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## **Abstract:**

This article on **Scriptural Physics** is a recompilation of two articles previously published elsewhere, namely, “What is Scriptural Physics” and “Make Sure of All Things”. It is about the author’s “lessons learned” personal experience in dealing with blind spots, illusions, "strange teachings" and deceptions in orthodox Christianity. It illustrates principles of interpretation, rules of evidence, obviation of controversies, and methods of perceiving the invisible. It also gives insights on how Christians may handle difficult and complex problems. This same methodology is then applied (elsewhere) to perplexing problems in physics and cosmology. The results of this methodology are astonishing but definitely not mainstream. They are described in other publications:

**“Beyond Einstein: non-local physics”** (2<sup>nd</sup> edition or later))

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334075961\\_Beyond\\_Einstein\\_non-local\\_physics\\_2nd\\_ed](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334075961_Beyond_Einstein_non-local_physics_2nd_ed) )

**“Research Needed on Monopolar, Pulsed High Voltage Levitation”**

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319002136\\_Research\\_needed\\_on\\_monopolar\\_pulsed\\_high\\_voltage\\_levitation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319002136_Research_needed_on_monopolar_pulsed_high_voltage_levitation) )

**“Intuitive Concepts for Atomic and Photon Spin Systems”**

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338293585\\_Intuitive\\_Concepts\\_for\\_Atomic\\_and\\_Photon\\_Spin\\_Systems](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338293585_Intuitive_Concepts_for_Atomic_and_Photon_Spin_Systems) )

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# Applications

Some possible uses for this document:

- **Science classes:** A key scientific premise in Scriptural Physics is that if equations of physics like  $E=mc^2$ ,  $E=pc$ ,  $E=cB$  are to be dimensionally consistent, then it should be possible to rewrite all equations of physics in terms of pure space/time ratios. This in turn should lead to general and powerful solutions to many perplexing problems as well as important practical applications.
- **Philosophy/Social Science classes:** How does a student distinguish frontier, cutting edge science from “junk science”. Why do institutions often rabidly oppose radically new ideas? Can institutions engage in “junk behavior”? Is “congruency” more difficult for institutions than for individuals?

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) had to address these questions in its Breakthrough Propulsion Physics program (BPP):

“Another challenge of seeking breakthroughs is ensuring credibility without sacrificing openness to new perspectives. This is particularly challenging since genuinely new ideas often extend beyond the established knowledge base, or worse, can *appear* to contradict this base. In other words, a *genuinely* new, credible idea is very likely to *appear* non-credible. Also, it is common when soliciting new ideas to receive a large number of “fringe” submissions that are certainly non-credible. To address this challenge, it is recommended to: (1) concentrate on credible *empirical* data (how nature is observed to work) rather than depending on current theories or paradigms (how nature is *interpreted* to work), (2) compare the new idea’s value to existing approaches, (3) ensure that the new idea can be put to a test, and (4) look for the characteristic signs of non-credible science [34]. It should be noted that these credibility criteria do not check if an idea is *correct*, but rather check to see if the idea is credibly constructed and is leading to a correctness test.

Some of the characteristics of non-credible work is that references are not explicitly cited, and that conclusions are made without substantiating the work with supporting evidence. This can be easily checked by requiring that submissions cite credible, peer reviewed, references. References are required for supporting evidence (criteria E), and for comparisons to existing theories (criteria F). Fringe or pathological researchers often do not do this homework. These credibility checks still leave plenty of room for unconventional, visionary ideas.”

<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/api/citations/19980201240/downloads/19980201240.pdf> (Section 4.4, 5.1)

[http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/ciencia/secret\\_projects/project301.htm](http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/ciencia/secret_projects/project301.htm)

- **Business Management classes:** What level of creativity do you want in the work place, and how do you manage its effects? Should employees follow orders and just do the job? Or should they be allowed to create potentially effective, but possibly disruptive solutions? Or should you just let the competition figure it all out first? (“The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.”) See “Creativity in Science and Engineering”, Ronald B. Standler (1998) <http://www.rbs0.com/create.htm>
- **Law classes:** Is Scriptural Physics science or religion?
- **Bible Studies:** Some Christians have difficulty seeing science and scripture as complementary. Perhaps what is found within these pages will be helpful.

“Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised,  
And his words are not heard.” —Ecclesiastes 9:16

“And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” —John 1:5

# Basis for Scriptural Physics

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Scriptural Physics is a method of acquiring fundamental knowledge about the physical universe that is guided by principles found in the Bible. Physics itself is the study of the interaction between matter and energy. More generally, it is a search for the fundamental rules that govern the physical universe.

Scriptural Physics has the following characteristics:

- Scriptural Physics seeks to find a fundamental underlying physical reality that is usually invisible and not experienced directly. In this sense it has much in common with the biblical conception of faith which depends on "evidence of things not seen." And like faith, the reality often turns out to be something unexpected, something contrary to outward appearances.
- The methodology of Scriptural Physics is largely inductive instead of deductive. That is, it proceeds inferentially from particular to general. It begins with specific facts and then tries to infer powerful principles that would encompass these facts and perhaps predict the existence of other phenomena yet undiscovered. In this regard, Scriptural Physics is rather ordinary, and not unlike the so-called scientific method, or even just plain old common sense.
- Scriptural Physics uses ordinary principles of biblical interpretation. Whatever the Bible meant to people of ancient times, it is taken to have basically the same meaning for us today. Likewise, what it did *not* mean to them, it does *not* mean to us today. This is required by the fact that the Bible was written in a historical manner anchored to real people and common, human circumstances. It was clearly not about physics, and because a scripture cannot mean today what it never meant in the first place, there is no point in looking for "secret messages that were concealed by the Holy Spirit in ancient times for the modern physicist" (or gamblers, fortune-tellers, etc., etc.)
- Scriptural Physics does not use "miraculous revelation" from God. Its methodology is very similar to the Scientific Method.

Key Biblical principles central to Scriptural Physics include the following:

## **Principle #1: The Physical Universe is worthy of study.**

"He seals the hand of every man, that all men may know His work . . . Stand and consider the wonders of God. Do you know how God establishes them?" (Job 37:7, 14-15)

"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. . . . How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all." (Psalm 19:1-3, *NASB*, 104:24, *NIV*)

"Great are the works of the LORD; They are studied by all who delight in them" (Psalm 111:2)

**Principle #2: The Physical Universe is intrinsically reasonable, understandable, and accessible to man.**

"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 1:19-20, *NIV*)

"Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? . . . Where is the way that the light is divided? . . . Where is the way to the dwelling of light?" (Job 38:33, 24, 19; Note that these are "physical" questions, and that they are also "fair" questions that must have answers that are understandable by mankind.)

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2Timothy 3:16-17)

"The anointing you received from [God] abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but . . . His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie" (1John 2:27; John 14:26))

"walk as children of light for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Ephesians 5:8-9)

"His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3)

"Those who seek the LORD understand all things" (Proverbs 28:5; See also Proverbs 1:7, 29-33, 9:10, Psalm 111:10)

"The Lord will give you understanding in everything." ( 2Timothy 2:7)

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11, *NKJ*)

"I applied my heart to know, to search and seek out wisdom and the reason of things . . ." (Ecclesiastes 7:25)

**Principle #3: The Bible outlines principles that pertain to perception of the invisible.**

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." (Hebrews 11:1-3, *NKJ*; Hebrews 11 goes on to give examples such as that of Moses who "endured as seeing Him who is invisible." )

**Principle #4: The Bible outlines principles that pertain to obtaining reliable knowledge.**

"The naive believes everything. But the prudent man considers his steps" (Proverbs 14:15)

"Test the spirits to see whether they are from God" (1 John 4:1-3)

"Examine yourselves . . . Test yourselves" (2Cor 13:5)

"Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings" (Hebrews 13:9)

If you are a Christian and believe in an intrinsically reasonable, accessible Universe, then how do you handle topics like action-at-a-distance, matter waves, tunneling, quantum interference, quantum correlation, the uncertainty principle, warps in space, UFO abductions, and a host of other very strange, bizarre topics?

*Make Sure of All Things* gives scriptural principles to address these problems. It is about my personal experiences in dealing with blind spots, illusions, "strange teachings" and deceptions in orthodox Christianity. It illustrates principles of interpretation, rules of evidence, obviation of controversies, and methods of perceiving the invisible. It also gives insights on how Christians may handle difficult and complex problems.

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"Physics *is* like a religion. It is founded on the belief that there is reason in nature which the human mind is capable of fathoming.

The articles of faith are that the natural world is fundamentally interesting, that the effort to understand it is worthy of pursuit, and that the pursuit will be made despite all obstacles. It is a demanding religion, but initiation is open to all." (*Waves and Grains: reflections on light and learning*, Mark P. Silverman, 1998, p. 405)

"To live in the presence of great truths and eternal laws  
—that is what keeps a man patient when the world ignores  
him and calm and unspoiled when the world praises him."  
(*Honore Balzac*)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7)

## “Make Sure of All Things . . .”

I was sitting in a restaurant stirring some sugar into a glass of ice tea. As I was swirling the ice cubes around and stirring up the undissolved sugar on the bottom of the glass, I began idly wondering how I knew the sugar was really sugar and not salt. In the old days, teenagers would sometimes mischievously switch the contents of salt and sugar containers, and then watch hapless patrons gag on salty coffee. Was this about to happen with me with my tea? I had neither looked at the crystals nor tasted them. I did not really know whether I was about to drink ice tea with salt or sugar in it.

I knew I was making an assumption—that the sugar had not been replaced with salt. Yet that realization did not make me uncomfortable. Then I realized that I was making *lots* of assumptions. I had not inspected the kitchen for roaches either. Nor had I checked under my chair for bombs. I usually don't even think of these things. I was making hordes of assumptions without even realizing that I was making them! It is probably a good thing that the human mind can do this, and be comfortable in doing so. Otherwise we would have nothing to do in life but checkout every personally relevant possibility we could imagine.

But this talent for automatically making assumptions raises some troubling questions. Suppose I were designing an airplane, or the control system for some industrial equipment. Could my mind automatically make assumptions without my conscious realization or intent? Might some of these assumptions be dangerous and threaten lives? How could I spot such assumptions? I needed to *know* how I knew things.

I was intensely motivated to find the answer to these questions. Some years before this, I had been the unwitting victim of a harmless-looking religious cult. It was one of those "Christian" religions that claimed to have an exclusive "hotline" with God. This hotline did indeed seem real and I felt I had access to it by virtue of my association with this religious organization. But eventually I realized that the hotline was not exclusive. People have access to this hotline if they are *righteously disposed*, (Acts 5:32) not because they are associated with some kind of religious organization. But this fact had been cleverly concealed from me by crafty doubletalk and a subtle "thought reform" culture. The effect of this deception on me was like carbon monoxide poisoning. It had messed up my ability to detect that I was being deceived. I gradually realized something was wrong, but I could not figure out what it was. Eventually, I quit going to church and wanted nothing to do with religion.

Some years later, I came across the book *Combating Cult Mind Control* (by Steve Hassan, 1988) As I read of the techniques used by cults, and of the full scope of what had happened to me, I got really angry. I knew from first-hand experience how effective, and how destructive, these techniques were. I was angry at the men who had claimed to be God's representatives and who had violated my mind without my permission or "full disclosure." To get my spiritual life back in order, I had to learn how to spot the assumptions my altered mind was now silently making. I knew I had been "brainwashed" with spiritual sewage for several years and I even understood the techniques that were used, but the long-term effects were subtle and very hard to spot. (other reading: "How totalism works", Alexandra Stein <https://aeon.co/essays/how-cult-leaders-brainwash-followers-for-total-control> )

I was pretty low on trust for religious leaders and was not about to join any church. But I believed in God and still had respect for the Bible. I decided that visiting various Bible churches



would prevent me from becoming enculturated to any one particular viewpoint, and that the variety of viewpoints would keep me thinking and help make my blind spots visible. With some difficulty, I also got in touch with former members of the cult and we used each other as psychological mirrors to peer into the workings of our spiritual lives. After several years of patient and diligent effort, I finally felt that I had fully recovered from this awful experience. I ended up with a much better understanding of the Bible and a much closer relationship with God.

"Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues"(Revelation 18:4)

Currently I go to a Community Church (which was formerly a conservative Baptist church). The pastor there appeals to us through his Christ-centered common sense and scriptural examples. It is truly refreshing to find a pastor who discards the manipulative gimmicks and emotional appeals and uses the time to teach the Bible instead of politics or psychology.

Yet there are some things there that remind me of my past experiences. The church has several "Sunday school" classes in the morning and I attended one fairly regularly. One day we were discussing the many titles of Jesus used in the Bible, titles like messiah, Prince of Peace, Son of man, Son of God, and so forth. Then the word "Trinity" briefly entered the discussion. This is the teaching that God is three gods, yet is one God. "Is Jesus God? . . . Yes! . . . Is God Jesus? . . . No!"

I was suddenly getting some uneasy feelings. The Trinity doctrine lacks explainability. And terms like "Trinity," "Deity of Christ," "God the Son," and so forth, are not biblically defined, and that allows people to define them any way they want. I had learned the hard way to be very wary and skeptical of religious teachings with these two traits. The realizations years before at the restaurant with the ice tea came back in a flash. So did the issue of cults and blindspots. I knew I had to investigate this one, and would have to do it thoroughly enough to write it down on paper, so it could be inspected and tested by other Christians.

Belief in the Trinity doctrine is widely held, and an examination of it can therefore give insights into broadly applicable fundamental values, strategic principles, and tactical skills. It is a good topic for an article in this sense because:

1. It illustrates widely held fallacies:

- the fallacy of never questioning things of which we are so very sure.
- the fallacy of responding to labels and abstractions as though they are the reality instead of merely descriptions or summaries.
- the fallacy of basing one's beliefs on the views of other people and the pronouncements of expert councils instead of a personal, first-hand examination of primary facts.
- the fallacy of "going beyond what is written" in fundamental documents like the Bible.
- fallacy of engaging in religious cockfights over essentially useless issues.
- fallacy of "Creeds before deeds" in Christianity and "symbols before substance" for the rest of the population.
- the fallacy of persecuting others for not believing "the plain truth." The perception is that there can be no good reason for rejecting such a widely held belief. Unbelievers must therefore be misinformed, immature or rebellious.

2. It can be used to illustrate a powerful problem solving principle known as obviation. Look for these underlying ideas in the discussion about obviation:

- To obviate a problem is to solve it without touching it. If obviation is properly done, the problem seems to evaporate effortlessly and unobtrusively and without leaving a big mess behind to clean up.
- obviation may require a thorough understanding of the problem by the obviation designer, but not by the obviation user.
- If obviation is called for as a solution, then trying to wrestle with the problem directly will almost always be counter-productive. Such "solutions" tend to address symptoms or things unrelated to the problem and therefore cannot really solve it. The principle of 'not touching the problem' will obviate even this problem.

3. The exposition of certain biblical principles, especially those relating to rules of evidence and perception of invisible things, will be helpful in understanding the topic of "scriptural physics".

## The Trinitarian Controversy

Let's start with defining what the Trinity is and what the controversy is about:

The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of the Christian religion—the truth that in the unity of the Godhead there are Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these Three Persons being truly distinct one from another. Thus, in the words of the Athanasian Creed: 'the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God —*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York, 1912) Vol. XV, p. 47

The Athanasian Creed is regarded as the final formulation of the Trinitarian doctrine (circa 500 AD). Note what it has to say regarding the equality of the Persons of the Trinity:

For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. . . . So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God. . . . And in this Trinity none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another. But the whole three persons are coeternal together, and coequal. —The Athanasian Creed, as quoted in *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, (New York, 1871), McClintock and Strong, Vol. 2:560-561

Note that the Trinity is called "the truth" and the "central doctrine of the Christian religion" (not redemption). It makes the bizarre claim that there are three Gods, yet not three Gods. Is this really a Biblical doctrine? Is it in fact the *central* doctrine of the New Testament? Did the apostles teach it? Statements by Trinitarians themselves will help us answer these questions:

TRINITY. The word Trinity is not found in the Bible, and though used by Tertullian in the last decade of the 2nd century, it did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the 4th century. . . . It is not a biblical doctrine in the sense that any formulation of it can be found in the Bible . . . —*New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd edition, (1982) p. 1221

The formal doctrine of the Trinity as it was defined by the great church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries is not to be found in the NT [New Testament]. —*Harper's Bible Dictionary*, (1985) p. 1099

No schematic conception of God as triune being is found in the NT . . . —*Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions*, Keith Crim, general editor, (1981)

Though "trinity" is a second-century term found nowhere in the Bible, and the Scriptures present no finished Trinitarian statement, the NT does contain most of the building materials for later doctrine. In particular, while insisting on one God, it presents Jesus Christ as the divine Son in distinction from God the Father, and probably presents the Holy Spirit or Paraclete as a divine person distinct from both. Obvious problems admittedly attach to both claims; indeed, "person" as a Trinitarian (threeness) term has itself been controversial since Augustine, and especially in the modern period. Still, the doctrine of the trinity does lie in Scripture "in solution" (B. B. Warfield, *ISBE* [1929], s.v.); i.e., the NT presents events, claims, practices, and problems from which church fathers crystallized the doctrine in succeeding centuries. —*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1988, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Vol. IV, p. 914

These statements lead to a paradox. First we read that the Trinity is the "central doctrine of the Christian religion," (not redemption) leaving us with the impression that Christ must have said a lot about it. But then we read that the doctrine "did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the 4th century" and that "the Trinity as it was defined by the great church councils of the fourth and fifth centuries is not to be found in the NT." If Christ taught it, or intended it, then why isn't it recorded explicitly in the Bible? Why is the doctrine credited to "great church councils" four hundred years after Christ?

A therein lies the controversy. Is God a Trinity? Or is He not a Trinity?

The official controversy, however, is irrelevant. The real issue is whether Christians can *distinguish* between tradition and scripture, or tradition disguised as scripture. Not all tradition is harmful, but believing that tradition *is* scripture can truly be fatal.

## What Do the Words on the Page Say?

If the doctrine itself is not in the Bible, does the Bible at least *imply* such a doctrine? Does the Bible, for instance, say anything about three Gods being one God? If we read the Bible, we would find that the term "God the Father" does in fact appear several times. (1Cor 8:6, Gal 1:1, Php 2:11, Col 3:17, 1Thes 1:1, 2 Tim 1:2, 2 Peter 1:17, 2John 3) But the terms "God the Son" and "God the Holy Spirit" are very conspicuously absent. And as the encyclopedias note, the word "trinity" does not appear anywhere in the Bible either.

Rather than depicting "three-in-oneness," plain, explicit statements in the Bible seem to depict the Father and the Son as distinct and separate beings:

Indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God, the Father . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ—1Cor 8:5-6

Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.—2John verse 3

There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all.—1Tim 2:5,6 AV

Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.—Galatians 3:20, *NKJ*

God is one —James 2:19, *NASB*

There is one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God . . . —Eph 4:4-6, *NKJ*

Jehovah your God is one Jehovah—Deut 6:4-5, *AS* and *NIV INT*; Mark 12:29

Note that virtually nothing is said about the Spirit in these texts. If the third person of the Trinity is just as important as the first and second, why is it so rarely mentioned?

Related to this question is the assertion of the Athanasian Creed that the persons of the trinity have "glory equal", that they are "coequal," and that "none is greater or less than another"? This assertion appears to be plainly contradicted by the teachings of Christ:

No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

—Mat 24:36

The Jews tried all the harder to kill Him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing . . ." —John 5:18-19, *NIV*

All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me . . . For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.—John 6:37-38

My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.—John 7:16,17 5:30

If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God' — John 8:54

He who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him who sent Me.—John 12:44  
the Father is greater than I—John 14:28

. . . that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent —John 17:3, *NIV*

Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' —John 20:17, *NIV*

I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age, or in the age to come. —Mat 12:30-32

The Son of God says this: . . . I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. . . . He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God . . . and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God . . . which comes down out of heaven from My God . . . —Rev 2:18, 3:2,12

. . . the head of Christ is God.—1Cor 11:3, *AV*

These texts imply nothing about God being three gods in one God. But if God were three gods in one, these texts *do* explicitly disclaim that the persons of the Trinity are coequal or have equal glory.

Still, Trinitarians claim that certain passages in the Bible imply, or are consistent with, the claim that God is a Trinity. I will cite a few of these texts here, and offer my own non-Trinitarian view of them.

Please keep in mind that my purpose here is to illuminate, give insight, and raise pertinent questions, not be a judge or critic. **This entire article is concerned more with the nature of blind spots than with doctrine per se.** I am not so concerned with your actual beliefs as I am with how and why you chose those beliefs. Please give these issues the careful thought that they deserve.

The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God.—Romans 14:22

## 1. "The Word was God" —John 1:1

Trinitarians read this as proof that Jesus is God, or more specifically, Jesus was God before He came to earth, and resumed being God after his resurrection.

The full verse reads: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning." (John 1:1-2) A problem is immediately obvious here: How could the Word 'be God' and yet be "with God"? Also, why isn't the Holy Spirit mentioned here if He is also God? Is this a sacred mystery that is beyond our human comprehension, or has something merely been lost in the translation?

"The Word was God" is a translation of the New Testament Greek *theos en ho logos* literally, "God was the Word" (θεος ην ο λογος).

At first this does not seem to clarify matters. But note that in the Greek the predicate nominative occupies the subject position and the subject occupies the predicate nominative position. Note also that the definite article (the word "the") appears before "Word" but does not appear before "God." Is there any significance to this? What other choices did John have in the way he could have written this phrase? There appear to be three:

- a. John could have chosen a wording literally translatable as "The Word was the God." This would mean that Jesus is identically the same as God the Almighty. (The subject and predicate nominative are interchangeable and identical if they both have the definite article.)
- b. Or John could have chosen a wording literally translatable as "The Word was God" (no "the" before God). This could be rendered as "The Word was a god." (Compare a parallel construction at Acts 28:6) Jesus would therefore be "a god" but not God the Almighty.
- c. The third choice would be translatable as "The Word God is." This choice is similar to other passages in John's writings like : "The God light is" (1John 1:5), "The God love is" (1John 4:8), and "The word your truth is." (John 17:17) In fact John seems to prefer this sort of construction. *Why didn't he use it at John 1:1?*

John did not use any of these constructions because they could not convey the meaning he intended. He placed "God" in the subject position, even though the subject was "the Word." His reason for doing this could be that the subject *position* was used for emphasis. Because "God" has no definite article, John was emphasizing what nature or quality characterized the Word— not *who* the Word was, but *what* the Word was. John was saying emphatically that the Word was "Godness" or "divine." In fact, some Bibles render it that way: "the Logos was divine" — *The Bible -An American Translation* by Smith and Goodspeed (1935); *A New Translation of the Bible* by James Moffatt (1935) and "what God was, the Word was" —*NEB*

I try to illustrate this, perhaps imperfectly, by saying that there are various types of natures: God nature, angel nature, human nature, animal nature, plant nature, and inanimate nature. Jesus, in his prehuman existence, was the only being (besides God) who possessed God nature. And he got that nature because God, his Father, passed his own nature onto him, as fathers naturally do in the case of their sons. Hence, John 1:18 refers to

Jesus as "the only begotten God." (*NASB*) Colossians 1:15 says that Jesus is the image of his father, "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation." Hebrews 1:3 says "He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature."

In contrast to a *begotten* being, *created* beings or life-forms do not automatically receive the nature of their Creator. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus was begotten, not created. (Ps 2:7, John 1:14,18, 3:16,18, Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5,6, 5:5, 11:17; 1John 4:9; compare Col 1:15,18, Rev 1:5)

But Jesus was far more than a mere reproduction of this father's nature. Jesus had his father's ways about him too. When Philip asked to see the Father, Jesus said, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9; compare 3John 11) Jesus was "the image of the invisible God." Colossians 2:9 says that in Christ "all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." (compare Luke3:22) If Philip had really known Jesus, he would have known the Father also for the Son was 'the exact representation of his very being.'

Christians, incidentally, are to become "partakers of the divine nature" (2Peter 1:4) and "put on immortality" (1Cor 15:52-54; 2Tim 1:10).

## **2. "Before Abraham was born, I am" —John 8:58**

Here Trinitarians claim that Jesus was saying he is the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14. There Moses asks God what name of God he should use when proclaiming Him to the Israelites. God says "I am who I am" and "This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.' " If Jesus is actually the "I AM" of the Old Testament, then he is the God of Moses, and therefore God Almighty.

My view is that the context of John 8:58 shows clearly that Christ is talking about his preexistence, rather than his nature (the Jews ask, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?") . He is expressing how long he has existed rather than who he is. In the words of John the Baptist: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' " (John 1: 29-30, 15; see also Luke 1:35-36, 57-63)

The Greek words used in this passage however, *εγω ειμι*, literally translate as "I am" (present tense). It is the same Greek as that used by the blind man a few verses later at John 9:9 and is commonly translated as "I am the one" or "I am the man." But inserting this into the translation of John 8:58 would come out as "Before Abraham was born, I am" and that is not meaningful in our language pattern. The Greek wording at John 8:58 must have another English meaning, but what is it?

The Greek words in question follow an adverbial clause of past time. This changes the meaning significantly. In Greek when a temporal adverb is followed by a statement denoting continuing action which began in the past, the Greek will use the present tense, whereas the English translation will ordinarily use the present perfect. Hence, a better translation would be "Before Abraham was, I have existed."

And in fact many translations render it similarly: "I have existed before Abraham was born" (Moffat); "I was in existence before Abraham was ever born" (The Living Bible); "I was alive before Abraham was born" (The Simple English Bible); "I existed before Abraham was born" (Schonfield); "Before Abraham existed, I was" (Murdock); "Before Abraham existed I was already what I am" (The Twentieth Century New Testament)

This Greek tense is known in the Greek grammar books as "present of duration" (Dana and Mantey) and "progressive present" (Robertson). Examples of this tense with temporal adverbs are Luke 13:7, 15:29, John 5:6, 14:9, 15:27, 2 Cor 12:19, 2 Tim 3:15, 2 Peter 3:4, and 1 John 3:8. Readers who want to pursue the technical details can look these up in an interlinear translation and see that the "present of duration" in Greek is usually translated with the English perfect. John 14:9, for instance, is literally "so long time with you I am" and gets translated in the Revised Standard Version as "I have been with you so long".

Hence, there is no contextual or grammatical support for the idea that Jesus was claiming to be the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14. In fact if he did intend to do so, this would be a weak way of saying it to the ears of his skeptical audience. The Septuagint—a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament used in Jesus' day—renders Exodus 3:14 as "I am the Being" or "I am the existing one" (ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν). If Jesus were really claiming to be the "I AM" of Exodus, then these Greek words would have been a much clearer choice. Yet Jesus did not use this wording at John 8:58, nor even at John 18:4-8. In the latter, the parallel accounts suggest that the words he used (ἐγὼ εἰμι) were interchangeable with a similar Greek expression—one that clearly does not have overtones of Exodus 3:14. (αὐτός ἐστιν, see Mat 26:48, Mark 14:44)

It is also instructive to review the *other* "I am . . ." statements that Jesus made. The following are translated as "I am" and contain the Greek ἐγὼ εἰμι or at least εἰμι (the ἐγὼ is used for emphasis and is not always present):

I am the living bread that came down out of heaven. —John 6:51

I am the light of the world —John 8:12

I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world —John 8:23

I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. —John 10:9 I am the Son of God —John 10:36

I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, shall live even if he dies. —John 11:25

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. —John 14:6

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. —John 15:1

I am he [Jesus the Nazarene] —John 18:5-8

I am the King of the Jews —John 19:21

I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.—Acts 9:5

What is your impression of these? Is he trying to say "I am God", or is he more likely saying "I am he" who is described, not in Exodus 3:14, but in Deuteronomy 18:15-19:

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses] from among you, from your country-men, you shall listen to him. . . . and I [God] will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And it shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

Jesus reminded the Jews of this when he said, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of me" (John 5:46) and "for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins." (John 8:24)

I think it is very clear that he was using "I am" in claiming to be "The Prophet" instead of "The God".

### 3. "He existed in the form of God" —Philippians 2:6,7

To Trinitarians this passage means "Jesus existed as God" or simply, "Jesus is God."

The full text is: "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death " (Philippians 2:6-8)

In the phrases *form of God* and *form of a bond-servant*, the word *form* is translated from the same Greek word, *morphe*. What is the meaning of this word?

An excellent definition of the word is that of Gifford: "*morphe* is therefore properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual itself exists. . . . Thus in the passage before us *morphe Theou* is the Divine nature actually and inseparably subsisting in the Person of Christ . . . . For the interpretation of 'the form of God' it is sufficient to say that (1) it includes the whole nature and essence of Deity, and is inseparable from them, since they could have no actual existence without it; and (2) that it does not include in itself anything 'accidental' or separable, such as particular modes of manifestation, or conditions of glory and majesty, which may at one time be attached to the 'form,' at another separated from it. . . ." (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, W. E. Vine, M. F. Unger, W. White, Jr., 1985)

Note the idea of 'actual nature or essence' and the idea of 'whole and inseparable' in this definition. Thus, *morphe* represents an actual outward appearance that, when seen, leads the observer to perceive the object's inner essence or real nature. When we look at a human, for instance, we can see "human nature" not merely that human's outward appearance, the manifestation of the latter being variable under different conditions.

This passage therefore is saying that Jesus in his prehuman form, was fully and completely of the "divine nature." He then "emptied himself" fully and completely of the divine essence and became in essence and nature a "bond-servant." This means that he was then fully and completely human (not a God-man; He had to *be* human just like Adam was when God created him.—John 1:14, 1Cor 15:22,45; Gal 4:4, Hebrews 2:9; 10:5, 10-14, Luke 24:46, Acts 10:40)

The concept of separability here seems to outright destroy the "three but only one" nature of the Trinity. How could the second person of the Trinity be separated from an inseparable



essence or nature? How could the second person acquire a completely different *morphe* or essence while here on earth as a human? How could the second person of the Trinity be dead in the grave for parts of three days while the other two persons were alive in heaven?

Christ could not be both God and man. Denying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and that he was fully human is a denial of his ransom sacrifice:

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.—1John 4:1-3

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.—John 1:14 (see also 1Tim 3:16)

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.— John 6:50-60

When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.—Gal 4:4

But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely Jesus. . . . Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is the devil. . . .Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things . . .—Hebrews 2:9, 14-17

How could Jesus be God and yet be flesh? (John 4:24, Luke 24:39) How could he be God and yet be lower than angels? How could Jesus be tempted when "God cannot be tempted"? ( compare Mat 4:1, Heb 2:18:, 4:15 with James 1:13, Numbers 23:19) In their handling of this word *morphe*, aren't Trinitarians *really* saying, "There is not one, but three"?

John gave us a strong warning about being deceived on the issue of Christ's *humanity*: "Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist." ( 2John 7; see also 1John 4:1-3 quoted above)

My view is that Philippians 2:6,7 simply presents the same truth about the Son's nature as that expressed in John 1:1 discussed above.

#### **4. "My Lord and my God!" —John 20:28**

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples in a closed room and showed them the nail marks in his hands and the spear mark in his side. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, was not present. When the disciples told him that they had seen the risen Lord, he told them "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

Eight days later Jesus appeared again in the same manner. This time Thomas was present and Jesus specifically invited him to put his finger into the nail prints and reach his hand into his side. Thomas did this and perceived that this was indeed the risen Jesus. He then exclaimed "My Lord and My God!"

Many Christians say that, in this verse, Thomas was clearly proclaiming Jesus to be his God.

But a minority say that this was clearly an exclamation, much like we say "Oh my God!" today. The latter claim that the text is telling us that Thomas was surprised and impressed, not specifically making a theological statement about the Deity of Jesus.

A few verses earlier, John's gospel records Jesus as saying, "I ascend to My Father and your Father and My God and your God." The implication here is that Thomas knew who his God was: it was the same God that Jesus worshipped. On the cross, Jesus cried out "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" (Mat 27:46) Thomas would have known about that too. And Jesus, the Son of God, still uses the term "My God" when referring to "My Father" even after his resurrection *and* glorification. (Rev 2:18, 3:2, 12, 21; see also 1:6)

## **5. "the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" —Titus 2:13**

### **"our God and Savior Jesus Christ" —2 Peter 1:1**

The wording here appears to say that Jesus is both our God and our Savior—one and the same.

A more careful reading of the Bible shows that God is the originator of our salvation and Jesus is the means. Hence, the term "Savior" is applied both to God and Jesus:

The Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world —1John 4:14

. . . now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus —2Tim 1:10

God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. —1John 4:9; John 3:16

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord . . . For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. —2 Peter 1:2, 11

It is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers. —1Tim 4:10

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared . . . He poured out [the Holy Spirit] upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior —Titus 3:4,6

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus —1Tim 2:5,6  
to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our lord . . .  
—Jude 25, *NIV*

Notice that in Titus 3:4,6 cited above, the title "Savior" is applied to both God and Christ. Yet, the two are clearly distinct. God does the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and Jesus is the means "through" which this is done.

Unfortunately, there is still some uncertainty and controversy surrounding the translation of Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1. The *Revised Standard Version* renders Titus 2:13 as "the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (text) and as "of the great

God and our Savior" (footnote). *The Emphasized Bible* (J.B. Rotherham) renders it as "forthshining of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Christ Jesus." Moffatt renders it as "the appearance of the Glory of the great God and of our Saviour Christ Jesus." Their renderings of Titus 1:4 and 2Peter 1:1 are consistent with this. It is therefore apparent that some translations separate the identities of "God" and "Savior" but others do not. The Greek manuscripts are of the seventh century and cannot resolve this issue decisively.

## **6. "... in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit" —Mat 28:19**

In Mat 28:19 and 2 Cor 13:14 these three titles (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) are mentioned together. If God is indeed a Trinity, such a wording would be expected. But the wording alone proves nothing.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are also mentioned together. Are they a Trinity? (Genesis 50:24, Exodus 2:24, Num 32:11) What about phrases like *God* of Abraham, *God* of Isaac, *God* of Jacob? (Mat 22:32) Is that even stronger proof? In the Bible, Noah, Job and Daniel are mentioned together (Ezekiel 14:14,20) as are Peter, James, and John (Mat 17:1, Luke 8:51, 9:28, Acts 1:13) Few Christians would argue that these are trine because they are mentioned in threes.

## **7. "I and the Father are one" —John 10:30**

This again sounds like Jesus and the Father are one and the same being. But you might get a different impression if you keep on reading in John's gospel:

Know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father. —John 10:38

He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. —John 12:44, *NKJ*

In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. —John 14:20; see also 14:9-11

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. —John 17:20-23, *NIV*; Philippians 2:13

See also Eph 5:28-33 (Genesis 2:24), 1Cor 6:12-20, 12:12-27, (2Cor 6:14-18; 2Tim 1:14), Gal 3:28, Rom 12:4, and Col 3:15-16 for more insights on the "oneness" concept.

## **8. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." —Rev 1:8**

These words are commonly attributed to Jesus. Even the red-letter editions of *NASB* and *NIV* print them in red, thereby attributing these words to Jesus. The conclusion is obvious: Jesus is God the Almighty.

This is no problem for Trinitarians; they already believe Jesus is God. But thinking people have a problem with this viewpoint because other portions of Revelation have the Son referring to "My God," as though the Father were the God of Jesus, and therefore not Jesus himself. (Rev 3:2, 12, 21) In fact discerning readers get that impression almost immediately when reading Revelation:

John . . . Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead . . . " Rev 1:4-5, *NIV*

Notice that grace and peace are offered from three separately identified sources in this passage: Jesus Christ, the seven spirits, and "him who is and who was." John writes as though these three sources are separate and distinct.

John uses this separate identification throughout Revelation: "first fruits to God and to the Lamb" (14:4), "the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple" (21:22), "coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb," (22:1) "the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it." (22:3) If the Lamb (Jesus) and God were identical, then why does John so carefully refer to them distinctly and separately? John's treatment of this leaves thinking people with the impression that the Lamb is not God!

We know who the Lamb is, but who is identified by the phrase "him who is and who was"? We need only see how this phrase is used in Revelation to find out:

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." —Rev 1:8

Holy, Holy ,Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come —Rev 4:8

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was . . . —Rev 11:17, *NIV*

Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty—Rev 15:3

Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.—Rev 16:7

Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns.—Rev 19:6 (compare 19:15)

And He who sits on the throne said, . . . "It is done I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. . . . I will be his God and he will be My son."—Rev 21:6

And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. —Rev 21:22

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. —Rev 22:12

To these, it is fair to add the following, because like the above, they include the phrase "the first and the last":

I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore . . . —Rev 1:17,18

The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this . . . —Rev 2:8

It can be seen that the phrases "the Alpha and the Omega," "the Lord God," and "Holy, Holy, Holy," and "who is and who was" apply exclusively to the Almighty. The phrase "the first and the last" however, is used with reference to the Almighty or to the Son.

Hence, in John's way of writing, Jesus is clearly not the Alpha and the Omega, and not God the Almighty.

This is consistent with passages elsewhere in the Bible:

I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God —John 20:17

. . . with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ —Romans 15:6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ —2 Corinthians 1:3

the God and Father of the Lord Jesus —2 Corinthians 11:31

. . . the God of our Lord Jesus Christ —Ephesians 1:17

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ —1 Peter 1:3

No doubt a lot more could be written on the topic of the Trinity. And no doubt the reader can think up many more questions: Why does Hebrews 1:6 say in reference to Jesus, "Let all God's angels worship him"? And who is Arius and what about the Arian controversy? But I do not intend to write a treatise on what I believe is largely a worthless topic. Anyway, giving people answers tends to produce unthinking memorizers and reciters. Giving people the *questions* produces people who become practiced at thinking, researching, sorting, and discerning—people who often become more tolerant of other viewpoints because they realize they do not have all the answers themselves.

In any case, much evidence has been presented here with the intent of showing that the Trinity has its origins in tradition, not Scripture. But how do you feel about this evidence? Do you think you could stand before an impartial jury of twelve people and prove that the Trinity is the "central doctrine of the Christian religion" (not redemption) *from words actually in the Bible*?

Or could you more readily prove that it is traditional, and has nothing to do with the teachings of Christ? Can you *distinguish* between the pronouncements of church councils and the teachings of words on the biblical page? Whose authority will you accept? The Bible says "it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose." So are you going to "continue to work out your salvation," or do you wish others would do it for you? (Philippians 2:12-13, *NIV*)

If you are a scientist or engineer, remember Einstein's advice: "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough" (Albert Einstein, 1951). Man was "created in the image of God" and so an intuitively comfortable explanation of God's nature should be well within our reach. The Trinity doctrine may simply be yet another example of shallow thinking and "ignorance disguised as knowledge".

"Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law" Psalms 119:18

## **Obviation of the Trinitarian Controversy**

Christians can "argue scripture" on the Trinity until they are blue in the face (or for 2000 years) and never agree on whether God is, or is not, a trinity. Did you ever wonder why this is the case? It is because the real controversy is not about determining scripturally correct doctrine, but about why people accept the pronouncements of those who set themselves up as ecclesiastical

authorities. Discussions about the Trinity itself simply have no bearing on this problem and cannot resolve it.

It is instructive to consider how the apostle Paul resolved a divisive dispute among Roman Christians regarding the eating of certain foods and the observance of special days. Paul knew that all foods had been declared 'clean' and that the Mosaic law was no longer in force (Acts 10:9-16, 28; Rom 7:6; Gal 3:24-29) Understanding that Christians were free from such restrictions would have been an important doctrinal point. Paul was very knowledgeable about these matters and could really have straightened them out with some pointed admonition. But instead he said this:

Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. . . . Therefore let us not judge one another anymore . . . for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. —Rom 14:3-5,17

Instead of discussing the problem, and instead of declaring it solved by apostolic authority, he simply pointed out that it did not matter. The intense discussions about eating, drinking, and celebrating certain days, probably just faded away. We could say that Paul *obviated* the controversy—or what these Christians thought was the controversy.

If the Trinitarian controversy had existed in Paul's day, do you think he would have handled it the same way? Can you picture him saying "The kingdom of God is not about whether God is, or is not, a trinity, but about righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let each man be fully convinced in his own mind" ? In any case, he did say a lot about refusing "fruitless discussions" and "foolish and ignorant speculations." And he did emphasize pursuing righteousness, faith, love, peace, and calling on the Lord with a pure heart. (1Tim 1:5-6, 6:20, 21, 2Tim 2:22-26; Titus 3:9)

There is additional scriptural support for this view. Consider what Jesus said at Luke 4:20-30 when teaching in a synagogue:

But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. —Luke 4:25-27, NASB

In those days God had a special covenant relationship with the nation of Israel. The Jews of that time were part of that relationship because they were members of the nation. They knew they were a special people entrusted with the pronouncements of God and they studied those pronouncements diligently when they were read in the synagogues. Yet during a time of great need, Jesus pointed out, God did not help a single one of the Jewish widows or lepers. Instead, he helped what were perceived to be the unclean, unwashed, unworthy, pagan infidel foreigners who worshipped false gods. When his listeners realized what Jesus had implied, they were so outraged that they went from 'wondering at his gracious words' to casting him out of the city, and tried to throw him over a cliff!

Why did Elijah and Elisha bless these foreigners instead of people of their own nation? One factor was undoubtedly the waywardness of Israel in those days. And another, as Jesus said just prior to these verses, was that "no prophet is accepted in his own country." (NKJ) Nevertheless, the Sidonian widow and the Syrian leper must have been worthy of a blessing despite being foreigners and having the 'wrong religion.' Evidently the *deeds* of these foreigners mattered more than their non-Jewish religious beliefs.

Still more support for this view can be found in the parable of the good Samaritan. Prior to giving this parable, Jesus was asked by an expert in the Mosaic Law, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus threw the question back to the lawyer: "What does the Law say?" The lawyer replied: "Love the LORD your God . . . and Love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus said, "You have answered correctly." But then the lawyer asked "Who is my neighbor?"

This was actually a common question back then. Israel at that time was occupied by Roman governmental and military forces. Greek travelers and foreign businessmen were passing through the nation regularly. So the lawyer was asking a common and perplexing question. It was as though he were asking "I know who my God is, but who really is my neighbor? Does it include these foreigners? Does it include non-Jews, non-friends, and non-family?"

So in answer, Jesus then gave this parable:

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the inn-keeper, and said to him, "Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you." So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves? —Luke 10:25-37, NKJ

And so who was a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers: the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan? The lawyer saw the point and said, "He who showed mercy on him." And so Jesus said "Go and do likewise." In other words, you can be a neighbor, not just to those you know, but to complete strangers, to people who are so much in need that they are repulsive, to people who cannot repay you. (Mat 25:31-46)

There is actually more to this story than meets the eye. It is important to know how the Jews of that time viewed Samaritans. We readily think of the phrase "good Samaritan" today but back then the phrase would have been "*bad* Samaritan." For example, the Jews reviled Jesus by saying, "You have a demon and are a Samaritan." (John 8:48) The simple fact was, Jews and Samaritans hated each other.

Samaritans used only the first five books of the Bible, and their edition of it, similar to the Samaritan Pentateuch, had special alterations. References to "Mt. Zion," for example, were replaced with "Mt. Gerazim." Their use of "corrected" editions of the wrong set of scriptures—the wrong Bible—is not unlike that of certain supposedly Christian religions today.

Their ancestors built rival altars at Bethel and Dan, and non-Levitical priests mislead the people into idolatrous calf worship. Later, the Samaritans built a rival temple on Mt. Gerazim (destroyed by the Romans about 150 years before Christ). A few decades before the time of

Christ, they desecrated the temple area at Jerusalem by scattering human bones across its courts. Their ignorance of God was so deep, Jesus said that Samaritans worship what they do not know. (1Kings 12:28-33; John 4:1-35, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18:30)

In the parable, the priest and Levite were worshipers of the true God, at the true temple, on the correct mountain, with the correct 'Bible' and with plenty of accurate knowledge. Yet despite all this knowledge and religious devotion, they did not act in a neighborly manner towards the man who fell among the robbers. Instead, it was the despised and ignorant Samaritan—the one who, in the eyes of the Jews, was the unclean, unwashed, unworthy heathen infidel—that Jesus held out to us as one who acted in a neighborly way. The Syrian leper and the Sidonian widow had likewise done good deeds, and were rewarded in spite of their inaccurate religious beliefs. Peter's words seem to explain how God must have viewed these situations:

In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by him—Acts 10:34-35, *NKJ*; see also Psalm 15:1-2, 24:3-5, Mat 5:6-10

If you wonder what truly distinguishes people who serve God from those who do not, you will find plain, simple, explicit answers in the Bible:

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother—1John 3:10, *NKJ*

Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.—3John 11

Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.—Mat 6:33

Everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock . . . And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. . . —Mat 7:24-28

Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother. —Mat 12:46-50; compare 1Cor 7:19

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. —John 13:34-35

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

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. —James 1:22, 27, *NKJ*

Notice how plain, simple, and explicit these references are. They refer to 'pure and faultless religion' and contrast "the children of God" with "children of the Devil." The doing of love, righteousness, and the will of the Father, are the defining characteristics of a religion that pleases God. Whereas the mysteries of the Trinity cannot be understood, *these things are easily understood.*

Notice also that the emphasis is on *doing*, not just knowing or believing. This is clearly a "deeds before creeds" religion (Mat 7:12; James 2:19-20). Christians who think they can gauge another person's spirituality by belief in a creed or subscription to a doctrine like the Trinity are thoroughly misinformed.



Furthermore, knowing whether God is, or is not, a Trinity, will have almost no effect on your life. It is, as we engineers say, a "GNDN" (for Goes Nowhere, Does Nothing). In contrast, the kind of understanding and knowledge that *can* profoundly affect your life is expressed in the words of Jeremiah:

Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises loving kindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things. (Jer 9:23-24)

Christians frequently ignore these distinguishing features of Christianity as though they were unimportant. I once sought to join a Christian scientific affiliation but discovered that I was required to affirm my belief in the Trinity as a condition of membership. I really didn't care whether Christians believe in one God with three heads or one God with one head. So I wrote out my own carefully worded statement of belief and was accepted anyway.

But later, the affiliation got even more picky and emphatic about this point. The issue did not matter to me very much, but I could see that it really mattered to *them*. They weren't asking about my involvement with taking care of the poor, the fatherless child, widows, my neighbors, my family, my concern about righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, etc. Nor were they concerned about how I spent my time or my money (which says a lot about a man's real interests). Instead, they were concerned about whether I believed in a doctrine that is purely traditional and has nothing to do with the plainly stated, important things of Christianity. I felt that this was a wrong focus for a group that claimed to be Christian so I did not renew my membership.

I felt sad that this focus on traditional, rather than scriptural matters split us apart. They needed my insights in "scriptural physics", and I needed theirs too. But we went our separate ways, and we are all now a little bit less effective than we could have been. This situation could well be repeated many times with many other Christians who have an interest in science. As the apostle Paul said, when one member of the body of Christ suffers, the whole body suffers. (1Cor 12:12-30)

So if you ever wonder what your spiritual service to God should consist of, always remember Rom 12:1: "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship." If you get that part right, everything else will follow. God will use you in the body of Christian believers and practicers just as He (not men) sees fit. (1 Cor 12:18)

## **"Examine Everything Carefully; Hold Fast To That Which Is Good"**

The apostle Paul knew that tradition would overtake the church. He gave these warnings: "Do not be carried away with varied and strange teachings." (Hebrews 13:9) "Do not go beyond what is written." (1Cor 4:6; Pr 30:5-6) "We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming." (Eph 4:14)

But how can we heed this admonition? How can we recognize a strange teaching for what it really is if it has been presented craftily and deceitfully by others? Paul's manner of teaching is itself an example of how this question could be answered:

They came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead. . . . *Then the brethren . . . sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*—Acts 17:1-3,10-11;17, NKJ

This record bespeaks a culture of reasoning, explaining, proving, searching, and testing. It implies that Christian faith equates to personally accessible proof and evidence, not belief based on authority, and certainly not blind credulity. It implies the necessity of first-hand, personal knowledge. If you do not read the Bible, for example, how will you know whether a doctrine is "beyond what is written"? How will you know if someone "comes and preaches another Jesus . . . a different spirit . . . or a different gospel" ? (2Cor 11:4)

The Bible actually says quite a lot on the theme of testing and searching. Some samples:

Does not the ear test words, As the palate tastes its food?—Job 12:11

The naive believes everything, but the prudent man considers his steps.—Prov 14:15

I [Solomon] directed my mind to know, to investigate, and to seek wisdom and an explanation. —Ecc 7:25

. . . think so as to have sound judgement.—Rom 12:3

Be putting yourselves to the test whether you are in the Faith. Be putting yourselves to the test for the purpose of approving yourselves, and finding that you meet the specifications, put your approval upon yourselves. —2 Cor 13:5, *Wuest*

Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good. —1Thes 5:21

Test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.  
— 1John 4:1-3

There are also many Biblical examples of people using this approach, and doing so with God's approval:

- Abraham questioned God to better understand His righteousness and mercy. (Genesis 18:22-33) God answered the questions and participated in the discussion. God did not say "Look Abraham, I am God of the Universe. Trust me. I'll do the right thing."
- Gideon made sure of God's will with a cross-over test involving dew on fleece and even surreptitiously listened to his enemies. Why didn't he just believe God the first time? —Judges 6:36-40, 7:9-18; 6:14
- David repeatedly asked various people what the reward would be for slaying Goliath. He also rejected Saul's armor because he did not have time to test it.—1 Samuel 17:20-30, 39
- Solomon experimented with the pleasures of wine, women, song, and empire building. (Ecclesiastes chapter 2) Solomon was given wisdom by God. Couldn't he "just know" these things without running expensive experiments? (cf. Daniel 7:16)
- Thomas was not present when Jesus first appeared to the disciples after his resurrection and was not convinced that the disciples had actually seen Jesus. Although Thomas was one of the twelve apostles, he still wanted first-hand evidence that he could test himself. Jesus invited him to do so, and then reminded the disciples "You are witnesses of these things." (John 20:19-29, Luke 24:36-43)

- The apostle Paul gave proofs of the resurrection of Christ for he said "If Christ has not been raised . . . we are of all men most to be pitied." —1Corinthians chapter 15

These people were trying to convince themselves of something, pro or con. They sought out evidence and put it to the test. If they could not examine the evidence, how could they make a decision, except based on the emotions of the moment, and perhaps influenced by the various blindspots and prejudices we all possess?

Jesus used a similar approach. However, he was trying to convince, not himself, but others. He offered the evidence and appealed to others to do the testing (he did not shame them for not believing): 'If you do not believe me, believe my works' (John 10:37-38, 14:11) He was saying in effect, Perhaps you cannot see my close relationship with my heavenly Father, but you can at least see what I do, and then believe because of that.

When talking to a group of Pharisees (whom he bluntly called a "brood of vipers") he said "a tree is known by its fruit" and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mat 12:33-37, *NKJ*). We cannot see what is in a person's heart, but we can see the deeds they actually do, and we can hear the actual words that come out of the mouth. These allow us to know whether the heart is full of good things or evil things. These tangible things bespeak an underlying reality. We can perceive that invisible reality if we examine the visible evidence.

## Perceiving the Invisible

Christian faith is based on an underlying reality, which itself is not visible, but is perceived by its visible effects:

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . . The things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.—Hebrews 11:1-3, *NKJ*

Notice that this is a definition ("Faith is . . ."). And notice that faith is defined to be something *substantive*; it is not just a belief, hope, suspicion, or hunch. Faith equates to *evidence* of things not seen. It is clearly not blind credulity, nor is it a belief based on authority of position or office.

This definition perhaps reminds us of the Greek term *morphe* ("form") which we encountered earlier. *Morphe* represents an actual outward appearance that, when seen, leads the observer to perceive the object's inner essence or real nature. What is seen is "evidence of things not seen," evidence of an underlying reality that cannot itself be perceived directly.

Faith is itself required to give evidence of its existence. The Bible writer James said "faith without works is dead" and "faith without works is useless." He emphasized that faith is not just a belief in God "because the demons also believe" in God. Faith must *work* in your life to be real, and in fact faith is *perfected* by works. (James 2:14-26)

Faith is also personal. Your faith is based on evidence which you personally inspect, experience, and accept first-hand. The evidence usually does not just drop into your lap. You have to make a personal search for it. The Samaritan woman at the well believed because Jesus "told me all the things I have done." She later told this to other Samaritans, and they in turn believed "because of the word of the woman" who spoke her eyewitness testimony to them. But later these people

invited Jesus to stay for two more days and then could finally say: "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world." (John 4:7-42) Your faith will not be your own unless you collect and test the evidence yourself to your own satisfaction.

One piece of evidence worth considering is the Bible itself. It is unique in that it is the only collection of 'scripture' that claims to be inspired by God (2Tim 3:16-17, 1Thes 2:13, 2Peter 1:19-21) It shows the prophets spoke in God's name rather than their own. (Ex 20:1, Isa 7:7, 46:9-10, Jer 1:9, John 14:10,29) It claims to be the truth plainly and straight-forwardly, with no built-in escape clauses (Eph 1:13, 1Tim 1:15, 2Tim 2:15, Titus 1:9, 3:8, James 1:18; Ecc. 12:10, Dan 2:45). It is also unique in that it gives a detailed account of Creation (Genesis chapters 1 thru 4). It presents God as the "rewarder of those who seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6) and who interacts with common men in an ordinary historical setting, in contrast to most myths whose settings are in a "far and distant land, long, long ago." Its statements are practical, useful, and free of the philosophical ramblings so often found in encyclopedias.

The Bible is the supreme example of something with 'stealth effects' that seem far out of proportion to what one would expect just from reading a good book. Many people experience this and realize that indeed "the word of God is alive and exerts power" when they actually read it. (Hebrews 4:12)

So get a modern translation of the whole Bible, such as the paperback edition of the *New American Standard Version*. Carry it with you and just read it (especially the New Testament) when you have a spare moment (don't wait for the perfect study situation). What you learn could change your life profoundly.

## **The Captivity of "Empty Deception" by "Deceiving Spirits"**

No Christian wants to go before the throne of God on Judgement Day and hear God authoritatively say: "Your religion was worthless. You were not serving me at all. You were just deceiving yourself." How hard is it to deceive oneself and be faced with such serious consequences? It is actually very easy:

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.—James 1:26, *NIV*

Jesus said things like this would happen to "many" people:

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'—Mat 7:21-23

Can you feel the bewilderment of those who get into this pathetic state? And can you see what Jesus might have had in mind when he said, "If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" ? (Mat 6:23, *NIV*)

Another thing that can put a person in an "accursed" position is that of teaching the wrong sort of gospel. Paul had this problem with some men in the Galatian congregation. Notice the strong language:

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you, and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed. (Gal 1:6-9)

The original gospel (or "good news") was taught directly to the apostles by Jesus himself. Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me." (John 14:6) "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9) But today, religious organizations abound that pervert that simple message. Instead of the believer having a direct relationship with Christ, they now, it is claimed, need a "Spiritual Guide", or "the Guru", or "the Organization", or the "Apostolic Council" or "the Vicar" or some other supposed guide to salvation. Christ, you see, cannot do all this merely by himself; He must need some help. Why, even baptizing them merely in the name of Jesus might not be sufficient; they might also have to include the name of their Guru or their Organization in the baptismal vow. Is it hard to believe that such a perversion could take place? It happened even in Jesus' time: "I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him." (John 5:43) But Jesus said that such people are "thieves and robbers" who come in to "steal, and kill, and destroy" (John 10:7-11). Undoubtedly they will also come under Paul's double curse.

Jesus admonished us to abide *in him* lest we be "thrown away":

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. (John 15:4-6)

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We all have blind spots and deceiving ourselves is something that can definitely happen. But there is something that is even more pernicious and evil. We can be *taken captive* by deception. The apostle Paul and Jesus warned:

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.—Col 2:8

For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance. —Mat 24:24

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths—2Tim 4:3-4

Notice the strong language the Bible uses in these descriptions:

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. —1Tim 4:1-3, *NKJ*

In the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-

control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power . . . evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. —2Tim 3:1-5,13

If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!" (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence —Col 2:20-22

The apostle Paul had to deal with such men. He said they were "false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ." Just as "the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness" the disciples could "be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" to "another gospel." This should not be surprising for "Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their deeds." (2Cor 11:1-15; Gal 1:6-9)

Such people are caught in "the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will." (2Tim 2:26). Yet they believe they are doing God's will, not Satan's. Their attitude is one of "This is God's theocracy and we are running it for him; this is God's will, not our own." If you subscribe to this kind of thinking, their power over you will be complete; you may also become very disgusted with "God."

Jesus gave a good warning to heed when you find yourself around such hypocrites: "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." (Mat 7:6) This is a good time to keep your mouth shut. (Ps 39:1, Pr 9:7-9, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8,7)

But keep in mind that only God knows who is truly in the "body of Christ." Christians who meet in a building are a mixed group, a group composed of "wheat" that is intimately intertwined with "weeds." The weeds look just like wheat until harvest time when the differences become obvious. (Mat 13:24-30, 36-43; 1Cor 5:10) Hence, don't try to find the "pure church," one that is free from all error, because it simply does not exist in that form. As for judging individual people, the apostle Paul's admonition to the Corinthians may help keep things in perspective:

"Therefore do not go on passing judgement before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motive of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God." (1Cor 4:5; 1Tim 5:24-25).

What really matters is what kind of individual you are. (Rev 3:1-6)

## **The Master Lie and Its Operation**

Satan, the "god of this age," (2Cor 4:4, *NKJ*) has blinded peoples' minds through an armada of the most fantastic yet believable lies the human race will ever encounter. These are lies that deny the ransom sacrifice of Christ.

All Christians understand the basis for the ransom sacrifice of Christ. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive." (1Cor 15:21-22) Adam was created by God and given everlasting life. But Adam rebelled against God's rulership, and God condemned him to death for his sin. But now "as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous . . . to eternal life" (Romans

5:12-21) What Adam lost for us, Christ regained for us. God offers the benefits of the ransom free of charge to each and every one of us. But we individually must signify our acceptance of it if we want the benefits. (Romans 6:1-23; Hebrews 10:5, 10-14)

Satan's lies deny the need for the ransom. His "lies for the masses" say the same thing that he said back in Eden to Eve: "You surely shall not die! For . . . you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen 3:4-5). Nowadays, his lies are tailor-made for mass media, the public schools, and our science-minded society. Here are a couple of examples of his offerings:

### **1. When humans die, they are not really dead. So nothing is lost. No ransom is needed.**

But the Bible says otherwise. The Bible contrasts the living with the dead: "The living know that they will die; but the dead do not know anything." In death there is "no activity or planning or wisdom." (Ecclesiastes 9:5,10). In death, man's "spirit departs, he returns to the earth; In that very day his thoughts perish." (Ps 146:4) "The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor do any who go down into silence." (Ps 115:17) But although the living are contrasted with the dead, the fate of man and the fate of the animals is the same: "For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of the beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast . . . All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust." (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20; Gen 2:7, 3:19, Ecclesiastes 12:6-7, Ps 49:12-20; An aside: my "hellfire Baptist" friends have trouble with Ecclesiastes 3:19-20 because it implies that all dead animals are sharing the flames of hell with human sinners)

The soul of man is just as mortal as the soul of the animals. (Look these up in the King James Authorized Version (preferred because of its consistent translation of the Hebrew and Greek words for "soul"): Judges 16:16, Ps 22:29, 78:50, Eze 18:4, Mat 10:28, Acts 2:31, 3:23, Hebrews 10:39, James 5:20, Rev 16:3)

Man, however, can be resurrected by God, but this resurrection has not yet begun. Oddly, many Christians today believe that the resurrection has already taken place. Paul had the same problem in his day and warned about men "who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place and thus they upset the faith of some." (2Tim 2:18) Christians were upset because if the Lord had come, and they were still here on earth, then they had missed out on the resurrection, and missed out on being raised to immortality in heaven (1Cor 15:53; 1Tim 6:15-16). This would be very distressing! The congregation at Thessalonica had experienced this problem and so Paul wrote 2Thes 2:1-17 and 1Thes 4:13-18 to enlighten them.

Jesus had also made it plain that his second coming would be accompanied by signs that were blatantly obvious to everyone and which would not need to be interpreted by some select group with special knowledge. (Mat 24:23-28) The great Apostasy was to precede his coming and his reign would be associated with the fall of Babylon the Great, the resurrection of the faithful, the rise of the Beast, and the opposition of nations which would be "enraged" at his rule.( see Rev 11:15-19 and chapters 14, 17, 18 )

Any evidence that the dead are not really dead, or that there is a realm of disembodied spirits, will be met with widespread public curiosity. Certain mass media programs appeal to this curiosity, and it is not wrong for the media to present actual evidence and eye

witness testimonies about such things. The programs often point out that the interpretation offered is not the only one possible. But they leave the viewer to his own limited resources to figure out some other possibility.

So when several psychics tell us a certain house is haunted, and when these psychics independently give detailed, verifiable, credible, explanations that are pretty much the same, we are left with the impression that ghosts do in fact exist, and that something survives physical death. But the unspoken assumption is that the ghosts were communicating with the psychics, not demons (wicked angels) intent on deception. If there were evidence of demons with methods and motives for deceiving our society, wouldn't you want to know about this possibility too?

The Bible says nothing about haunted houses (just demon-possessed people and pigs ). But it does give accounts about people being brought back from real, physical death (Luke 7:11-15, Acts 9:36-43). When Jesus sent forth his twelve apostles, one of their duties was to "raise the dead" (Mat 10:8; —and I bet you thought your job assignment was difficult!). Jesus himself later testifies that "the dead are raised up" (Mat 11:5). These were not the "near death or dying experiences" like we hear so much about today. For example, John 11:1-45 records the death and resurrection of Lazarus. He had clearly been DEAD for four days and was resurrected by none other than the Son of God himself. Now this would be a fantastic opportunity to learn about after-death experiences! "You died and then you came back. You were in the realm of the dead! What was it like? Were you a ghost? Were you with God? Could you see us? Hear us?" Yet nothing is said about after-death experiences, or even any inquiries about them. As explained above, the people already knew that there is no work, knowledge, wisdom, planning, activity, love, hatred, envy, or thoughts after death. The condition of the dead was very well understood. And the activity of the demons was understood as well.

But our biblically ignorant, science-minded society today has an increasingly acceptant attitude towards such deceptions. And Satan has adjusted the terminology to make us more comfortable in this regard. "Supernatural" has been replaced by the more fashionable term of "paranormal." Likewise, "fortune-telling" has become "remote viewing in space and time." This gives "psychic phenomena" a wider appeal and tries to remove it from the realm of superstition and place it into the realm of science. Formerly, the field was dominated by women, but now it has a much higher proportion of men, even men of science. It is not unusual to find intelligent, conscientious, credible, caring people involved with things like remote viewing, which allows them "to be like God," knowing things that mere humans could not normally know.

## **2. Man got here by a very gradual evolutionary process. There was never any fall from perfection, and so no ransom from sin and death is needed.**

This deception permeates our society in all sorts of ways.

- The Genesis account of creation of humans is either presented as mythical or at least not literal. (Jesus cited it as literal and factual. —Mat 19:4-6; Ps 100:3)
- The doctrine of human evolution is made to look respectable by being presented as science. (Because it lacks testability and reproducibility—the defining characteristics of the scientific method—it does not even qualify as a scientific theory. And in contrast to statements in the Bible, it cannot qualify as eye



witness testimony either. Modern science, in fact, seems to have disproven evolution.) See also: "The Cell: an image library", <http://cellimagelibrary.org/home> )

- People believe evolution must be true because respectable, educated scientists believe it, and because it is widely taught in influential institutions like public schools, even elementary schools. (Popular acceptance is not proof of validity.)

A logical consequence of the doctrine of evolution is that humans can set their own standards of righteousness. They can define "knowing good and bad" in whatever way they see fit. Their righteousness is truly self-righteousness, not that imputed by God (Philippians 3:8-9). The words of Isaiah aptly apply to them: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And clever in their own sight!" (Isa 5:20-21)

And indeed those woes are with us today. Evolution has had a devastating effect on the morals of our young people—an effect no doubt amplified by the so called "value neutral" sex education classes. Teen pregnancies, female dominated families, and a crop of angry young men are too frequently the result.

Evolution also tells our kids "We are just animals. We have no higher purpose in life, nor does life itself have any real purpose. Life is just an accident, just survival." Would you expect your kids to look forward to the future and make valuable contributions to society with a mindset like this?

Teachers want parents to be involved in their children's education. But when parents question evolution, they find that their involvement is not really welcome. They see the hypocrisy that is built into the educational system. They realize that evolution is actually a religious belief ("secularism") taught under the guise of science. If evolution is scientific, why does it fear competition? Why does it fear debate, or criticism, or examination? Do scientists like blind spots? Decades of this lopsided environment result in deeper woes. Teachers now worry about students being involved with dangerous drugs, gun violence, promiscuous sex, and so forth, not merely chewing gum or passing notes in class. The educational establishment disclaims any responsibility for this fruitage, despite having us as a captive audience for most of our impressionable and formative years. We have been exposed to decades of "stealth values" that have had negative side effects, and those effects are now being fed back into the educational system, which in turn has made public education a much more difficult task.

The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do  
not know over what they stumble. Proverbs 4:19

Some people think that prayer in school will offset these effects. But schools need believers, and respect for believers, not just permission to pray for one minute. The problem is not the teaching of evolution or the lack of prayer, but the widespread subterranean contempt that school boards and teacher's unions hold for Christianity and other forms of decency. (If school boards followed the Bible, they would not be saying "kissing is sexual harassment, but you can pick up your free condoms across the hall.")

Darwin gave us all a necessary insight. There is variability within a "species" (a group of interbreeding natural populations) and "natural selection" can cause the population of one type of species to predominate over another of the same kind. Darwin corrected contemporary misconceptions about the variability of life forms. But he did not explain the origin of life itself. Modern science education now goes far beyond Darwin and claims that evolution explains the origin of life, and claims that the explanation is scientific and factual.

But evolutionists are tricky here. They say that "evolution" means strictly "evolution of life" not "origin and evolution of life". In their minds, "keys to the car" means only that: just keys, not keys plus car plus permission to drive. But the public does not think this way. The term, "evolution of life" means, to the public and educators generally, "origin and evolution of life". (similarly, "Intelligent Design" to an evolutionist means "Creationism" — i.e. "origins" not merely "good design") "Evolution of life" has come to mean far more than mere "development of diversity of life forms".

Evolution in the origin-of-life sense is not factual and is not even a good theory. Examples of good theories are Quantum Mechanics and Special and General Relativity (despite their weirdness). The modern version of evolution does not even come close to the quality, testability, and predictive ability of these great theories.

The teaching of evolution as origin-of-life should not have any place in K1-8 education. I believe it should be reserved for the college level. Otherwise it is just indoctrination, at least as currently taught.

Students should instead be taught the scientific method, how to recognize logical fallacies, how to recognize persuasion by emotional wording rather than by facts and logic, and how to recognize cult mind control techniques (which are used in religion, business, politics, advertising, education, and even "science"). They need to know the difference between "practical significance" and "statistical significance". They should study the historic record of scientists opposing scientific discovery (even in modern times) and the problems with the peer review process. Evaluate K-12 students on their application of methodology and mastery of this kind of material, not on the doctrine of human origins.

- "Explained: Sigma How do you know when a new finding is significant? The sigma value can tell you — but watch out for dead fish", David L. Chandler, MIT News Office, February 9, 2012  
<http://news.mit.edu/2012/explained-sigma-0209>
- <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269634928> What Everyone Should Know about Statistical Correlation

Christians need a level playing field when dealing with the educational system. We need clear, official School Board answers and definitions for questions like: What is the scientific method?, What is science?, What is "biological evolution" (as taught)?, What is religion?, and especially, What is the purpose of K12 education? After we get formal definitions, then LET US USE THEM! If evolution is really science, then it is open to question, examination and correction. Let us put it to the *scientific* test (without involvement from religion). We need definitions so evolutionists don't steer the discussion off into the weeds. Once they are not allowed the weasel words, rubber definitions, smoke screens, fog banks, and arguments about labels instead of substance, we will see that their reasonings are utter nonsense.

Also, facts and expert testimony can be questioned and cross-examined in a court of law. Why not also in the classroom, where students are supposed to be learning how to think critically? Or are they there just to be indoctrinated with whatever the current science truth-of-the-day is?

There is said to be no controversy about evolution among university scientists, and that it therefore must be factual. But those scientists would never be in those positions if they were not evolutionists in the first place. Pastors of churches have no controversy about the existence of God. Atheists have no controversy about the non-existence of God. The existence of "no controversies" just means that people have joined the appropriate group and pretend the others don't exist. This is the path to *ignorance*, not knowledge.

Christians likewise need to define their terms. Years ago I read six different interpretations of the one Genesis creation account in the Bible. None of these views stated the rules of interpretation which were used in arriving at these views, which means basically "anything goes". The rules I have used include at least these:

1. The Bible is self-consistent and must be used to interpret itself.
2. The meaning of the text today will be close to whatever the text meant for the original writer and his intended audience. Similarly, what it did NOT mean to them, it does NOT mean for us today.

Example: Some Christians believe the Creative Days of Genesis were 24 hours long. But the above rules lead to a different conclusion. There is no statement in Genesis that the seventh Creative Day ever ended. Hebrews 4:1-11 indicates that it continues to the present day. Hence, a period of at least 6000 years is implied for the length of the seventh Creative Day. Likely, the Creative days were all of equal length. And that implies a period of many thousands of years to prepare the Earth for human habitation. (God created the Earth itself "In the beginning"-another indefinitely stated time period)

Here are some links about how to recognize common pitfalls:

- "15 Questions for Evolutionists"  
<http://creation.com/images/pdfs/flyers/15-questions-for-evolutionists-s.pdf>
- "Fallacies"  
<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/fallacies/>  
(an excellent article on logical fallacies)
- "What are the Characteristics of a Religious Cult?"  
<http://www.prem-rawat-talk.org/forum/uploads/CultCharacteristics.htm>  
(apply this to commercial and educational cults too)
- "Can school today teach anything more than how to pass exams?"  
<https://www.educationviews.org/school-today-teach-pass-exams/>  
(use of the Socratic method)

"It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves." Psalm 100:3

"The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer,  
But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things"  
Proverbs 15:28

The latest lie based on the evolutionary theme is that our planet is being visited by extraterrestrial space aliens who look like insects, humans, lizards, and so forth. Their variety of forms must

obviously be the result of evolution. And why would God let them visit this sin laden planet (where we have the forbidden 'knowledge of good and bad'), unless maybe this planet is just an ordinary planet like any other?

The Bible is silent on the question of extraterrestrial life. But biblically, if there are any creatures out there capable of visiting this planet, they would have been created by God, rather than have come into existence by evolution. We would expect that such creatures would have been created "in His image" like Adam and Eve. That is, they would have been sinless, and would have God's qualities of love, justice, wisdom and power. Further, God would have revealed himself to them, and laid out the rules, just as He did with Adam and Eve. They would not be coming here and abducting and terrifying humans, nor drawing pictures in our fields of crops, nor interfering with us in any detectable way. Such made-for-an-audience activities are more consistent with demonic activity than with visits by sinless creatures.

Moreover, the Bible talks about "angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode" (Jude 6). These are "the spirits now in prison who were once disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah" (1Peter 3:19-20; 2Peter 2:4). These disobedient angels came to Earth and "took wives for themselves, whomever they chose." (Genesis 6) This unnatural union eventually filled the Earth with violence, and God brought on the great flood of Noah's day to break up these evil works. These angels are now "in prison" and are no longer permitted to materialize in human form. But the reports ("recollections") about "alien abductions" almost invariably have some sexual aspect, usually disguised as "reproductive experimentation". The demons are apparently still just as crazed about sex as they were in Genesis 6:1-4.

So before you conclude that our planet is being visited by (planetary) extraterrestrials, consider that "Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" (2Cor11:14) but in actuality "he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44). He will offer "great signs and wonders so as to mislead" (Mat 24:24) and will do so "with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness." (2Thes 2:9-10) Satan floods our planet with disinformation with the intent of denying the ransom offered by Jesus who "died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf." (2Cor 5:14-15). Are we really being visited by extraterrestrials, or is this just another one of Satan's lies? Consider all the evidence, including statements in the Bible, and then find the best fit.

Additional reading:

- "UFOs, ETs and The New Age: A Christian Perspective",  
Doug Potter,  
[https://www.academia.edu/7197557/UFOs\\_ETs\\_AND\\_THE\\_NEW\\_AGE\\_A\\_CHRISTIAN\\_PERSPECTIVE](https://www.academia.edu/7197557/UFOs_ETs_AND_THE_NEW_AGE_A_CHRISTIAN_PERSPECTIVE)
- "UFOs: The Hidden Agenda",  
Jay Howard,  
<http://ittsy.com/focusonthefaulty.com/ufos-the-hidden-agenda/>
- "Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind - Alien Abduction The Unwanted Piece of the UFO Puzzle",  
CE4 Research Group  
<http://www.alienresistance.org/ce4.htm>
- <http://scripturalphysics.org/4v4a/ADVPROP.html#AlienAbductions>

- James 4:7, 1Peter 5:8-9, 1John 5:18

And what about UFOs themselves? There appear to be two categories of UFOs: In the first category are the illusions and deceptions created by Satan; they are usually associated with reports of mental telepathy, "visions", abductions, "space aliens", ghosts, communication with the dead, supernatural knowledge, alternative salvation themes, etc. People have been familiar with these things in various forms for millennia (and even call them "familiar spirits": Deuteronomy 18:10-14; Leviticus 19:31,20:6,27; Matthew 14:26; Luke 24:36-39; Ephesians 6:12)

The second category (which Satan can mix with the first) includes actual, physical, man-made "flying machines" (of purely terrestrial origin) and are commonly described with words like "highly advanced technology". These machines are not anything like conventional aircraft, nor are they propelled by conventional means. The *technology* has been known for many decades, and much of it is even accessible to hobbyists, but the actual *science* behind it is not understood. The science seems to involve utilization of the "Creative Substrate" or what physicists would call "the ether" (but not in the sense of the old mechanical, static, "waveable medium" of the 19th century, nor what is currently called "empty space").

A scientific understanding would require a paradigm shift so severe it would choke a swamp full of alligators, and is currently beyond the abilities of our institutions. But this is a social limitation, not a technological one. The science would also reveal concepts like "delocalization", and "non-local physics" as applied to everyday objects. This has implications that are both very useful and very frightening. Perhaps there are things that the human race should just not openly know for a while: God-like power should be accompanied by God-like wisdom.

That leaves me feeling somewhat like Eve must have felt in the Garden of Eden. The tree of the forbidden knowledge must have been very beautiful in appearance, and its fruit (according to Satan's lie) would give them knowledge and wisdom so that they would "be like God". Why would God withhold such knowledge? That would simply be unthinkable! And so they both partook of the fruit. The results were disastrous. We have now been bombarded with the "knowledge of good and evil" for the past 6000 years. It has even attained the status of entertainment in the form of cartoons, detective stories, police shows, war stories, and the usual fare of lies, sex, and violence TV programming—to say nothing of the evening news and world events. Are we enjoying it? Did Adam and Eve really understand what they were asking for?

Similarly, the operational details of UFO propulsion systems are known by apparently thousands of people—which is still few compared to the human race at large. Should this valuable and practical knowledge become widespread? If it is easy to do, then terrorists will have access to it too. Our God-given scientific curiosity impels us to learn about these things. But the consequences are both wondrous and terrifying. Do we really want to find out what kind of "fruit" we are about to eat? Temptation beckons! (See: "Beyond Einstein: non-local physics", 2<sup>nd</sup> edition [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334075961\\_Beyond\\_Einstein\\_non-local\\_physics\\_2nd\\_ed](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334075961_Beyond_Einstein_non-local_physics_2nd_ed) )

"Absolute power corrupts absolutely"  
 Lord Acton [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Dalberg-Acton,\\_1st\\_Baron\\_Acton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dalberg-Acton,_1st_Baron_Acton)

"The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms, and it will be different from the previous ones and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it." Daniel 7:32

Actual lies can even cause other lies to be perceived as truth: People read a headline that says "Government denies space aliens crashed in New Mexico" and their reaction could be "The government has lied before and they would probably lie about this too. "They perceive the claim that space aliens have visited us is *true*, not because there is a shred of proof, but because they know the government *lies* occasionally.

In a way consistent with this inverted logic, a lack of evidence for the existence of something is taken as evidence for its existence. For example, our planetary civilization is (historically) about 6,000 years old. Let's say that in an additional 4,000 years, pioneers from our civilization travel to and begin colonizing another planet. If new planetary civilizations emerge *by purposeful colonization* (not just evolution) at 10,000 year intervals, then a medium sized galaxy like ours could be fully populated in about a million years. Hence, if the universe is tens of *billions* of years old, it should abound with intelligent beings like us.

So where are they? If each cube of galactic space 50 light years on a side contains, on the average, one planetary civilization, then why don't we see clear evidence of extraterrestrial civilizations? Why don't we detect the radiation from their powerful defense radars? Or from navigation beacons? Or radio and TV broadcasts? Or the "hello we are here" signals that SETI expects to find (<http://www.setileague.org/>)? And wouldn't these intelligent beings visit us? Don't they seek knowledge like we do? Wouldn't they invite us over for a visit? If our civilization is *typical* of the evolutionary process, then there should be others like ours. But if ours is unique, then evolution does not work as advertised.

Such lack of evidence gets explained away by what is popularly known as the Prime Directive: the doctrine that an advanced civilization must not interfere with the development of lesser civilizations. Because this is "obviously" happening, such a lack of evidence is taken as evidence for the existence, even abundance, of extraterrestrial civilizations.

We can wait around for the space aliens to finally land on the White House lawn. Or for scientists to finally discover "evidence of life" on Mars. But be forewarned: Satan's specialty is "empty deception." (Col 2:8) When you really look at the evidence, there may be nothing there but an illusion.

There are many, many, other ways Satan lies about the ransom, but these are currently the most prominent, and the most damaging to our society. He has integrated all of them into a seamless whole and the deception is extraordinarily complete. It is so effective that the Bible says he "deceives the whole world" (Rev 12:9, 13:14, 18:23; 1John 5:19) and that he does so "with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness." (2Thes 2:9-10) People escape from one lie, only to be ensnared by another, all the while believing that they are free and have outwitted the Master Deceiver.

For these lies, God condemns not only Satan, but "those who exchanged the truth of God for the lie" and who served the creature as Creator instead of God:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for *God made it*

*evident to them.* For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that *they are without excuse.* —Rom 1:18-25, *NKJ*

## The Full Armor of Light

How can we defend ourselves from a fusillade of such lies and deception when they come at us from all directions? We simply don't have the time, the resources, or even the ability to detect every lie Satan hurls at us. How could we possibly defend ourselves against an invisible foe so experienced and so effective? The Bible gives us this answer:

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with **truth**, and having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**; in addition to all, taking up the shield of **faith**, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of **salvation**, and the sword of the **Spirit**, which is the **word of God**. With all **prayer** and petition pray at all times in the Spirit—Eph 6:10-18; compare Rom 13:12, 1Thes 5:8

Imagine special physical armor that could protect you from flaming arrows, poison gas, biological toxins, the full force and heat of a hydrogen bomb (!) and everything else. If you wore this "complete suit of armor" you would be protected from every threat and hazard, even if you did not understand the hazard, or anticipate it, or weren't even aware of its existence. You would no doubt think of this armor as quite valuable and would want to wear it all the time. Of course, you would want to be trained and skilled in its use and have plenty of practice under realistic conditions.

Similarly, the "full armor of God" protects us from invisible spiritual threats. It consists of truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, the word of God, and prayer. With these, the Lord gives us the ability to defend ourselves through the "strength of His might" so that we can stand firm when attacked by these unseen forces of wickedness "in the heavenly places" during the evil day.

Are you confident you know how to use this armor and the weapons that go with it?

## Conclusion

This article is intended to demonstrate a methodology that is applied to various questions of Scriptural relevance. The same methods are applied (elsewhere) in Scriptural Physics. The methodology requires:

1. a thorough familiarity with the subject matter, whatever it might be
2. a thorough familiarity with logical fallacies
3. a thorough familiarity with the teachings of the Bible

4. a thorough familiarity with Bible study aids (commentaries, ancient culture and customs, *koine* Greek study aids, concordances)
5. an ability to tolerate chaos (contradictions, conflicting evidence, lack of evidence, misuse of statistics, half-truths and false claims by experts and the media)
6. the realization that your carefully derived, important conclusions will be summarily rejected or ignored by millions of people.
7. an ability to develop new concepts and new interpretations of old facts. (Example: “An Atom or a Nucleus?”, <http://scripturalphysics.org/4v4a/ATMORNUC.html>)

"Wisdom is better than strength. Nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised,  
And his words are not heard." —Ecclesiastes 9:16

"And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." —John 1:5

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Scriptures cited in the above article are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB) unless otherwise noted by the following abbreviations:

*AS* American Standard Version

*NASB* New American Standard Version

*NEB* New English Bible

*NIV* New International Version

*NIV INT* The NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament, ed. J.R. Kohlenberger III (Zondervan, 1987)

*NKJ* New King James Version

*TEV* Today's English Version

*Wuest* The New Testament an Expanded Translation, Kenneth S. Wuest

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## Addendum: The So-called "Pre-existence of Christ"

The terms "incarnation" and "pre-existence of Christ" are not scripturally defined terms, and therefore tend to mean different things to different Christians. Generally, however, Christians do NOT mean to say that Jesus existed in heaven as "Jesus without a body". Rather, they mean that he existed both as the Word, and as God's only begotten Son, who was then "sent" to earth to appear in a fully human form, as (the newly born) Jesus. God's Son is NOT the "little baby Jesus, God's son" depicted in the Christmas scenes on TV. He was the Son before he came to Earth and continued to be God's Son while living amongst us. (He was also God's son in the resurrection sense. — Rom 1:4)

The Scriptures themselves provide clear evidence that Jesus was God's "only begotten Son" and was "sent" by God and appeared to us in the human form of Jesus:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God . . . He was in the beginning with God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1-3,14)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son . . ." (John 3:16,18)

"By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. . . . And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1John 4:9-10,14)

"the One born from God" ( 1John 5:18)

"If God were your Father, you would love Me; I proceeded forth and have come from God" (John 8:42)

"I speak the things which I have seen with my Father" (John 8:38)

"And now, Father glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (John 17:5. NIV)

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world." (John 17:24, NIV)

"And he is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible. . . all things have been created by Him and for Him. And he is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything." (Col 1:15-18)

"For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom 8:3)

"But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law" (Gal 4:4)

"God . . . in the last days has spoken to us in His Son . . . through whom also He made the world. (Hebrews 1:1-2)

"Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me" " (Hebrews 10:5)

Jesus was born after John the Baptist. But "John bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, 'This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.' " (John 1:15)

Many believe that God was talking with his Son at Gen 1:26-27 and Gen 11:5-9 ("Let us . . .") Many also believe he was the Master worker, personified as Wisdom in Proverbs 8:22-31.

Mark 12:1-12 has a parable about an already existing son being sent after the servants are killed. The parable obviously applies to Jesus.

Jesus was therefore both a "son of God" and a "son of man". He was the most intimate associate of God and also lived intimately among mankind. As such, he is in a most excellent position to be a mediator between us and God (1Tim 2:5). "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)