a copy, contact Dennis Petersen at Creation Resource Publication, P.O. Box 570, El Dorado, CA 95623. Telephone: 530-626-4447, Fax: 530-626-3221.

<sup>14</sup>From the book *If* by Amy Carmichael, published by CLC Publications, Fort Washington, PA. Used with permission.

<sup>15</sup>Used by permission of Answers in Genesis. For further information about AiG, see their website: [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org).

<sup>16</sup>Used by permission of Answers in Genesis. For further information about AiG, see their website: [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org).

# READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER

By RICK DEIGHTON

## WARNING!

**D**on't read this book—if you are satisfied with the status quo and don't like to be challenged! However, if you yearn to expand your knowledge, to deepen your faith, and to strengthen your ability to answer tough questions from skeptical friends and family, keep turning these pages, absorbing the truths, and pondering the questions at the end of each chapter. If you understand and apply what you read, you are in for the thrill of your life! Especially, remember to pray daily, "Lord, please fill me with your Holy Spirit and put me in the right place at the right time with the right words to honor you." You will be amazed how God answers this prayer and uses you!



**RICK DEIGHTON** is a bi-vocational missionary who works lighting business between mission trips to former Soviet Union nations. Rick's wife, Della, is a co-owner of their business and is office manager for both their business and their ministry. With Rick, she was also co-founder of Alpine Christian Mission and Overseas Outreach. Rick and Della are co-workers with Victor and Evelyn Knowles as Northwest representatives of Peace On Earth Ministries, and Rick is an associate evangelist with Reggie Thomas (White Fields Overseas Evangelism). Rick is a graduate of Boise Bible College and later did post-graduate study at Ozark Christian College in mission strategy, expository and evangelistic preaching, personal evangelism, philosophy, and writing techniques. Rick's articles, tracts, and booklets have been published in English, German, Korean, and Russian. Rick and Della believe that education is important but prayer is vital in being "*Ready To Give An Answer.*"