GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT (2025 EDITION)

Pastor William E. Wenstrom Jr.

WENSTROM BIBLE MINISTRIES

Huntsville, Alabama

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Introduction

In theology, God the Holy Spirit is identified as the third person of the Trinity. The word, "Trinity" does not appear in Scripture. However, the word is used by theologians to describe what the Scriptures reveal about who and what God is, namely, it describes God as being three co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal persons with each sharing the same divine essence. It means that in the being of the one God (1 Corinthians 8:4) there are three persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So, there is one God and in God's being there are three persons. They describe themselves in Scripture as Father, Son and Spirit and each of whom is identified in Scripture as God. The Father, Son and Spirit are identical in being and nature. No one person is of higher or lesser status than the other.

Each member of the Trinity is in union with each other and indwells each other. This is called in theology "perichoresis." The three persons mutually indwell one another in a dynamic communion. All have the same divine nature with specific attributes or characteristics, which can be described. Each member of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are three distinct persons who each possess these divine attributes individually. There is no member of the Trinity who is lower in rank to another member. Each member of the Trinity has a specific purpose related to the plan of God.

The Scriptures teach that there is an order among the persons in the Trinity with respect to human relations. With regards to eternal salvation, the Scriptures teach that it proceeds from the Father and is provided through the Son by the Holy Spirit. Or we could say this in reverse in that in response to God's grace, salvation is by the Holy Spirit through the Son to the Father. In Scripture, we see that the Father sends the Son, but the Son never sends the Father. The Holy Spirit is described as proceeding from the Father, but the Father never proceeds from the Holy Spirit or the Son.

The Bible teaches us that each member of the Trinity has their own specific role that is not shared by the others. God the Father's role in the Trinity is as the source and planner of all things. God the Son's role in the Trinity is to carry out the plan of God. God the Holy Spirit reveals the Father's plan and provides the power to carry it out.

In eternity past, the Father planned the salvation of sinful humanity. This plan was accomplished by sending His Son to planet earth to become a human being who then lived a life of perfect obedience under the Mosaic Law, which sinful humanity did not have the capacity to do. He also suffered the consequences of the sins of sinful humanity by suffering the wrath of His Father on the cross in order that the

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members of sinful humanity would never have to suffer His wrath for all of eternity in the eternal lake of fire.

The crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of the incarnate Son of God restored sinful humanity as rulers over planet earth since these events of the First Advent of the Son destroyed the works of the devil who is temporarily the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). These events also redeemed all of sinful humanity from the slave market of sin in which each member of the human race was born physically alive and yet spiritually dead because of the fall of Adam in the garden of Eden. These events propitiated the Father's holiness which demanded that sin and sinners be judged and they also reconciled all of sinful humanity to the Father who is holy.

The Holy Spirit appropriates this so great salvation when the sinner trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior, which results in the Father declaring them justified. Simultaneously, the Spirit regenerates the justified sinner and places them in union with the Son. At the moment of justification, the Spirit also identifies them with the Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Consequently, the justified becomes a member of the body of Christ and the future bride of Christ when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church. Together, with the Son they will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits as the rulers planet earth at the Second Advent of the Son, which will usher in the Son's millennial reign.

Why is it important to understand the doctrine of the Trinity? We must understand the doctrine of the Trinity in order to have a mature relationship with God. Our understanding of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ will be determined by our view of the Trinity. We will be inaccurate in our view as to how to live the Christian life if we do not have an accurate understanding of God the Holy Spirit's role in the plan of God. We will be inaccurate when praying if we don't understand the role of each member of the Trinity. We are not able to worship God accurately and are not able to be spiritual if we don't understand the doctrine of the Trinity. God's plan demands accuracy in our doctrine. For example: There is only one way to be saved, which is faith alone in Christ alone. There is only one person of the Trinity who we are to believe on in order to be saved, Jesus Christ, the second member of the Trinity. There is only one person of the Trinity who provides us with the power to live the Christian life, namely, the third member of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit. There is only one person of the Trinity we are to pray to, which is the first person of the Trinity, God the Father. Therefore, it is very important that we are accurate in our understanding of the Trinity.

It is critical for the Christian to understand the doctrine of the Trinity in order to protect them from false doctrine. There are several major heresies with regards to the doctrine of the Trinity that have plagued the church throughout the centuries. There is "modalism," which does not view Father, Son and Spirit as three particular

"persons in relation" but merely as three modes or manifestations of the one divine person of God. Thus, God comes in salvation history as Father to create and give the law, as Son to redeem and as Spirit to impart grace.[1]

Robert Letham writes that modalism is "the blurring or erasing of the real, eternal, and irreducible distinctions among the three persons of the Trinity. This danger can arise when the unity of God, or the identity in being of the three persons, is overstressed at the expense of the personal distinctions. It can also surface where there is a pervasive stress on salvation history, so as to eliminate any reference to eternal realities. When that is so, God's self-revelation in human history as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is no longer held to reveal who he is eternally in himself."[2]

He describes also in another way, "Modalism is the idea that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are merely ways God revealed Himself and do not represent eternal antecedent personal realities in God Himself. They are temporary appearances, like an actor assuming different roles at different times. The problem with this, of course, is that if it were so, we would have no genuine knowledge of God, for He would be something in Himself other than that what He has revealed Himself to be."[3]

Modalism is also called "Sabellianism," which is named after an early third century heresy named for Sabellius, an early-third-century trinitarian heresy named for Sabellius, who taught that the one God revealed himself successively in salvation history first as Father (Creator and Lawgiver), then as Son (Redeemer) and finally as Spirit (Sustainer, Giver of Grace). Hence for Sabellius there is only one divine person, not three as in Christian trinitarianism.[4]

There is another heresy that has plagued the church throughout the centuries when it comes to the subject of the Trinity, namely "tritheism," which is the belief that there are three gods. Having a good understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity will protect the Christian from this false doctrine.

Tritheism is the belief that the Trinity is not one God but three. It is a distorted believe in three different Gods-Father, Son and Spirit rather than one God who is unified and yet diversely three persons. It can arise if the persons of the Trinity are regarded as substantial beings in their own right, sharing a common divinity only in the sense that people share a common humanity.

The New Dictionary of Theology writes that "Tritheism has never been the official teaching of any church. It is at best an error which some Christians may have fallen into in their attempts to explain the Trinity. Jerome accused the Greek Church of holding a form of tritheism, on the ground that the Greeks referred to the persons

[1] Grenz, S., Guretzki, D., & Nordling, C. F. (1999). *Pocket dictionary of theological terms* (79). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
[2] The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology and Worship; page 500; P & R Publishing, 2004
[3] Ibid. 409
[4] Grenz, S., Guretzki, D., & Nordling, C. F. (1999). *Pocket dictionary of theological terms* (104). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

of the Trinity as *hypostaseis*, which he took to mean 'substances;' but he was mistaken in this and had to be corrected. Christians today are sometimes accused of tritheism by Jews, and particularly by Muslims, and also by such sects as Jehovah's Witnesses, though the accusation has always been strenuously denied and does not in fact reflect any major strand in Christian theology.[5]

Another false doctrine which has plagued the church throughout the centuries is "subordinationism," which is a heresy that originated in the second and third century. It contended that the Son and the Spirit proceed from the Father, but they are not equal to the Father and are thus not fully divine.

Another important reason for understanding the doctrine of the Trinity is that it will protect one from the cults. Many groups which call themselves "Christian" do not subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity and in fact reject it.

David MacLeod writes "The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, reject the doctrine and proclaim a form of the ancient heresy of Arianism that denies the eternality and full deity of Christ. The Mormon Church rejects the monotheism of the Bible and the doctrine of the Trinity. 'Mormon theology is polytheistic, teaching in effect that the universe is inhabited by different gods….' Christian Science also rejects the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Christ. According to Mary Baker Eddy, 'God is impersonal, devoid of any personality at all.' 'Oneness Pentecostalism,' taught by the United Pentecostal Church, is a form of ancient Sabellianism that denies the Trinity. There are not three real, distinct, coequal persons in the eternal Godhead. Rather, the three are 'only different roles that one divine person temporarily assumes.' Likewise, various New Age cults oppose the Trinity. Shortly before his death, Walter Martin, the premier evangelical authority on the cults, noted that despite its lip service to tolerance and compatibility with Christianity, the New Age movement is 'pointedly anti-Christian and particularly hostile to the unique claim of deity by the Lord Jesus Christ and confirmed by apostolic witness. There are new challenges as well, chief among them radical feminism.' This movement is engaged in a frontal assault upon 'the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.' The historic biblical faith is looked upon as 'patriarchal,' 'androcentric,' and 'sexist.' Gone are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Now we have the more impersonal or more feminine, Goddess as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Along with the new challenges there are old challenges, chiefly from the other 'monotheistic' religions of the world, Judaism and Islam. Judaism, which has historically revered the Scriptures of the Old Testament, finds the idea of a Triune God abhorrent. It rejects the doctrine of original sin and the need for Christ's atoning sacrifice. Jews do not believe in the Messiahship of Jesus, and they reject His deity as well. Muhammad, the founder of Islam, and

[5] Ferguson, S. B., & Packer, J. (2000). *New dictionary of theology* (electronic ed.) (694). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

author of its holy book, the Koran or Qur'an, spoke of Jesus as a prophet of God on a par with Noah, Abraham, and Moses. He rejected the doctrine of the Trinity as a monstrous falsehood —'Say not, 'Three.' Refrain; better is it for you. God is only One God.' It is clear that he misunderstood the doctrine, believing the Christian Trinity to consist of three gods, the Father, the Virgin, and their Child. God could not have a Son when 'He has no consort.' God is a solitary God—'They are unbelievers who say, "God is the Third of Three." No god is there but One God.' …Sadly, our own Brethren churches have not been free from Trinitarian error. In the early years of our movement there was major division over Christological teaching. At least one party of the Exclusive wing of the Brethren has known serious heretical teaching on the Trinity. In our own time I am aware of at least two assemblies of Open Brethren in the North American Midwest that have suffered great damage due to false teaching on the Trinity, and I have seen docetic, Eutychian, and Sabellian views expressed in written materials produced by men from the Brethren assemblies. In light of the current situation with its indifference, hostility, cultic thought, and religious pluralism, it is imperative that true believers be clear on the teaching of Christ and His Apostles as it pertains to the Godhead."[6]

Carl Trueman commenting on the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity has the following comment, he writes "So what is the immediate importance of the doctrine of the Trinity for believers today? I would suggest at least a twofold importance. First, we need to be very clear that what is at stake in the doctrine of the Trinity is the very identity of God. Christians do not worship a God who is merely an example of deity in general. He is the very specific, particular God who is both three and one. This is especially significant in the context of the modern pluralist societies in which we live. For example, many Christian might find themselves faced with the question of whether the God of the Koran is the God of the Bible. After all, they seem to have some things in common (both are sovereign creators, for example). A clear grasp of the doctrine of the Trinity precludes a positive answer to this question: if Allah is not the one who is three and the three who are one, then he is not true God in any real sense. Thus, at a basic level, a grasp of this doctrine reminds us that the God of the Bible is utterly unique and different than other religious conceptions of god, even other monotheistic viewpoints. Second, the doctrine should shape the way in which we worship. If God is a very particular God, and in Christ has set forth a very particular way of salvation, then our response of worship should, in turn, be very particular and take full account of God as Trinity. Perhaps the most significant and helpful essay on this is John Owen's book, On Communion with God, where he delineates the Trinitarian nature of God, the Trinitarian action of God in salvation, and the way in which our worship, directed to

[6] *Vol. 11*: *Emmaus Journal Volume 11*. 2002 (2) (129–130). Dubuque, IA: Emmaus Bible College.

the God who is one, must also be directed to the God who is three. Owen perhaps takes this to extremes, arguing that the Lord's Prayer itself is not to be used by Christians since it originates from a time before the Trinity had been fully revealed (a point which he signally does not make with reference to the Psalms). But, in the context of modern evangelical worship, it is worth asking how a creedal commitment to the Trinity actually affects our thinking about God and our worship. For Owen, all prayer is addressed to God the Father, through the Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit; and, additionally, the different persons are to be specifically worshipped for their respective actions in salvation. As salvation is the act of the whole Godhead, so in its particulars it can be specifically ascribed to Father (e.g., appointing Son as Mediator), to the Son (e.g., taking up and executing the office of Mediator) and the Spirit (e.g., applying salvation to the individual). Each task can only be performed by one who is God; and within such a framework, one of the practical aspects of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity is made very clear.[7]

The doctrine of the Trinity is extremely important and essential to know because it explains who the Lord Jesus Christ is. It also assures us that God is personal, which stands in stark contrast to the monotheism of Islam. Without the Trinity, we cannot truly know God and He cannot be revealed. The Son reveals the Father and the Spirit the Son. The Trinity is critical for a proper understanding of redemption. The Father planned the redemption of sinful mankind and the Son accomplished this plan while the Spirit appropriates the benefits of the Son's work on the Cross for the sinner who exercises faith in the Son.

Now, in this study of the Holy Spirit, we will first look into His personhood. Then, we will look at the work of the Spirit. We will note His work in the life of Jesus Christ. This will be followed by a study of the work of the Spirit in relation to the church age believer, which will be broken out into two sections. The first will discuss the various ministries performed by the Holy Spirit at the moment of justification. The second will involve a study of the various post-justification ministries of the Spirit. We will then discuss the restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit which is taking place now in the church age. As we will note this will take us to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-11, which teaches that the Spirit through church age believers is restraining the proliferation of evil in the world today. Specifically, through the church, He is restraining the manifestation of the Antichrist appearing on the pages of history. Next, we will discuss the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to Scripture, which will result in a study of the doctrine of inspiration. Lastly, we will note the fourteen affirmations regarding the Holy Spirit, which appear in Romans chapter eight. We will end our study of the Holy Spirit by noting the apostle John's teaching on the Holy Spirit in his first epistle.

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[7] *Vol. 10*: *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology Volume 10*. 2006 (1) (96). Louisville, KY: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Person of the Holy Spirit

The Scriptures teach that the Spirit is a person not a thing (John 15:26; 16:7; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2). The Holy Spirit is the unseen power of God. He reveals the plan of God on earth and is the agent for executing the Christian way of life.

The Titles of God the Holy Spirit: (1) "**Spirit of holiness**" (Romans 1:4) (2) "**Spirit of life"** (Romans 8:2) (3) "**Spirit of knowledge**" (Isaiah 11:2) (4) "**Spirit of truth**" (John 14:17). Titles related to God the Father: (1) "**Spirit of God**" (2) "**Spirit of our God**" (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:11) (3) "**Spirit of your Father**" (Matthew 10:20). Titles related to God the Son: (1) "**Spirit of Christ**" (2) "**Spirit of Jesus Christ**" (Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19) (3) "**Spirit of His Son**" (Galatians 4:6) (4) "**Spirit of the Lord**" (Acts 5:9). These titles do speak of an attribute because an attribute would not be designated by a personal pronoun such as "**He**," "**Him**," and "**His**."

John 14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you." (NASB95)

John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (NASB95)

John 16:5 "But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged. 12 I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.'" (NASB95)

God the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct Person in the Godhead. He is called "**Lord**" in 2 Corinthians 3:17 just as God the Father and God the Son are.

The Holy Spirit has the attributes of personality: (1) Intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Romans 8:27). (2) Emotion (Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 10:29; James 4:5). (3) Will (1 Corinthians 12:11; Acts 16:6-11). (4) He has a mind, and therefore He thinks, searches and teaches.

The Spirit performs the actions of personality: (1) Teaches (John 14:26; 16:13-15). (2) Testifies or bears witness (John 15:26). (3) Guides and Leads (R. 8:14). (4) Performs miracles (Acts 8:39). (5) Convinces (John 16:7-8). (6) Restrains (Genesis 6:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7). (7) Commands (Acts 8:29). (8) Intercedes in prayer (R. 8:26). (9) He receives ascriptions of personality. (10) He can be obeyed (Acts 16:6-7). (11) He can be lied to (Acts 5:3). (12) He can be resisted (Acts 7:51). (13) He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:31). (14) He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). (15) He can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Relation to Jesus Christ

The Holy Spirit was involved in the birth, life, ministry and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let's now take a look at the Spirit's work in the birth of Christ.

When speaking of the incarnation, we must of course discuss the virgin birth since the incarnation was the result of the virgin birth (Isa. 9:6-7; Micah 5:2; Luke 1:30-35).

The virgin birth was predicted in the Old Testament. In 700 B.C., the prophet Isaiah was used by God the Holy Spirit to prophecy of the birth of our Lord.

Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel." (NASB95)

Matthew 1:18, Luke 1:35 and Hebrews 10:5 says that God the Holy Spirit prepared a human body for God the Son.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)

Luke 1:35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God." (NASB95)

The prophet Isaiah also speaks of the incarnation in Isaiah 9:6-7.

Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of {His} government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from

then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. (NASB95)

The gospel of Matthew provides us with one of two accounts of the birth of Christ.

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. 19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. 20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." (NASB95)

"**Joseph**" who was engaged to Mary is said to be a "**son of David**," which is intended to show Jesus' legitimate claim to the throne of David through his legal father Joseph (see verse 31). The marriage of Mary and Joseph made our Lord the "adopted" son and "legal heir" of Joseph, which reflects God's sovereignty, omniscience and omnipotence.

The angel tells Joseph that Mary conceived by the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit was the source of Mary's pregnancy (Matt. 1:18) since the divine omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit created the human body of our Lord.

Hebrews 10:5 Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME; 6 IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND sacrifices FOR SIN YOU HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE." (NASB95)

An act of divine omnipotence produced the sperm that fertilized the egg in Mary's womb and as a result the Lord Jesus Christ had no sin nature like we do because He did not have a human father. Mary's womb was only the vehicle for the formation of the human body of our Lord and the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit provided 23 perfect chromosomes to fertilize Mary's normal, pure ovum, which produced a fetus in Mary's womb that was uncontaminated by Adam's old sin nature.

Matthew 1:21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." 22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet. 23 BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,' which translated means, "GOD WITH US." 24 And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took Mary as his wife 25 but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus. (NASB95)

The name "**Jesus**" means, "Yahweh saves" and expresses that Jesus would be the long awaited Savior of the world and would be the fulfillment of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15.

The gospel of Luke gives us more details regarding the birth of Christ than Matthew.

Luke 1:26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. (NASB95)

The phrase "**in the six-month**" refers to six months after the angel Gabriel had been sent to Zechariah to announce that his wife Elizabeth would be pregnant in her old age and the child that she would bear would be the forerunner of Jesus Christ, namely, John the Baptist.

"**Virgin**" is the noun *parthenos*, which denotes "a young, unmarried girl who has not had sex with a man yet."

Joseph and Mary were legally considered to be married but had not consummated the marriage by having sex. The Jews had a tradition called betrothal or engagement period, which was considered preparation for marriage but was legally binding. It was an agreement that included witnesses, a marriage contract, and the payment of the bridal price and was the first stage of the marriage and usually began when the girl was about 12 years of age. This period was generally concluded after a year when the woman would go to live at the man's house instead of her parents. If the marriage did not take place because of a breach of contract such as the dowry not paid to her parents or if she had sex before marriage, the young woman could not be married to another man until she was freed by due process and a certificate of divorce.

Luke 1:28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." (NASB95)

"**Favored one**" is the verb *charitoo*, which means that God the Father was bestowing upon Mary the gracious honor of bearing the human nature of the Messiah.

"**The Lord is with you**" is an Old Testament greeting preparing Mary for her service to bear the human nature of the Savior, including the assurance of divine assistance in accomplishing this service and indicates that Mary was experiencing fellowship with the Lord at this time.

Luke 1:29 But she was very perplexed at this statement and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. (NASB95)

The statement "**she was very perplexed at this statement**" indicates that Gabriel's greeting confused Mary and she could not understand why she is being singled for such a wonderful and gracious greeting.

The statement "(she) **kept pondering what kind of salutation this was**," indicates that Mary carefully considered the implications and nature of this extraordinary manner of greeting she received from the angel Gabriel.

Luke 1:30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God." (NASB95)

Gabriel tells her not to be afraid since she would be the recipient of an extraordinarily gracious and fantastic honor, which is described in the following verses. He tells her that she has found favor or grace in the eyes of God meaning that God is going to bestow a great honor upon her that she did not earn or deserve but does indicate that she was experiencing fellowship with God since God would not choose her to bear the Savior if she were not.

Luke 1:31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. (NASB95)

The name "**Jesus**" means, "Yahweh saves" and expresses that Jesus would be the long awaited Savior of the world and would be the fulfillment of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15.

Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. (NASB95)

The statement "**He will be great**" emphasizes the importance of Jesus to the fulfillment of the Father's plan to rule over the works of His hands (cf. Ps 8; Heb. 2:5-10). It also means that Jesus would possess superiority in rank over both men and angels and would be great in power and in wisdom, and in dominion on both earth and in heaven since He will be the God-Man Savior (cf. Phlp. 2:5-11).

The prophecy that Jesus would be "**called the Son of the Most High**" emphasizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6.

The prophecy "**the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David**" refers to the fact that Jesus would fulfill the Davidic covenant in which God promised David that a descendant of his would sit on his throne forever ruling over the nation of Israel (See 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Jeremiah 23:5).

Luke 1:33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end. (NASB95)

The prophecy that Jesus would "**reign over the house of Jacob forever**" refers to the fact that He would be the King of Israel and the prophecy "His kingdom will have no end" refers to the fact that Jesus' reign will never end on planet earth.

Luke 1:34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" (NASB95)

Mary's question was not an expression of unbelief like Zechariah recorded in Luke 1:18-19 but rather it was an expression of faith since she believed the promises but did not understand how they would be fulfilled with her since her marriage with Joseph was not yet consummated.

Luke 1:35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God." (NASB95)

In Luke 1:35, the term "**overshadow**" is an Old Testament image of the cloud of God's presence that descended upon the tabernacle (Ex. 40:35) and is a metaphor for the presence of God.

Luke 1:36 And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God. 38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (NASB95)

When Mary said, "**be it done to me according to your Word**" (Luke 1:38), she was saying yes to the plan of God and expresses her faith in the Lord.

Mary had to agree with God's plan before the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit could implant the seed that would form the perfect humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus revealing a spiritual principle that our faith appropriates the omnipotence of God in our lives (cf. Matt. 17:20).

The Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus Christ has a human body like ours but without a sin nature (John 1:14; Heb. 10:5; 1 John 1:1; 1 John 4:2-3), that He has a human soul (Matt. 26:38a; Isa. 53:11a) and a human spirit (Luke 23:46; John 13:21; 19:30). He did not have an old sin nature like every human being born in Adam because of the virgin birth. He did not have a sin nature because He did not have a human father (Luke 1:35). The father passes along the sin nature in the human race. However, our Lord did not have a human father since the Holy Spirit impregnated Mary. Therefore, Jesus Christ was totally free from the sin nature, which means He was perfect or flawless. He remained free from all three categories of sin in the human race: (1) Old sin nature (2) Adam's original sin (3) Personal sins.

Therefore, our Lord was found to be without sin in His humanity (John 8:46a; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5). He was tempted in all things as sinful humanity (Heb. 4:15). However, even though He was tempted to act and live independently from God the Father's plan for His life, He never once sinned (Luke 4:1-4; Matt. 16:21-23). He even was tempted not to go to the cross (Luke 22:39-44).

The fact that the sin nature resides in the human body is further indicated in that Jesus Christ's human body was not the result of the sexual union between Mary and Joseph but rather the result of the Holy Spirit impregnating Mary (Luke 1:35; cf. Hebrews 10:5-7). He could not have a human body that was the result of human copulation because the sin nature is passed down in this manner and resides in the body. This is significant in that it makes clear that Jesus Christ did not have the principle of the sin nature residing in Him since the Holy Spirit impregnated Mary. He did not have a human father who could pass down the sin nature in sex. This

makes clear that our Lord was not under the headship of Adam like the rest of the human race.

Every member of the human race is under the headship of Adam due to physical birth. However, Jesus Christ did not have a sin nature because He did not receive a human body as a result of human copulation.

Now, because He did not have a human father and that His human body did not have a sin nature residing in it, it is then clear that the rest of the human race are sinners due to the fact that they possess a sin nature that resides in their physical bodies since it is passed down through copulation. The human body of Adam became corrupted as a result of his disobedience, which he passed down to his posterity. Also, in Romans 6:6, the noun *hamartia* could also be interpreted as a "genitive of production," which takes place when the genitive substantive "produces" the noun to which it stands related. Therefore, we could translate the expression *to soma tes hamartias*, "the body, which produces sin." Either way you slice it, the text makes clear that the sin nature is resident in the physical body, thus making the human body inherently sinful.

Genesis 3:18-19 teaches that the fall of Adam not only affected his fellowship with God but also it effected his environment and his physical body! The physical body of human beings eventually ceases to function and decompose into the dust of ground because it is inherently sinful. They are inherently sinful because of the curse the Lord put on Adam and his posterity. Therefore, in Romans 6:6, the noun *soma* is obviously a reference to the human body.

The life of the Lord Jesus Christ was a life of power (Luke 1:35; 4:36). He used the power of God the Holy Spirit to cast demons out of people (Matt. 12:28). Hebrews 9:14 teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself to the Father as a propitiatory sacrifice on behalf of the entire human race by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews [9:14] how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our consciences from dead works to worship the living God. (NET)

The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit raised Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ from the dead (Rom. 1:4; 8:11).

The Lord Jesus Christ was trichotomous: (1) Body (2) Soul (3) Spirit. Therefore, His death was unique: (1) His physical body went to the grave (Luke 23:50-53). (2) His human spirit went to heaven (Luke 23:46; John 19:30). (3) His human soul went into Paradise a compartment of Hades (Luke 23:43; Acts 2:27; 2:31; Eph. 4:9).

God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are agents in the resurrection. The Lord was brought back from the dead by three categories of divine power: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father sent back Jesus Christ's human spirit to the body in the grave (Acts 2:24; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21). (2)

Omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit sent back His human soul to the body in the grave (Rom. 1:4; 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son raised His physical body from the grave (John 6:39-40, 54 10:17-18).

1 Timothy 3:16 teaches that the resurrection, ascension and session of Jesus Christ served to vindicate Him. In this verse, Paul presents a Christ hymn that expresses a common confession in the church and speaks of the mystery of godliness. This confession has six lines with each speaking of some aspect of Jesus Christ's ministry. The first refers to the His incarnation and hypostatic union. The second is that Jesus Christ was vindicated by the Spirit, which refers to the Spirit raising Him from the dead and consequently vindicating Him since His resurrection demonstrates His claim of being the Son of God. The third line speaks of the angels bearing witness to this vindication by observing the Lord's resurrection, ascension and session. The fourth refers to the proclamation of His redemptive work by the church among the nations. The fifth speaks of the fact that members of the human race trusted in Him as Savior. The sixth refers to the ascension of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASB95)

"**He who was revealed in the flesh**" refers to the incarnation and resultant hypostatic union and "**was vindicated in the Spirit**" refers to the resurrection that vindicated Christ in that it demonstrated who He claimed to be all along, namely the Son of God.

"**Seen by angels**" is a reference to the elect angels bearing witness to His vindication by observing and bearing witness to His resurrection, ascension and session.

"**Proclaimed among the nations**" refers to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ after His ascension and "**believed on in the world**" refers to the response to this proclamation that continues to the present day.

"**Taken up in glory**" is an obvious reference to the ascension.

"**Was vindicated in the Spirit**" is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *dikaioo* (δικαιόω), "**was vindicated**" and the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**in**" and its object is the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**."

In 1 Timothy 3:16, *dikaioo* means "to vindicate" and is modified by the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι, "**in the Spirit**," which refers to the Holy Spirit. Together, they refer to the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit raising Jesus of Nazareth from the dead on the third day in fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies and according to the Father's will. This act "vindicated" Jesus of Nazareth in the sense that it demonstrated that His claims that He was the Son of

God were true and that the accusations of His enemies were false and that His execution was a travesty of justice.

The resurrection vindicated Jesus of Nazareth's claims that He was the Son of God and that faith in Him alone was the only way to receive eternal salvation and escape eternal condemnation. It vindicated His claims that He was the Messiah of Israel and the fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies. Therefore, the Father vindicated His Son, Jesus Christ by raising Him from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. This vindication is mentioned in Acts 2:22-36, 3:11-15, 4:10-12, 10:34-43, Romans 1:4, 1 Corinthians 2:1-9, Ephesians 1:20-21, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 2:8-15, and 1 Peter 3:21-22.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the Lord Jesus Christ being vindicated by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit raising Him from the dead. The passive voice of the verb means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is of course the Lord Jesus Christ and the agency is expressed by the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι. This indicates that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit was the means by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, which vindicated Him. The Spirit vindicated Him by raising Him from the dead. The indicative mood is "declarative" presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun *pneuma* refers of course to the Holy Spirit who is identified as the third Person of the Trinity. It is the object of the preposition *en*, which is a marker of means indicating that the vindication of Jesus Christ was "by means of" the power of the Holy Spirit. Although, an instrumental of means is not conceived as personal but "impersonal" the Person of the Spirit is not being emphasized here. Rather His power is presented as the instrument that raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead, which consequently vindicated Him. Therefore, we can see that the figure of "metonymy" is being used here by Paul meaning that the Person of the Spirit is put for His power. So, this prepositional phrase emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth was vindicated "by means of" the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Work of the Spirit on Behalf of Sinners and the Church

Forty days after His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, He received power and authority and the title of *kurios*, "**Lord**" over history and creation. Ten days later on the day of Pentecost in June of 33 A.D., the Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to permanently indwell those who had exercised faith in Him for eternal salvation. On this day, the baptism of the Spirit first took place.

Jewish believers were the first to receive it and this event is recorded in Acts 2. It took place among Gentile believers not too long after this and is recorded in Acts 10. The Spirit proceeds from the Lord Jesus Christ to permanently indwell the sinner who trusts in the Lord Jesus as his Savior. (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15; Acts 1:8; 2:33).

God the Holy Spirit's role in man's salvation: (1) Common Grace: Makes the gospel understandable (John 16:7-11; 2 Corinthians 2:14b). (2) Regeneration: Creates a human spirit at the moment of salvation (John 3:1-16). (3) Efficacious Grace: Makes the believer's faith in Christ effective for salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2; Ephesians 2:8-9).

Seven conversion ministries performed by the Holy Spirit when the child of God was declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ: (1) Efficacious Grace: Makes faith in Jesus Christ effective for salvation (2 Corinthians 6:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-9). (2) Regeneration: Creates a human spirit for the purpose of the imputation of eternal life (John 3:1-16; Titus 3:5). (3) Baptism of the Spirit: Places every believer in union with Jesus Christ (John 7:37-39; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5; 1 Peter 3:21). (4) Indwelling: Creates a temple for the indwelling of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16). (5) Filling: Influences the soul of the believer in executing the plan of God for the church age (Ephesians 5:18). (6) Sealing: Puts His stamp on the believer to guarantee their salvation (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). (7) Distribution of Spiritual Gifts: Gives every believer a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

God the Holy Spirit's post-conversion ministries on behalf of the believer: (1) Empowers the believer to execute the plan of God (John 14:16, 26; Galatians 5:16, 25; Ephesians 5:18; Philippians 2:13). (2) Reproduces Christ-like character in the believer (Galatians 4:19; 5:5, 16-23). (3) Teaches the believer the doctrines of Christ (John 14:26; 1 Co. 2:10-16; 1 John 2:20, 27). (4) Convicts the believer of sin (John 16:7-11; Romans 8:4-14; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Th. 5:18). (5) Leads the believer in worshipping the Father (John 4:24; Philippians 3:3; Romans 8:4-13). (6) Promotes spiritual maturity (Galatians 5:1-5; He. 5:11-6:6). (7) Applies truth to the believer's experience (John 14:26; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 6:18). (8) Gives power to the believer's prayer life (John 15:7; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20). (9) Promotes worship of God (John 4:23-24; Ephesians 5:18-21; Philippians 3:3; Isaiah 59:1-2). (10) Gives capacity, burden and direction for witnessing (Acts 1:8; 1 Th. 1:5). (11) Gives capacity for ministry (1 Co. 1:12-14). (12) Provides fellowship for the believer (2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:1).

God the Holy Spirit teaches the believer through the Word of God (John 14:26; 15:26). Several passages state that the believer is to give heed to what the Spirit is saying to the churches because of this spiritual principle that the Spirit takes the

doctrines of Christ and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit speaks to the church through the communication of the Word of God.

Acts 21:11 This is what the Holy Spirit says. (NASB95)

Acts 28:25 The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. (NASB95)

Hebrews 3:7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "TODAY IF YOU HEAR HIS VOICE." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:7a "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:13, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

The church age believer is totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit in order to attain Christ-likeness and as a result execute the plan of God (Galatians 5:5, 16; Ephesians 3; 16-17). He is the believer's true teacher (John. 14:16-20, 26; 15:26; 16:7-16; 1 Co. 2:10-16; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 5:5, 16-25; Ephesians 3:16-19; 5:18; 1 John 2:20-27).

The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to produce Christ-like character in the believer (Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 2:13). He takes the Word and empowers, guides and directs the believer in the process of executing the Father's plan (Acts 8:29; Romans 8:14, 26; Philippians 3:3; 2 Per. 1:21; cf. Hebrews 4:12). He calls attention sin in the life of the believer by taking the Word of God and using it to convict him (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; cf. John 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19).

Therefore, the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity who reveals whether the believer is living in accordance with the doctrines of Christ or not (John 16:7-16; Romans 8:14). God the Holy Spirit produces peace in the soul of the believer who

applies the Word of God and in particular applies the doctrine of prayer (Phil. 4:6-7).

The Disciple's Study Bible presents the following summary note on the Holy Spirit, they write, "The Spirit is not a possession we hold on to but a Person we love and obey. People must choose between the way of the flesh or sinful nature and the way of the Spirit. We should choose 'the Spirit of life' (Ro 8:2-note), 'the Spirit' (Ro 8:4-note), 'the Spirit of Christ' (Ro 8:9-note), 'the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus' (God, Ro 8:11-note), 'the Spirit of God' (Ro 8:14-note), and 'the Spirit of sonship' (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit gives life (Ro 8:2-note), peace (Ro 8:6-note), freedom (Ro 8:9-note), leadership (Ro 8:14-note), assurance (Ro 8:16-note), hope (Ro 8:23-note; Ro 8:24-note), and help (Ro 8:26-note). The Spirit is with all Christians (Ro 8:9-note, Ro 8:14-note). The Spirit makes Christians God's children and able to say 'Father' when we pray (Ro 8:15-note). The Spirit assures us that we are in fact God's children (Ro 8:16-note), and that, even though we pass through much suffering, we will eventually share in the glory of Christ (Ro 8:17-note). With all this we remain free. We must choose to follow the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit (Ro 8:5-note), to set our minds on what the Spirit desires (Ro 8:5-note), to be controlled by the Spirit (Ro 8:9-note), to put to death the old way of life (Ro 8:13-note), and to be led by the Spirit (Ro 8:18-note). These phrases all refer to a serious commitment to live as Christians with the help of God's Spirit. This includes high moral standards (Ro 8:4-note) and more. Obeying the Spirit means a personal loyalty and obedience to Christ which expresses itself by following the leadership of the Spirit in all life's decisions. This is active cooperation as well as passive yielding. The Spirit's work is not irresistible. The Spirit prefers to wait and allow us to obey His leadership freely. Paul's call to obey the Spirit makes no sense at all if the Spirit is only an impersonal power or force. The Spirit is personal, and this leads to the commands to respond to the Spirit in a fully personal manner."[8]

Common Grace

Now, let's take a look at individually the various ministries performed by the Holy Spirit when the child of God was declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. We will first look at "common grace," which is grace that the entire human race receives when God the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel message understandable to the spiritually dead unbeliever in order that they can make a decision to believe in Christ or reject Him for salvation. Common grace is given to everyone in the human race.

[8] Disciple's Study Bible

Titus 2:11 For the grace originating from God has been manifested offering salvation for the benefit of each and every member of the human race. (Author's translation)

The entire human race is born spiritually dead because of Adam's sin.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and spiritual death spread through sin, and so spiritual death spread to all men, because all sinned when Adam sinned. (Author's translation)

Therefore, God the Father had to send His Son to the cross for everyone because He made everyone a sinner at physical birth through the imputation of Adam's sin.

John 3:17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world (Christ would die in their place), but <u>that the world should be saved through Him (faith alone in Christ alone)</u>." (NASB95)

Imputation is crediting something to someone's account. God wants everyone to be saved.

1 Timothy 2:1 Therefore, based upon my previous statements, I first of all urgently request specific detailed requests, reverential prayers, intercessory prayers, thanksgivings be regularly offered up on behalf of each and every member of the human race, 2 on behalf of kings as well as each and every one of those individuals who are in authority in order that we may continue to live a peaceful and tranquil life with absolute godliness as well as dignity. 3 This is noble as well as pleasingly acceptable in the judgment of God the Father, our Savior 4 who desires each and every member of the human race to be saved as well as to enter into knowing experientially the truth. (Author's translation)

Not everyone will be saved because God in His perfect integrity has provided everyone with a free will or volition. You have to make the decision to believe in Jesus Christ, God cannot make the decision for you. People go to the Lake of Fire because they made the decision to go. God didn't want them in the Lake of Fire; He wants them all in heaven. God didn't make us robots. You have to make a decision.

The call of God is simply God's offer of salvation through faith in Christ. God makes the offer through the presentation of the Gospel.

Romans 1:16 For I am never ashamed of the gospel for it is God's power resulting in deliverance for the benefit of everyone who believe, to the Jew first and then to the Greek. (Author's translation)

The gospel is a spiritual message in a spiritual language. God the Holy Spirit translates it for the spiritually dead unbeliever so that they can make a decision for or against Christ. The gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ died for every sin ever committed in the human race-past, present and future and that by believing in Him you can have eternal life.

John 3:18 "He who believes in Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) is not judged. He who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the uniquely born Son of God."

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the Son shall not see eternal life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Acts 16:30 "And after he brought them out, he said (the Philippian jailer), 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And they said (Paul and Silas), 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you (believe) and your household (believe).'"

There is only 1 way to get saved. Faith alone in Christ alone. There is no other person through whom you can get saved. Our ticket to heaven is through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts [16:30] Then he brought them outside and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (NET)

Acts 4:10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, this man stands before you healthy. 4:11 This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, that has become the cornerstone. 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among people by which we must be saved." (NET)

Our Lord is the only perfect person who ever lived. He never once committed a mental, verbal or overt sin (John 8:46a; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5). The Lord Jesus Christ is the only person whom God the Father will accept. He is the only human being that God the Father was "**well-pleased**" with (Matt. 17:5; Luke 3:22). He is the only righteous or holy person who ever lived (1 John 2:1). God the Father was not only satisfied with the perfect person of our Lord but also with His saving work on the cross on our behalf.

1 John 2:1 My dear children, I am presently writing these things for the benefit of each of you in order that each of you would not enter into committing a sin. However, if anyone enters into committing a sin, we possess an advocate with the Father, namely, Jesus, who is the Christ, who is a righteous person. 2 For you see, He Himself is the propitiatory sacrifice for our sins. Indeed, by no means for ours only, but in fact also for the entire world. (Author's translation)

Propitiation is a big word used to describe the fact that God the Father is totally satisfied with saving work of our Lord on the Cross. This saving work was for everyone, the whole world. Therefore, because God the Father is totally and completely satisfied with the perfect person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father will accept anyone who has faith in Him. We are saved because of one person, our Lord Jesus Christ. God doesn't save us because we are nice people. We

don't go to heaven because of anything that we did. We go to heaven because of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. That is grace.

Grace means that we don't earn or deserve salvation. Grace means that God did all the work and receives all the credit for our salvation. Our part is to believe which is non-meritorious meaning that we have no merit before God.

Efficacious Grace

The next conversion ministry performed by the Holy Spirit when the child of God was declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ is "efficacious grace," which refers to the Holy Spirit making the sinner's faith in Jesus Christ at justification effective for salvation.

When a person hears the gospel message, God the Holy Spirit makes it understandable, which is called "common grace." He has to make it understandable to the unbeliever because the gospel is a spiritual message, but the unbeliever is spiritually dead. He needs help to understand the things of God. The gospel is spiritualese. The unbeliever needs a translator. Once the Holy Spirit translates the gospel for the unbeliever like an interpreter of a foreign language. The unbeliever then has to make a decision once he understands what he has heard. God has given everyone a soul and in that soul, he has placed a volition or free will. The free will or volition is the light switch in your soul. The person who believes in Christ for salvation flicks on the light switch and now walks in the light while the person who doesn't believe in Christ remains in the darkness. If a person makes the decision to believe in Christ that person is not saved yet...I repeat they are not saved yet... God the Holy Spirit has to do one more thing, which is our subject... God the Holy Spirit has to make a person's faith in Christ effective for salvation. This is called efficacious grace.

2 Corinthians [6:1] Now because we are fellow workers, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. [6:2] For he says, "*I heard you at the acceptable time, and in the day of salvation I helped you*." Look, now is *the acceptable time*; look, now is *the day of salvation*! (NET)

Ephesians [2:8] For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; [2:9] it is not from works, so that no one can boast. (NET)

A person's faith in Christ does not save them until God the Holy Spirit does something with that person's faith. Efficacious grace is a big word for when the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit takes a spiritually dead person's faith in Christ for salvation and makes it effective or valid for salvation.

The best way to describe efficacious grace is through the drowning man analogy. A person who is drowning cries out for help, don't they? Of course, they do. A

drowning person cries out for help because they are helpless. A drowning person cries out to another person for help because they cannot save themselves. A person's faith in Christ is like a drowning person's cry for help. A person's faith in Jesus Christ for salvation is a cry to God for help. God the Holy Spirit hears the person's decision to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation and then proceeds to save that person like a lifeguard who saves a person from drowning... A person is not saved from drowning until the lifeguard pulls them out of the water. In the same way, a person is not saved until God the Holy Spirit makes a person's faith in Christ effective for salvation. A drowning man is not saved by simply crying out for help and neither is a person saved by simply having faith in Christ. Someone has to hear and then pull a drowning man out of the water to be saved, right? Well, God the Holy Spirit has to hear our faith in Christ and then He has to save us. God the Holy Spirit is our spiritual lifeguard who makes our faith in Christ effective for salvation. We are saved from drowning in the Lake of Fire forever and ever when God the Holy Spirit, our spiritual lifeguard takes our cry for help, faith alone in Christ alone and makes it effective for salvation which is analogous to being pulled out of the water.

Regeneration

The next ministry we will look at with regards to the Holy Spirit's work on behalf of the child of God at their justification is "regeneration," which refers to the moment when the sinner is declared justified by the Father through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Regeneration takes place at the moment of conversion, i.e., justification when the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit imputes eternal life to them.

There are several passages that support the doctrine of regeneration.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him (Faith alone in Christ alone), to them He (God) gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name (His Person), 13 who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh (old sin nature), nor of the will of man, but of God. (NASB95)

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; 2 this man came to Him by night, and said to Him (the Lord Jesus Christ), "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is <u>born again</u>, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh (old sin nature) is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (human spirit). 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born

again. 8 The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going, so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (Author's translation)

1 Peter 1:3 Worthy of praise and glorification is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy (grace in action) has caused us to be born again to a living confidence through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (Author's translation)

1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus (emphasizing His humanity) is the Christ (the Messiah, the Savior of the world) is born of God. (NASB95)

Regeneration is our spiritual birth. It is a theological word for being born-again. Every person born into this world that has human life is born spiritually dead. Every baby that is born into this world is physically alive but spiritually dead. Every baby that is born into this world receives the imputation of Adam's original sin in the garden making them spiritually dead but qualified for grace. When Adam sinned, the entire human race sinned (Rom. 5:12). God imputed Adam's sin to every person born into the world in order that He might show grace and mercy to everyone (Rom. 11:32).

So that when any person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ when they hear the gospel communicated to them, God the Holy Spirit cleanses them from the sin nature and personal sin as a result of appropriating for the justified sinner the benefits of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. The result is that they are now spiritually alive. When the sinner becomes born-again or regenerated through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, they have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Regeneration is a part of God's grace policy directed toward us. Grace means that the sinner can never earn or deserve to be born again. It is a gift from God. The justified sinner can never take credit for the fact that they have been born again since it is entirely the work of the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit. Regeneration or being born again is the justified sinner's entrance into the plan of God.

Regeneration is also a ministry performed by the Holy Spirit on behalf of a person the moment they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior where He creates a human spirit for the person so that they might receive the imputation of eternal life.

Titus 3:4 But when the kindness, yes, the love for mankind originating from the Savior who is our God was manifested, 5 He saved us, by no means on the basis of meritorious actions as constituting its source. In other words, on the basis of human self-righteousness which we ourselves have done. But rather on the basis of His mercy as constituting the standard, by means of a washing

produced by regeneration, specifically, a renovation produced by the Spirit who is holy. (Author's translation)

"**Regeneration**" in Titus 3:5 refers to the Holy Spirit appropriating for the justified sinner the benefits of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection which results in a spiritual birth or in other words it results in entering them into a new relationship with the triune God.

So, in Titus 3:5, Paul is teaching that the Holy Spirit is the intermediate agency involved in the Christian's salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ provided for all of sinful humanity the offer of eternal salvation as a result of His death and resurrection. While on the other hand, at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit appropriates the benefits of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on behalf of those sinners who are declared justified by the Father through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ solved several problems for sinful humanity. He delivered all of sinful humanity from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, the sin nature, personal sins, Satan and his cosmic system. When the sinner trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit appropriates for them this deliverance over these things. Thus, Paul makes clear that the Holy Spirit is instrumental in the Christian's salvation.

The apostle John mentions the concept or doctrine of being fathered by God eight times (cf. 1 John 2:29; 3:9 twice; 4:7; 5:1 twice, 4, 8) and in each instance, he is referring to the doctrine of regeneration.

1 John 2:29 If each of you possess the conviction that He is righteous, then each of you know experientially that any person who at any time does practice that which is truly righteousness has been fathered by Him. (Author's translation)

1 John 3:9 Every person who has been fathered by God never as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of practicing sin because His nature does as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of living in him. In other words, he has received the capacity to never exist in the state of committing sin because he has been fathered by God. (Author's translation)

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let each one of us continue to divinely love one another because this love is a characteristic originating from God (the Father). Consequently, the one who at any time does divinely love has been fathered by God (the Father) and as a result they know God (the Father) experientially. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:1 Anyone who at any time does believe that Jesus is the Christ has been fathered by God. Consequently, anyone who at any time does divinely love the Father, correspondingly does divinely love the one who has been fathered by Him. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:2 By means of this, any one of us can at any time confirm that we are divinely loving God's children: whenever any one of us does at any time divinely love God (the Father). Specifically, whenever any one of us does at any time obey His commands 3 because this defines divine-love for God (the Father), namely that each one of us does conscientiously obey His commands. Now, His commands are absolutely never characterized as burdensome 4 because every person who has been fathered by God conquers the world. Specifically, this appropriates the conquering power, which has conquered the world, namely our faith. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:18 Each one of us possesses the conviction that every person who has been fathered by God never commits sin. On the contrary, the one who has been fathered by God, He (God) protects him. Consequently, the evil one can never for his own benefit harm him. (Author's translation)

When John mentions the believer being "**fathered by**" God in 1 John 2:29, 3:9, 4:7, 5:1 and 5:18, he is referring to the doctrine of regeneration, which is one of seven ministries the Holy Spirit performs on behalf of every believer the moment they are declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. John mentions this new spiritual birth in 1 John 3:9, 4:7, 5:1, 4 and 18. He also mentions this doctrine in his gospel (cf. John 1:12-13; 3:3-8).

The Baptism of the Spirit

The next ministry we will look at which is performed by the Holy Spirit when the child of God was declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ is "baptism." During the dispensation of the church age when a sinner exercises faith alone in Christ alone, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit places that person in an eternal union with Christ, thus identifying the believer positionally with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This results in making the believer a permanent member of the royal family of God, a new spiritual species and eternally secure (Mark 16:16; John 7:37-39; 14:20; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:11-13; 1 Pet. 3:21). This is identification with Jesus Christ is called the "baptism of the Spirit." This ministry of the Spirit never took place before the day of Pentecost in June of 32 A.D. The baptism of the Spirit distinguishes the church age from other dispensations. There was no church before the baptism of the Spirit.

John the Baptist and Jesus Christ's Prophecies Regarding the Baptism of the Spirit

John the Baptist prophesied of the baptism of the Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). God the Father tells John the Baptist that the Lord Jesus

Christ will be responsible for the Baptism of the Spirit (John 1:33). John the Baptist places a clear distinction between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit (Mark 1:8; Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16). His reference to the baptism of the Spirit was of course related to believers whereas his reference to the baptism of fire is related to the unbeliever (Luke 3:16).

The Lord Jesus Christ prophesied about the baptism of the Spirit (John 7:37-39).

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (NASB95)

Jesus described the baptism of the Spirit as "**rivers of living water**" (John 7:38). At that time, the baptism of the Spirit had not yet taken place when our Lord issued this prophesy (John 7:39). In this passage, John writes that the reception of the baptism of the Spirit is contingent upon believing in Christ (John 7:38) and that the giving of the Spirit was contingent upon our Lord's glorification (John 7:39). The last day of the great feast refers to the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, which lasted eight days (Lev. 23:36), and was considered the climax to the Feast.

Seven days symbolized Israel's wandering the desert and the eighth day was a solemn day of rest depicting the eternal state of the believer in Christ. There was a ceremony during the eighth day in which water was drawn from the Pool of Siloam and then poured out, commemorating God's provision for Israel in the desert. Our Lord was interpreting the meaning of this ceremony, which depicted the baptism of the Spirit.

The phrase "**from His innermost being shall flow rivers of living water**" refers to the soul of the believer which receives eternal life (John 4:14; 1 Cor. 10:4).

"**Shall flow**" is the Greek verb *rheo*, "to gush, overflow," and was used in the ancient world of gushing or overflowing rivers. Our Lord uses it figuratively of the soul of the believer which has received eternal life.

In John 14:16, our Lord promises to the send the Spirit in His Upper Room Discourse.

John 14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever." (NASB95)

Our Lord promises the disciples that He will send them "**another**" (*allon*) "**Helper**" (*parakletos*) to assist them while in the devil's world. *Parakletos* means "one who is called or sent for to assist another." God the Holy Spirit would act in this capacity for believers during the church age dispensation.

In John 14:20, the phrase "**in that day**" refers to the day of Pentecost when the apostles would be placed in union with Christ by the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit.

John 14:20 "In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you." (NASB95)

"**You in Me**" is our Lord's prophesy concerning the baptism of the Spirit, which is something they had never read in the Scriptures before because it was never known to Old Testament saints. It is exclusive to the church age.

The phrase "**in Me**" (*en emoi*) is a locative of sphere meaning that the apostles will be identified with Christ. This prepositional phrase speaks of the believer's intimate, eternally secure position in Christ. It speaks of the believer's union and identification with Christ that makes the believer eternally the object of the Father's divine-love. It alludes to the doctrine of positional truth and the justified sinner's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, His death and His resurrection.

In John 14:26, the Lord taught His disciples that God the Father would send the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in His name.

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (NASB95)

At that time, it was still future to our Lord's thinking. God the Holy Spirit is our true teacher of bible doctrine. God the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance all that our Lord said during this night before He was to go to the Cross.

"**In My name**" has a five-fold meaning. First, it refers to the "person" of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is undiminished deity and true humanity and, thus, the unique theanthropic person of history and creation. Second, the word refers to the "character" of the Lord Jesus Christ, the aggregate features and traits of the Lord Jesus Christ's divine and human nature. It also refers to the Lord Jesus Christ's work during His First Advent, which ended with His greatest accomplishment, His substitutionary death on the cross. His death fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law, destroyed the works of the devil, redeemed the entire human race from the slave market of sin, propitiated the Father's righteous demands that every sin in history be judged, and reconciled the entire human race to God. What an accomplishment! The phrase also alludes to Christ's resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father (Eph 1:21; Phi 2:5-11; Heb 1:4), since it refers to His reputation before mankind as the Savior of the world, redeemer of all mankind, and sovereign ruler of history. Lastly, it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ's position before the Father as righteous and holy and as His Beloved Son. Essentially, this all refers to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only person holy enough to have merit before God the Father.

In Acts 1:5, our Lord distinguishes between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit.

Acts 1:4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (NASB95)

This prophecy took place on the day of our Lord's ascension and session. Not many days turned out to be ten days. Ten days after our Lord's ascension, the baptism of the Spirit took place and the church age began. Luke states in Acts 1:3 that our Lord appeared to His disciples over a period of forty days.

Pentecost means fiftieth and designated among the Jews the fiftieth day after Passover. Our Lord was crucified on the Passover and rose three days later, ascended into heaven on the fortieth day after Passover and then sent the Spirit ten days later on Pentecost.

The baptism of the Spirit could not take place until our Lord was glorified which was about to take place after He finished saying these things to His apostles. Our Lord had to go away.

In Acts 1:8, our Lord repeats His promise to the apostles of sending them the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:7 He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (NASB95)

Our Lord gives the apostles the promise of a Person (God the Holy Spirit), a power (the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit) and a program (missionary activity to the Jews, the Samaritans and the entire world). Throughout the dispensation of the church age believers would have available to them one hundred percent availability of divine power to execute the plan of God the Father. The baptism of the Spirit makes this possible.

Both Jew and Gentile Believers Receive the Baptism of the Spirit

The baptism of the Spirit first took place among Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost in approximately June of 32 A.D. and was a fulfillment of the prophecies made by John the Baptist and our Lord. It also took place among the Gentiles as recorded by Luke in Acts 10:34-38, 19:1-7, thus making it universal in scope in the church age (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13). It unites Jewish believers with Gentile believers making them a new humanity under the headship of Jesus Christ who is the head of the new creation.

This ministry of the Spirit never took place before the day of Pentecost and will not take place after the rapture. The completion of the royal family of God at the rapture will mark the end of this ministry of the Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit distinguishes the church age from other dispensations. There was no church before the baptism of the Spirit.

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. (NASB95)

Pentecost is one of the seven great feasts of Israel: (1) Passover: Leviticus 23:4-5; 1 Corinthians 5:7. (2) Unleavened Bread: Leviticus 23:6-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8. (3) First Fruits: Leviticus 23:9-14; 1 Corinthians 15:23. (4) Pentecost: Leviticus 23:15-22; Acts 2:1-4. (5) Trumpets: Leviticus 23:23-25; 1 Corinthians 15:52. (6) Day of Atonement: Leviticus 23:26-32; 1 John 2:2. (7) Tabernacles: Leviticus 23:33-44; John 7:2.

It was the second national festival in Israel and took place fifty days after the Passover Sabbath (Ex. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:25-21; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12). It was designated the Feast of Weeks which celebrated the wheat harvest in Israel and was a one-day feast of celebration. It was originally the festival of the first fruits of the grain harvest (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:17-22; Num. 28:26-31). It was called the Feast of Weeks because it came after a period of seven weeks of harvesting that began with the offering of the first barley sheaf during the Passover celebration and ended with the wheat harvest.

Pentecost took place fifty days after the Feasts of First fruits, which spoke of our Lord's resurrection. It was celebrated in Israel as the anniversary of the giving of the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai in 1441 B.C., which was the beginning of the dispensation of the Law. The dispensation of grace began on the day of Pentecost with the baptism of the Spirit. So, God is setting a contrast between the Law and Grace.

Pentecost was looked upon in Judaism as one of the three great pilgrim festivals in Judaism along with Passover preceding it and Tabernacles some four months later. Because it was a great festival in Israel, there were many pilgrims from around the Roman Empire in Jerusalem at this time who spoke many different languages.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. (NASB95)

Luke states that the tongues were like fire, which would be of great significance to Jew in the first century. Fire in the Old Testament was a symbol of God's presence in Israel. The Lord spoke to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:2-5), the pillar of fire guided Israel by night through the wilderness (Ex. 13:21), the consuming fire on Mount Sinai (Ex. 24:17) and the fire that hovered over the wilderness Tabernacle

(Ex. 40:38). Luke states the baptism of the Spirit was like tongues of fire, or as tongues of fire, which denotes the fact that it wasn't fire or tongues or some ecstatic experience.

The word translated "**as**" in the New American Standard is the comparative particle *hosei*, which means "as," or "like." The sign of the fire was for the benefit of the disciples to give them the confidence that the Lord was indeed present among them and gave them confidence to speak the Gospel boldly.

Acts 2:5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs -- we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God." 12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" 13 But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine." 14 But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. 15 For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; 16 but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: 17 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHESY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; 18 EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT' And they shall prophesy. 19 'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. 20 THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. 21 AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.' 22 Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know 23 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. 24 But God

raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. 25 For David says of Him, 'I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN. 26 THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE; 27 BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. 28 YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.' 29 Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that 'GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE,' 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that 'HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.' 32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, 35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.' 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified." 37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do? 38 Peter said to them, Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." 40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!' 41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls." (NASB95)

The initial outpouring came on the day of Pentecost, and there were other outpourings in the books of Acts. Some of these outpourings came to those who had been baptized in water, and some came to those who had not yet been baptized in water (Acts 8:15-17; 10:44-48; 11:15-16; 19:1-6).

Now the book of Acts documents the difficult transition from the dispensation of Israel to the dispensation of the church age. In the book of Acts, God the Holy Spirit is the most prominent member of the Trinity. God the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity that actively guides the early Jewish believers in the church in this

transition from the Law to Grace…from the dispensation in which they previously lived to a new dispensation with a new *modus operandi*.

The apostle Peter of course was a Jew who lived his entire life attempting to live in accordance with the mandates of the Mosaic Law. The apostle Peter did not understand that God has begun a new dispensation called the church age. In Acts 10 and 11 we find God instructing Peter regarding this transition from the Law to Grace. God teaches Peter that he no longer makes any racial distinctions between Jew and Gentiles by instructing Peter to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles so that they too might receive the Baptism of the Spirit.

The fact that the Gentile believers like the Jewish believers could receive the same awesome invisible asset of the baptism of the Spirit as a result of faith alone in Christ alone was a shocking, revolutionary thing for Jewish believers such as Peter during the first century. The apostle Peter's obedience to God's directives resulted in Cornelius and his family getting saved and receiving the baptism of the Spirit. Peter's presentation of the Gospel to the Gentiles set an example for other Jewish believers to follow.

God had gotten his message across to Peter regarding the new dispensation that began among only Jewish believers initially on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem in June of 32 A.D. that there would be no racial distinctions in the church age. Those of Gentile origin and those of Jewish racial descent would all be under the federal headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Any biological or racial Jew who believes in Christ as his Savior during the church age, is considered by God to be "church" or "body of Christ" since according to 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:26-28, there are no racial distinctions in the church age. After the conclusion of the church age, any Jew racially or biologically that accepts Christ as his Savior during the Tribulation dispensation (aka "Daniel's 70th week) that follows the church age, becomes a member of "regenerate" or "born-again" Israel. In the same way Gentiles who believe in Christ after the church age. They become "regenerate" or "born-again" Gentiles.

Now, Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles, for Jesus clearly commissioned him to do so as recorded in Acts 9:15. Paul had already declared the Gentiles were not excluded writing (cf. Rom. 1:16).

In Galatians Paul taught that the Gentiles were not excluded from receiving the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us -- for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE" 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (NASB95)

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

The Baptism of the Spirit Unites Jewish and Gentile Believers in One Body

Ephesians 2:11 begins a section of the epistle which comes to an end in Ephesians 2:22. This section teaches that Gentile church age believers are united with Jewish church age believers through their union and identification with Jesus Christ, which took place at their justification through the baptism of the Spirit. This section is broken out into three parts. The first appears in Ephesians 2:11-12 and describes the Gentile church age believer's pre-justification unregenerate state in relation to the Jews (2:11-12). The second occurs in Ephesians 2:13-18 and describes the Gentile church age believer's post-justification regenerate state. It also teaches that Jesus Christ reconciled the Jew and Gentile races through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross. The third and final part occurs in Ephesians 2:19-22 and describes the new status of these Gentile Christians in that they along with Jewish Christians form the new humanity with Jesus Christ and the teaching of His apostles as the foundation of this new humanity.

The contents of Ephesians 2:11-13 present a strong inference from the contents of Ephesians 2:1-10, which speaks of the church age believer's union and identification with Christ, which was the product of God's grace policy which flows from the function of His attribute of love. In Ephesians 2:1-6, the apostle Paul employs a concessive clause. Ephesians 2:1-3 is the protasis of this concessive clause whereas Ephesians 2:4-6 is the apodosis. In Ephesians 2:1-3, Paul describes the unregenerate state of the recipients of this epistle whereas in Ephesians 2:4-6, he describes their present regenerate state.

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of remembering that formerly each of you who belong to the Gentile race with respect to the human body, specifically, those who receive the designation "uncircumcision" by the those who receive the designation "circumcision" with respect to the human body performed by human hands, 12 each one of you used to be characterized as without a relationship with Christ. Each one of you used to be alienated from the nation of Israel's citizenship. Specifically, each of you used to be strangers to the most important promise, which is the product of the covenants. Each of you used to not possess a confident expectation of blessing. Consequently, each one of you used to be without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system. 13 However, because of your faith in and your union and identification

with Christ Jesus each and every one of you as a corporate unit who formerly were far away have now been brought near by means of the blood belonging to this same Christ. 14 For He Himself personifies our peace. Namely, by causing both groups to be one. Specifically, by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two and the two with God). 15 In other words, by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws in order that He might cause the two to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Thus, He caused peace to be established (between the two and the two with God). 16 In other words, in order that He would reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross. Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. 17 Correspondingly, He as a result came proclaiming peace for the benefit of each and every one of you, namely, those who were far off likewise peace to those were near. 18 Consequently, through the personal intermediate agency of Himself each and every one of us as a corporate unit, namely, both groups are experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father. 19 Indeed therefore, each and every one of you as corporate unit are no longer foreigners (to the covenants of promise), that is, foreign citizens. But rather each and every one of you as a corporate unit are fellow citizens with the saints, that is, members of God's household 20 because each and every one of you as a corporate unit have been built upon the foundation, which is the communication of the gospel to each one of you by the apostles as well as prophets. Simultaneously, He Himself, namely, Christ Jesus is the cornerstone. 21 On the basis of its being continually fitted inextricably together by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Him, the whole building is growing into a holy temple by appropriating by faith your union and identification with the Lord. 22 In other words, by appropriating by faith your union and identification with Him, all of you without exception are being built together into God's dwelling place by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 2:1, Paul describes the recipients of this epistle as spiritually dead ones because of their transgressions, in other words, because of their sins. Then in verse 2, he describes them prior to their justification through faith in Jesus Christ as living their lives by means of these sins and transgressions in agreement with the standard of the unregenerate people of this age, and which standard is the production of the cosmic world system. He then elaborates on the cosmic world system by

asserting that prior to their justification, the recipients of this letter lived their lives in agreement with the standard of the sovereign ruler, who is of course Satan or the devil. Paul further describes Satan as the sovereign governmental authority ruling over the evil spirits residing in the earth's atmosphere. He then describes the devil as the spirit who is presently working in the lives of those members of the human race who are characterized by disobedience, which is a reference to unregenerate humanity. Then, in Ephesians 2:3, Paul describes both the unregenerate state of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle and himself as selfishly conducting their lives by means of those lusts, which are produced by their flesh, which is a reference to the indwelling Adamic sin nature. He then elaborates further on their unregenerate state as indulging those inclinations which are produced by their flesh, in other words, those impulses, which are the product of their flesh, i.e., their old Adamic indwelling sin nature. Consequently, each of them caused themselves to be children who are objects of God's wrath because of their natural condition from physical birth, which is a reference to the imputation of Adam's sin in the garden at the moment of physical birth. Paul then completes this description of their unregenerate condition as corresponding to the rest of unregenerate humanity who like them caused themselves to be children who are objects of God's wrath because of their natural condition from physical birth.

Then, in Ephesians 2:4-6, the apostle Paul describes the regenerate state of these Gentile Christians, which was the direct result of the Father exercising His love on behalf of them even though they were spiritually dead and enslaved to the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system. In Ephesians 2:4-5, he asserts that because God is rich with regards to mercy, and specifically because of the exercise of His great love with which He loved the church age believer, even though they were spiritually dead ones because of their transgressions, He caused each of them to be made alive together with the one and only Christ. He then asserts that each of them are saved because of grace. In Ephesians 2:6, he defines what he means that the Father caused them to be made alive together with the one and only Christ. He defines it as causing them to be raised with the one and only Christ. Correspondingly, he also defines it as causing them to be seated in the heavenlies because of their faith in Christ at justification and correspondingly, because of their union and identification with Christ.

Therefore, this concessive clause in Ephesians 2:1-6 asserts that the Father made the recipients of this epistle alive together with His one and only Son, Jesus Christ even though they were spiritually dead and enslaved to the indwelling Adamic sin nature and Satan's cosmic world system. The Father made them alive together with His Son by identifying them with His Son in His resurrection and session at His right hand because of their faith in His Son at justification and their union and identification with His Son.

In Ephesians 2:7, Paul presents the purpose of identifying them with Christ, namely, the Father did this so that He could display for His own glory during the ages, which are certain to come, the incomparable wealth, which is the product of His grace because of kindness for the benefit of each and every church age believer because of their faith in and union and identification with His Son, Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 2:8, Paul asserts that the recipients of this epistle are saved because of grace by means of faith! In other words, their salvation never originated from any one of them as a source but rather it originated as the gift from God. In Ephesians 2:9, the apostle Paul asserts that their salvation never originated from meritorious actions as a source so that they can never for their own glory enter into the state of boasting. Lastly, in Ephesians 2:10, he asserts that the church age believer is the Father's creative workmanship. He then presents the reason why this is the case by asserting that the church age believer has been created by means of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and correspondingly because of their union and identification with Him. The purpose of which he asserts is that the church age believer would produce actions, which are divine good, which God prepared in advance in eternity past so that the church age believer would conduct their life by means of them.

Now, Ephesians 2:11 and 12 are both *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clauses whose thought is completed by the contents of Ephesians 2:13. Also, like Ephesians 2:1-3, Paul in Ephesians 2:11-12 describes the unregenerate state of the recipients of this letter. However, unlike Ephesians 2:1-3, here in Ephesians 2:11-13, he describes them as Gentile Christians. Therefore, he is describing the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians in Ephesians 2:11-12. In fact, he is also comparing their unregenerate state in relation to the covenant people of God, namely the Jewish people. Thus, he is comparing the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians in relation to the Jewish people in order to accentuate or emphasize what the Father has accomplished for them through their faith in His Son at justification and their union and identification with His Son. What the Father accomplished for them at their justification through the baptism of the Spirit was in accordance with His grace policy, which flowed from the exercise of the Father's attribute of love.

In Ephesians 2:11, the apostle describes the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians as being uncircumcised and then in Ephesians 2:12, he describes them as being without the Messiah, i.e., the Christ and alienated form the citizenship of Israel and were strangers to the covenants of promise. Consequently, he describes them as possessing no confident expectation of blessing from God because they do not possess a covenant relationship with Him like the Jews possessed with Him. Then, like Ephesians 2:4-6, Paul in Ephesians 2:13 describes the regenerate state of these Gentile Christians by asserting that they were brought near to God and His covenant

people Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and their union and identification with Christ.

So therefore, the contents of Ephesians 2:11-13 present a strong inference from the contents of Ephesians 2:1-10. What is being inferred is that these Gentile Christians must continue to make it their habit of remembering that they were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel because of their faith in His Son Jesus Christ at their justification and resultant union and identification with Him when they possessed absolutely no relationship with either God or His covenant people. In fact, the contents of Ephesians 2:14-22 teaches that the Father created a new humanity, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles who He declared justified through faith in His Son, who is the head of this new humanity. Consequently, the Father identified both groups with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand through the baptism of the Spirit. Together, this passage asserts that they form the temple of God.

Therefore, Ephesians 2:11 enables Paul to transition from his statements in Ephesians 2:1-10 to his statements in Ephesians 2:11-22.

Now, Ephesians 2:11 begins with the command *mnēmoneuete hoti pote hymeis ta ethnē en sarki* (μνημονεύετε ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of remembering that formerly each and every one of you as a corporate unit who belong to the Gentile race with respect to the human body**." (Author's translation)

A comparison of the contents of Ephesians 2:12-13 with this command and the rest of the contents of Ephesians 2:11 indicates that Paul is commanding these Gentile Christians who were called "uncircumcision" by the Jews and possessed absolutely no relationship with God or His covenant people Israel were to remember that they were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of Christ. This took place because of their faith in Christ at justification and their union and identification with Christ despite the fact that they possessed absolutely no relationship whatsoever with God or His covenant people, Israel.

In Ephesians 2:11, the second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *mnēmoneuō* (μνημονεύω), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must make it your habit of remembering**" pertains to recalling information repeatedly from memory but without necessarily implying that the person has actually been forgotten. Therefore, this verb indicates that Paul is requesting that the recipients of this epistle, who he identifies as Gentile Christians, to remember or recall that they were brought near to God and His covenant people, Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ. The implication is that were taught in the past by Paul and their pastors that that they were brought near to God and His covenant people, Israel

by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ.

Now, in Ephesians 2:11, the referent of the second person plural form of this verb *mnēmoneuō* (μνημονεύω), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must make it your habit of remembering**" is Gentile Christians. This is indicated by the *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object *hoti pote hymeis ta ethnē en sarki* (ὅτι ποτὲ ὑμεῖς τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί), "**that formerly each and every one of you as a corporate who belong to the Gentile race of people with respect to the human body**" (Author's translation), which modifies it. The second person plural form of this verb means "each and every one of you" because it is not only referring to these Gentile Christians as a corporate unit but it is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The latter emphasizes that "each and every one of" these Gentile Christians must remember that they were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ.

The present imperative conjugation of this verb *mnēmoneuō* (μνημονεύω) is the only verb in the imperative conjugation in the first three chapters of Ephesians. Here in Ephesians 2:11 the present imperative conjugation is "not" an ingressive-progressive present imperative, which emphasizes both the inception and progress of an action commanded. The implication is that the command was issued but not obeyed or it was never given to the recipients of this command. Therefore, this would express the idea that these Gentile Christians were "to enter into the habit of" remembering that they were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ and must "continue doing so." The implication is that they were issued this command before but were not obeying it or they never received this command in the first place.

This author interprets the present imperative conjugation of this verb *mnēmoneuō* (μνημονεύω) as a customary present imperative whose force is for these Gentile Christians to simply "continue making it their habit of" performing the action of this verb. Therefore, it indicates that these Gentile Christians as the subject were "to continue making it their habit of" remembering that they were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ.

This interpretation of the present imperative is supported by the contents of this epistle, which do not give any indication whatsoever that these Gentile Christians were not already doing this. Nor is it implied within the contents of this letter that they were not already doing this. The meaning of the verb itself implies that they were taught in the past that they were brought near to God and His covenant people

by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ.

There are at least five reasons why Paul issues this command to the recipients of this letter to remember that they were brought near to God and His covenant people by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him despite the fact that they never possess a covenant relationship with Him or His covenant people. First, it is designed to promote unity among the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities. In other words, the purpose of this command was to maintain unity experientially between these two communities. The implication is that they would not enter into divisions so as to sever their relationship with each other. This unity would be maintained experientially when these Gentile Christians practice the love of God when interacting with members of the Jewish Christian community. This is the main purpose for the contents of this entire epistle. This is indicated by the fact that Paul opens the practical application of his teaching in the first three chapters by commanding the recipients of the letter to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:3. This would be accomplished by living in a manner worthy of their calling and by practicing humility, gentleness, patience and tolerance of one another through the practice of the command to love one another, which Paul instructs them to do in Ephesians 4:1-2.

Thus, motivation to practice the command to love another is the second reason for this command in Ephesians 2:11. They are obligated to do so because God the Father exercised His love on behalf of them when they were spiritually dead and possessing absolutely no relationship with Him or His covenant people, Israel.

The third reason for this command in Ephesians 2:11 is to keep the Gentile Christians humble by preventing them from being arrogant in relation to their Jewish brothers and sisters in Christ. If God treated them according to His grace policy, which manifests His attribute of love when they were spiritually dead and possessing absolutely no relationship with Him and His covenant people Israel, they should remain humble and not be arrogant towards those in the Jewish Christian community who do possess a covenant relationship with God. Again, they are obligated to treat their brothers and sisters in Christ in the Jewish community according to this same grace and love because God exercised His grace and love toward them when they were not His covenant people and possessed absolutely no relationship with Him whatsoever.

The fourth reason why Paul issues this command in Ephesians 2:11 is to promote thankfulness to God on the part of these Gentile Christians. They should always express their gratitude to the Father for the great deliverance He provided them through faith in His Son Jesus Christ and their union and identification with Him. Thus, they should live their lives in a manner which reflects this new relationship

that they have with God the Father through their union and identification with His Son, Jesus Christ, which they received through the baptism of the Spirit the moment the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son.

The fifth and final reason that Paul issues this command in Ephesians 2:11 is so that these Gentile Christians will ultimately praise the Father for His glorious grace policy which He exercised towards them when they were spiritually dead and possessed absolutely no relationship with Him and His covenant people Israel. If you recall, Paul in Ephesians 1:3-6 asserts that the Father is worthy of praise because He elected both Gentile and Jewish Christians by predestinating them to adoption as sons because of their faith in His Son Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with Him. Now, here in Ephesians 2:11-13, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to praise the Father for His glorious grace policy which He manifested when He declared them justified through faith in His Son and simultaneously made them alive together with His Son, which echoes Ephesians 2:5. If you recall, in Ephesians 2:6, Paul defines being made alive together with His Son as being identified with Him in His resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

Now, the command in Ephesians 2:11 is modified by a *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause, which describes the recipients of this epistle as receiving the designation "uncircumcision" with respect to the human body by those who receive the designation "circumcision" with respect to the human body, which is performed by human beings. This direct object clause asserts that the recipients of this epistle who were Gentile Christians who are called "uncircumcision" by those who are called "circumcision" were brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Christ. Therefore, this would indicate this action on the part of God of bringing these Gentiles were brought near to Himself and His covenant people by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ through their faith in His Son was to receive the action of being remembered by these Gentile Christians.

Ephesians 2:12 is also a *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause, which also describes the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians and describes them as being without the Messiah, i.e., the Christ and alienated form the citizenship of Israel and were strangers to the covenants of promise. Consequently, he describes them as possessing no confident expectation of blessing from God because they do not possess a covenant relationship with Him like the Jews possessed with Him. Therefore, this would indicate this action on the part of God of bringing these Gentiles were brought near to Himself and His covenant people by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ because of their faith in His Son at justification despite the fact that they possessed absolutely no relationship whatsoever with God or His covenant people was to receive the action of being remembered by these Gentile Christians.

Ephesians 2:13 continues the *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause in Ephesians 2:12 by presenting a contrast with the contents of Ephesians 2:12. In Ephesians 2:13, Paul describes these Gentile Christians as having been brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ because of their faith in Christ at justification and their union and identification with Christ.

Therefore, these two *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clauses in Ephesians 2:11-13 identify what these Gentile Christians must continue to make it their habit of remembering. Specifically, they must continue to make it their habit of remembering that despite the fact that they had absolutely no relationship with God and His covenant people Israel, God the Father brought them near to Himself and His covenant people Israel by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ. He did this because of their faith in His Son Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him.

The indefinite temporal particle *pote* (ποτέ), "**formerly**" is used of an indefinite time in the past experience of these Gentile Christians who lived in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia. This particle speaks of a period of time prior to these Christians being declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, it refers to their pre-conversion portion of their lives as human beings on planet earth. In other words, it refers to their unregenerate state. The two *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clauses in Ephesians 2:11 and 12 describe this state as possessing absolutely no relationship with God or His covenant people Israel.

The referent of the nominative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit**" is of course the recipients of this epistle who Paul describes here in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians. The word means "each and every one of you as a corporate unit" since the word not only refers to these Gentile Christians living in the various Christian communities throughout the Roman province of Asia as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The articular nominative neuter plural form of the noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος), "**those who are Gentiles**" pertains to those members of the human race who are not allied with and trusting in the God of Israel who is Jesus Christ and is used in a collective sense for these people. Thus, this word is used of those members of the human race who are not of Jewish racial descent and thus not members of the covenant people of God, Israel. In other words, they are not descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (i.e., Israel) who are the progenitors of the nation of Israel. The articular construction of the word is "generic" which distinguishes the Gentile race from the Jewish race.

The noun *sarx* (σάρξ), "**the flesh**" pertains to human nature understood by the physical body and is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which is a marker of specificity. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en sarki* (ἐν σαρκί) means "with

respect to the human body" and expresses the idea that the recipients of this epistle are Gentiles "with the respect to their human body" because they did not practice the rite of circumcision.

This *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause in Ephesians 2:11 is then modified by the participial clause *hoi legomenoi akrobystia hypo tēs legomenēs peritomēs en sarki cheiropoiētou* (οἱ λεγόμενοι ἀκροβυστία ὑπὸ τῆς λεγομένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου), "**Specifically, those who receive the designation 'uncircumcision' by those who receive the designation 'circumcision' with respect to the flesh performed on the body by human hands**" (Author's translation). This participial clause serves to further describe these Gentiles Christians as those who called the "uncircumcision" by the Jews.

The articular nominative masculine plural present passive participle conjugation of the verb *legō* (λέγω), which pertains to persons who identified by a particular designation or name that reflects a bodily characteristic. This bodily characteristic is identified by the articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *akrobustia* (ἀκροβυστία), "**the uncircumcision**," which pertains to the state of being uncircumcised which speaks of the state of not having the foreskin of the penis cut off. Here it is obviously used in a literal sense. This word was "a derogatory term emphasizing that non-Jewish people are outsiders in relation to God's covenant with Israel."[9]

The referent of the masculine plural form of this verb is the recipients of this epistle, who Paul identifies as Gentile Christians because in context Paul is asserting that these individuals were described by the Jewish people with the derogatory term "uncircumcision."

The passive voice of this verb *legō* (λέγω) means that the recipients of this epistle who are identified as Gentile Christians receive the action being designated "uncircumcision" by an expressed agency, which is the "circumcision," which is a reference of course to the Jewish people.

The uncircumcision of the Gentiles was evidence that they did not possess a covenant relationship with God unlike the Jews who did possess a covenant relationship with God and circumcision was evidence of that relationship.

The verb *legō* (λέγω) appears once again in Ephesians 2:11. However, this time we have the articular genitive feminine singular present passive participle conjugation of the word. As was the case when it was employed by Paul the first time in this verse, the word pertains to a person or persons being identified by a particular designation or name that reflects a bodily characteristic. However, this time the bodily characteristic is identified by the genitive feminine singular form of the noun *peritomē* (περιτομή), "**circumcision**," which is used in a literal sense of

[9] Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Eph 2:11). Lexham Press.

cutting off the foreskin of the male genital organ as a visible mark which distinguishes them from the rest of the human race as the covenant people of God.

The referent of the masculine plural form of this verb are the Jewish people because the term "circumcision" was a term the Gentiles gave to the Jews because they performed the rite of circumcision on their baby boys at eight days old as an identification mark that they were His covenant people through faith in Him.

Once again, we have the prepositional phrase *en sarki* (ἐν σαρκὶ). As was the case the first time the word appeared in this verse, the noun *sarx* (σάρξ) pertains to the human body with emphasis upon its substance or what it is composed of. In other words, it refers to the human nature understood by the physical body. It is used again as the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions again as a marker of specificity. Therefore, it is marking this noun *sarx* (σάρξ) as the specific area in which the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are circumcised, namely with respect to their physical bodies. This is indicated by the genitive adjective *cheiropoiētou* (χειροποιήτου), "**performed by human hands**." (Author's translation) Therefore, when this prepositional phrase *en sarki* (ἐν σαρκί) appears a second time in the verse it expresses the idea that those who call the Gentiles "uncircumcision" are the circumcision with the respect to the human body because they do practice the rite of circumcision.

The passive voice of the verb *legō* (λέγω) indicates that the Jews receive the action of being designated "circumcision" from the Gentiles.

The participle conjugation of this verb is in the genitive case when it is used here a second time because it functions as the object of the preposition *hupo* (ὑπό), which functions as a marker of agency. Therefore, this word indicates that the Jews are the agency which designates Gentiles as "the uncircumcised."

Now, in Ephesians 2:11, the articular genitive feminine singular form of the adjective *cheiropoiētos* (χειροποίητος) denotes something created by finite and temporal humanity as opposed to the infinite and eternal God. In other words, it speaks of something that is man-made rather than created by God. This word functions as a genitive of production, which is expressing the idea that this circumcision was "produced by" or "performed by" human hands or human beings.

Paul employs the adjective *cheiropoiētos* (χειροποίητος) to emphasize that the rite of circumcision, which the Jews were commanded by God to practice, stands in stark contrast to the circumcision produced by God Himself, which he mentions in Colossians 2:11-13, Philippians 3:3 and Romans 2:29. This is indicated by the fact that the former is the product of human beings. The latter corresponds to the circumcision of the heart which God spoke about to the Jews in the Old Testament (cf. Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4).

The circumcision Paul mentions in Colossians 2:11-13 is accomplished through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification and is identification with

Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In Philippians 3:2-3, Paul makes the contrast between the circumcision performed by human hands that which is performed by the Holy Spirit when a sinner is declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. In Romans 2:29, Paul asserts that the circumcision of the sinner's heart by the Holy Spirit is vastly superior to the circumcision which is merely performed by human beings. This circumcision performed by the Holy Spirit on the justified sinner is not only superior to the circumcision which the Jews practiced in obedience to God's command but also can be performed on both Jew and Gentiles and both male and female. The circumcision performed by human hands is vastly inferior to the circumcision by the Holy Spirit at the sinner's justification.

Now, Ephesians 2:12 is a *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause, which serves as the direct object of the second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *mnēmoneuō* (μνημονεύω), which appears in Ephesians 2:11. It resumes the *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause in Ephesians 2:11.

This verse contains five more descriptions of these Gentile Christians prior to their justification. The first asserts that they were characterized as being without a relationship with Jesus Christ. The second asserts that they were characterized as being alienated from the citizenship of Israel. The third asserts that they were characterized as being strangers to the covenants, which all produced the promise of a Savior. The fourth asserts that they were characterized as not possessing a confident expectation of blessing. The fifth and final description asserts that they were characterized as being without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world of Satan.

A comparison of the contents of Ephesians 2:13 and this *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause in Ephesians 2:12 indicates that these Gentile Christians who were at one time prior to their justification without a relationship with Jesus Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, possessing no confident expectation of blessing and were without a relationship with God in the world were brought near to God and His covenant people, Israel by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:12 also presents the reason why they were brought near to God and His covenant, namely because of their faith in Christ at justification and union and identification with Him.

Therefore, this *hoti* (ὅτι) direct object clause in Ephesians 2:12 would indicate this action on the part of God when they were without a relationship with Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, not possessing a confident expectation of blessing and were without a relationship with God in the world was to receive the action of being remembered by these Gentile Christians.

Now, each of these five descriptions of these Gentile Christians prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12 are alluding to the privileges God bestowed upon the nation of Israel. In Romans 3:2 and 9:4-5, Paul enumerates these privileges.

So therefore, these eight privileges in Romans 9:4-5 that God graciously bestowed on the nation of Israel implies that the Gentiles were cut off each of them. They were not adopted by God, nor did they receive the presence of the Shekinah Glory, nor were they give the Abraham, Palestinian, Davidic, New and Mosaic covenants. They were not given the Law, nor the temple service or the unconditional promises that God made to Israel. They did not descend from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Lastly, the Messiah did not descend from any Gentile nation on earth. Thus, when Paul describes the Gentiles in Ephesians 2:12, he is alluding to each of these eight privileges directly or indirectly. Thus, the five descriptions of the Gentiles in Ephesians 2:12 are from the Gentile perspective, five disadvantages.

Now, in Ephesians 2:12, the first description of the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians is that they used to be characterized as being without a relationship and fellowship with Christ. Therefore, if we compare the command to remember in Ephesians 2:11 with this first description of these Christian Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they used to be characterized as being without a relationship and fellowship with Christ.

The expression *tō kairō ekeinō* (τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ), "**at that time**" refers to the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians. During this period of their lives they were uncircumcised, without the Messiah, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, possessing absolutely no confident expectation of blessing and being without God in the world. This noun functions as a dative of time, which indicates that it is marking their period of their lives when they were unregenerate when they possessed these characteristics.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" contains the figure of metonymy which means that the one and only Christ is put for a relationship and fellowship with Him. This word is the object of the improper preposition *choris* (χωρίς), which functions here as a marker of separation. Therefore, this word marks Jesus Christ as the person whom these Gentile Christians were separated from during their unregenerate state or did not possess a relationship with. Therefore, this prepositional phrase expresses the idea that these Gentile Christians used to exist in the state prior to their justification as being "without Christ" and specifically, "without a relationship or fellowship with Christ."

Now, in Ephesians 2:12, the apostle Paul employs the figure of ellipsis four times. He uses it in each of the next four descriptions of these Gentile Christians prior to their justification.

In each instance, he is deliberately omitting the second person plural imperfect active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί), though it is implied from the first description.

As was the case when it appeared earlier in the first description, the word means "to possess certain characteristics" in each of the next four descriptions.

In each instance of the next four descriptions, the referent of the second person plural form of this verb is the recipients of this epistle whom Paul describes in Ephesians 2:11 as uncircumcised Gentiles. The second person plural form of this not only refers to these Gentile Christians as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

In each instance of the next four descriptions where the word is implied, the characteristics which these Gentile Christians possessed are presented in Ephesians 2:11 and 12. The former describes them as being uncircumcised. On the other hand, the latter describes them as being without the Messiah, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise, possessing absolutely no confident expectation of blessing and being without God in the world.

Now, the second description of these Gentile Christians prior to their justification, which Paul presents in Ephesians 2:12 is that they were characterized as being alienated from Israel's citizenship. Therefore, if we compare the command to remember in Ephesians 2:11 with this second description of these Christian Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12, Paul wants them to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they used to be characterized as being alienated from the nation of Israel's citizenship.

The verb *apallotrioō* (ἀπαλλοτριόω) means "to be alienated" from someone since the word pertains to being considered foreign to someone and consequently separated from another citizenry. They were alienated from the citizenship of the nation of Israel in these that both groups were estranged from each other. It expresses the idea that there was hostility and unfriendly relations between the two groups prior to their conversion to Christianity. This verb also appears in Ephesians 4:18 where it is used again to describe these Gentile Christians who were the recipients of this epistle and it describes them as being "**alienated from the life of God**." It also appears in Colossians 1:21 to describe the Colossian Christian community when they were unregenerate and which community was Gentile.

The articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *politeia* (πολιτεία), "**citizenship**" pertains to a body of citizens of a particular group of people or nation. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which indicates that this particular body of citizens are "unique" or "one of a kind." This use of the article is indicated by the word's genitive adjunct *tou Israēl* (τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ), "**of Israel**." **(NET)** Thus the entire expression *tēs politeias tou Israēl* (τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ), "**from the citizenship of Israel**" **(NET)** is expressing a monadic notion.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Israēl* (Ἰσραήλ) refers to the nation of Israel who are descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name was changed to "Israel" by God Himself (cf. Gen. 32:28). The articular construction of this word is also monadic which means that the nation of Israel is "unique" or "one of a kind" since it is the only nation, which God elected to represent Him to the rest of the citizens of the world. It is also unique because it is the only nation of the world in which God entered into a covenant relationship with. Therefore, the second description of the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians was that they were alienated from Israel's citizenship in the sense that they did not belong to their citizenry. It describes them as being estranged from the citizenship of Israel and expresses the idea that there was hostility and unfriendly relations between them and this citizens of Israel prior to their conversion to Christianity.

The third description of the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians, which Paul presents here in Ephesians 2:12 defines specifically the second description of them. It describes them as being characterized as strangers to the most important promise, which was the product of all the covenants God established with Israel. It explains why these Gentile Christians were alienated from the citizenship of Israel. Thus, this description indicates that these Gentile Christians prior to their justification were characterized as being alienated from the citizenship of Israel because they were strangers to the covenants of promise. They were strangers to the unconditional covenants that God established with the nation of Israel, which all promised a Savior to deliver them from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to sin and Satan, personal sins and spiritual and physical death.

Therefore, if we compare the command to remember in Ephesians 2:11 with this third description of these Christian Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they used to be characterized as being strangers to the most important promise, which is the product of the covenants.

The noun *diathēkē* (διαθήκη), "**the covenants**" refers to the five covenants God established with the citizenship of Israel. God never established with any Gentile nations. Five of these covenants that God established with the nation of Israel were unconditional and one conditional.

The articular construction of this word is monadic which means that these covenants which God established with the nation of Israel are "unique" or "one of a kind" since it is the only nation, which God entered into a covenant relationship with. This use of the article is indicated by the word's genitive adjunct *tēs epangelias* (τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), "**of promise**." **(NET)** Thus the entire expression *xenoi tōn diathēkōn tēs epangelias* (ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), "**strangers to the covenants of promise**" **(NET)** is expressing a monadic notion.

The noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία), "**the most important promise**" refers to God entering into a promise with the nation of Israel to provide them a Savior who will deliver them from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to sin and Satan, personal sins and spiritual and physical death. This promise appears of a Savior appears in the Mosaic, Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants.

The articular construction of this word is "par excellence" which is used to point out a substantive that is the extreme of a certain category. Here it indicates that this promise is the most important of all the covenant promises God communicated to Israel and which promise is that of a Savior. It is the most important promise for unregenerate Jew because they are under God's wrath and they can never benefit from the other covenant promises without first appropriating by faith the promise of a Savior by exercising faith in Jesus, the Christ.

The noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία) functions as a genitive of product, which is expressing the idea that this promise of the Messiah to deliver Israel is "the product" of these five covenants, which God established with the nation of Israel. In other words, this promise of a Savior is "the product" of the contents of these covenants.

The fourth description of the unregenerate state of the recipients of this epistle prior to their conversion to Christianity, which Paul presents here in Ephesians 2:12 describes them as being characterized as not possessing a confident expectation of blessing. Therefore, if we compare the command to remember in Ephesians 2:11 with this fourth description of these Christian Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they used to be characterized as not possessing a confident expectation of blessing.

The noun *elpis* (ἐλπίς), "**confident expectation of blessing**" refers to the church age believer receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church and rewards for faithful service from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat. They appropriated this confident expectation of blessing the moment the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and were simultaneously identified with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

The fifth and final description of the unregenerate state of these Gentile Christians, which Paul presents here in Ephesians 2:12 presents the result of the fourth description of them. It indicates that they were characterized as being without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system of Satan as a result of not possessing a confident expectation of blessing. They entered into a relationship with God and simultaneously possessing a confident expectation of blessing when the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, if we compare the command to remember in Ephesians 2:11 with this fifth and final description of these Christian Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity in Ephesians 2:12, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they used to be characterized being without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system.

This final description of unregenerate Gentiles does not mean that they were atheists but rather that they did not possess a relationship with the God of Israel, who is the true God. The Gentiles in Paul's day worshipped the Graeco-Roman pantheon of gods (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5, 6; Gal. 4:8; 1 Thess. 4:5). Thus, they were far from being atheists.

There is an interpretation issue with regards to the articular dative masculine singular form of the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος), which appears in this final description since some expositors believe it pertains to planet earth as the habitation of human beings. On other hand, others believe that the word retains the same referent here in Ephesians 2:12 as it did in Ephesians 2:2, namely, the cosmic world system.

In the New Testament, *kosmos* has three main uses: (1) The orderly arrangement of the heavens or the earth and all things in their complex order and composition as created by God, created in perfect order and subject to the laws God established to govern its operation.(Matt. 13:35; John 21:25; Acts 17:24). (2) The cosmos (Greek, kosmos) may also refer to the world in its arrangement of the inhabitants of the earth in tribes and nations or peoples (Acts 17:26; John 3:16; 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 John 2:2; 2 Pet. 2:5). (3) *Kosmos* is used of a vast system and arrangement of human affairs, earthly goods, godless governments, conflicts, riches, pleasures, culture, education, world religions, the cults and the occult dominated and negatively affected by Satan who is god of this satanic cosmos.

This author believes that the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) pertains to the cosmic world system that is ruled Satan because in both Ephesians 2:2 and 12, it appears in a description of the recipients of this epistle prior to their conversion to Christianity and in Ephesians 2:2, the referent of the word is the cosmic world system of Satan. The devil established his cosmic world system on the earth after the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. At that time, the devil became the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) and the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The entire world is under his authority (Luke 4:6; 1 John 5:19) and he deceives the entire world (Rev. 12:9). Therefore, when the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) appears in both Ephesians 2:2 and 12, it indicates that these Gentile Christians were living under the authority and deception of Satan's cosmic world system prior to their justification.

So therefore, the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος), "**the cosmic world system**" pertains to a vast system and arrangement of human affairs, earthly goods, godless governments, conflicts, riches, pleasures, culture, education, world religions, the cults and the occult dominated and negatively affected by Satan who is god of this

satanic cosmos. This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which indicates that the sphere in which these Gentile Christians used to exist in the state of not possessing a relationship with God prior to their justification. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en tō kosmō* (ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ) indicates that these Gentiles prior to their conversion to Christianity used to exist in the state of not possessing a relationship with God "in the sphere of the cosmic world system" that is ruled by the devil himself.

This system is promoted by Satan, conformed to his ideals, aims, methods, and character, and stands perpetually in opposition to God the cause of Christ. This world system is used to seduce men away from God and the person of Christ. It is anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Bible, and very anti-humanity though it often appears as humanitarian as part of Satan's masquerade as an angel of light.

The noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) is not only a system but also an organization. An organization is that which is organized. Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the verb "organize": (1) To form as or into a whole consisting of interdependent or coordinated parts, especially for harmonious or united action (2) To systematize.

If we paraphrase this definition, we could say that the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) refers to the "formation into a whole of interdependent and coordinated parts for harmonious and united action" against God.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines a "system" as "an assemblage or combination of things or parts forming a complex or unitary whole; due method or orderly manner of arrangement or procedure."

If we paraphrase this definition, we could say that the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) refers to the "assemblage of fallen angels forming a complex whole" that is under the authority of Satan.

The cosmic system is not a theocratic or Christocentric society, organization or system since it is designed by Satan to seduce men away from worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan uses temptations to incorporate even believers into his system and organization that is independent of God.

Now, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:13 makes the statement *nyni…en Christō Iēsou hymeis hoi pote ontes makran egenēthēte engys en tō haimati tou Christou* (νυνὶ…ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ὑμεῖς οἵ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**because of your faith in and your union and identification with Christ Jesus each and every one of you as a corporate who formerly were far away have now been brought near by means of the blood belonging to this same Christ**."

Therefore, in Ephesians 2:13, Paul is asserting in this verse that these Gentile Christians who formerly were far away from God and His covenant people, Israel have now been brought near to them both by means of the blood of Christ because

of their faith in Him at justification and their union and identification with Him. This statement is an adversative clause because it presents a contrast with Paul's statements in Ephesians 2:11-12. In the latter, Paul identifies the recipients of this epistle as Gentiles who are called "uncircumcision" by the "circumcision," namely the Jews. He also issued a command that required that they must continue to make it their habit of remembering that they were at one time without a relationship with Christ, alienated from the nation of Israel's citizenship, strangers to the most important promise (of the Messiah), which is the product of all the covenants. They were also to continue to make it their habit of remembering that they did not possess a confident expectation of blessing and were thus without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system ruled by the devil. Therefore, the contrast between these verses is these Gentile Christians not possessing a relationship with God or His covenant people, Israel and that of possessing a relationship with Him and His covenant people. Thus, the contrast is between their unregenerate and regenerate states.

The nominative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit**" since the word not only refers to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The use of this personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you**" here in Ephesians 2:13 is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the subject. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

Here it is used for emphasis as well as contrast. First, it is contrasting the regenerate state of these Gentile Christians described here in Ephesians 2:13 and their unregenerate state described in the contents of Ephesians 2:11-12. Secondly, the presence of this pronoun emphasizes the present regenerate state of these Gentile Christians.

"**Formerly**" is the indefinite temporal particle temporal particle *pote* (ποτέ) which speaks of a period of time prior to these Christians being declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Thus, it refers to their pre-conversion portion of their lives as human beings on planet earth, or in other words, it refers to their unregenerate portion of their lives.

The articular nominative masculine plural present active participle conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) means "to belong to a particular class of people." This class of people are identified by the expression *makran egenēthēte engys en tō haimati tou Christou* (μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**have been brought**

near by means of the blood belonging to this same Christ." (Author's translation) This word is identifying the subject or making explicit the identity of the subject.

The adverb of separation *makran* (μακράν), "**far away**" is used in a figurative sense of the relationship that did not exist between these Gentile Christians and God and His covenant people.

"**Now**" is the adverb of time *nuni* (νυνί) and refers to the regenerate of these Gentile Christians in Roman province of Asia who are the recipients of this epistle.

The adverb *engys* (ἐγγύς), "**near**" is also used in a figurative sense of the close, intimate relationship that now existed between these Gentile Christians and God and His covenant people, Israel.

The second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι), which pertains to experiencing a change of condition or relationship and thus indicating entry into a new condition or relationship.

In Ephesians 2:13, the nominative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which refers to these Gentile Christians is the nominative subject of this verb. Therefore, this indicates that they entered into a relationship with God and His covenant people because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with Him.

The aorist tense of this verb is a consummative aorist, which emphasizes the cessation of the act of these Gentile Christians being entered into a relationship with God and His covenant people and in particular regenerate Jews because of being justified through faith in Jesus Christ and their union and identification with Him. Therefore, it emphasizes the cessation of the act of these Gentile Christians being entered into a relationship with God and His covenant people and in particular regenerate Jews the moment they were declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ.

The passive voice of the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) indicates that these Gentile Christians received the action of being brought near to God and His covenant people Israel because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with Him. In other words, the passive voice of this verb indicates that these Gentile Christians received the action of being entered into a close, intimate relationship with God and His covenant people Israel because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with His Son. Therefore, the agency is the Gentile believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him at justification, which was accomplished through the baptism of the Spirit. Thus, this is a "divine-passive," which emphasizes that God the Father working through both His Son and the Spirit were responsible for the Gentile Christians present status of being near to God and His covenant people, Israel.

Paul's statement here in Ephesians 2:13 that the recipients of this epistle who he identifies as Gentile Christians were brought near by the blood of Christ and because of their faith in Him at justification and their union and identification with Him is alluding to Isaiah 57:19.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:7, the noun *haima* (αἷμα), "**the blood**" here in Ephesians 2:13 is used in a figurative sense as part of a representative analogy between the physical death of the animal sacrifices prescribe in the Mosaic Law and the spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ on the cross.

The noun *haima* (αἷμα) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**by**" which is functioning as a marker of means. This would indicate that the blood of Jesus Christ, which is a reference to His spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, was "the means by which" the Father entered these Gentile Christians into a close, intimate relationship with Himself and His covenant people, Israel.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" contains the figure of metonymy which means that the one and only Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in Him at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that Gentile Christians were entered into a relationship with God the Father and with His covenant people Israel by being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, through the baptism of the Spirit, they were placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. Through the baptism of the Spirit, they were united with Jewish Christians. Consequently, they benefit from the four unconditional covenants that God established with His covenant people, namely the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. They received the gift of the Spirit and the forgiveness of sins because of benefiting from the New covenant, which promises these two benefits.

The noun *Christos* (Χριστός) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**because of**," which functions here as a marker of cause or reason. Therefore, this indicates that the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification is "the reason why" Gentile Christians were brought near to the Father and His covenant people Israel. In other words, it presents "the reason why" Gentile Christians were entered into a relationship with the Father and His covenant people Israel and specifically, regenerate Jews.

The prepositional phrase *en Christō Iēsou* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), "**because of your faith in and your union and identification with Christ Jesus**" is fronted, which means that Paul places it at the beginning of the assertion here in Ephesians 2:13 for emphasis. Specifically, he wants to emphasize with these Gentile Christians something that he has done throughout this epistle up to this point, namely that their

present relationship with God and regenerate Jews who are the remnant of Israel, was not attain by their own meritorious actions, but by the grace of God. The Father's grace policy, which provided them a Savior in the person of His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, is the reason why they were in a relationship with the triune God and regenerate Jews. It was His grace policy, which sent His Son to the cross to suffer His wrath on the cross, which He experienced through His spiritual and physical deaths on the cross as their substitute. Consequently, these Gentile Christians were redeemed out of the slave market of sin in which they were born physically alive and yet spiritually dead according to the Father's grace policy. They were reconciled to a holy God. The Son propitiated the Father's holiness which demanded that sin and sinners be judged. All of this was according to the Father's grace policy, which flows from the exercise of the Father's attribute of love. These Gentile Christians appropriated this great deliverance or salvation on behalf of the entire human race, which the Father provided for them through His Son when they exercised faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Consequently, the Father imputed or credited His Son's righteousness to them and declared them justified (Rom. 3:19-30). In other words, the Father declared them justified based upon the merits of His Son, Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. Simultaneously, at the moment of their justification, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Christ and identified them with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand (Rom. 6; Col. 3:1-4). They are now members of the body of Christ and the future bride of Christ (Eph. 5:23-33) and will reign with Christ in His millennial kingdom. All of this was accomplished because of the Father's grace policy, which flows from the exercise of the attribute of His love. This grace policy and the exercise of the Father's attribute of love was manifested through the work of the Son, namely, His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. It was also manifested through the work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of their justification.

So therefore, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:13 is introducing the doctrine of reconciliation, which he discusses to the end of the chapter. It is not only a discussion of the reconciliation between these Gentile Christians and a holy God but also it is a discussion of the reconciliation between Jew and Gentile. So therefore, this reconciliation is two-fold. In both instances, they were reconciled to God and the Jewish Christian community because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Jesus Christ. The means by which this two-fold reconciliation was accomplished is "the blood of Christ," which is a representative analogy referring to the substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ on the cross. Therefore, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:13 is introducing the doctrine of peace as well because this reconciliation of Gentiles with Jews and with God is the reason why Gentile Christians have peace with God and Jewish Christians.

Ephesians 2:14 contains three assertions: (1) *Autos estin hē eirēnē hēmōn* (Αὐτὸς ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν), "**He Himself personifies our peace**" (2) *ho poiēsas ta amphotera hen* (ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἓν), "**Namely, by causing both groups to be one**" (3) *kai to mesotoichon tou phragmou lysas, tēn echthran* (καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν), "**Specifically, by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two)**."

Therefore, the reader can see that the first of these assertions is a declarative statement which presents the reason for the assertion in Ephesians 2:13. It states that Jesus Christ Himself personifies the peace which now exists between Paul and his fellow Jewish Christians and the recipients of this letter who were Gentile Christians. The second assertion explains how or the means by which Jesus Christ Himself personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians and states that He did this by causing both groups to be one. The third and final assertion also explains not only the first assertion but also the second. Thus, it explains not only how or by what means Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians but also how or by what means He caused both groups to be one single entity.

The first assertion *Autos gar estin hē eirēnē hēmōn* (Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν), "**He Himself personifies our peace**" presents the reason for the previous assertion in Ephesians 2:13. Paul asserts in this verse that because of their faith in Him at justification and their union and identification with Him, the recipients of the epistle, who he identifies in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians, were formerly far away from God and His covenant people, Israel, but have now been brought near to both of them by means of the blood of Christ. Therefore, a comparison of this assertion in Ephesians 2:13 with the first one in Ephesians 2:14 indicates that these Gentile Christians have been brought near to God and His covenant people, Israel by means of the blood of Christ "because" Jesus Christ Himself personifies their peace.

The nominative third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**He Himself**" emphasizes that the person of Jesus Christ personifies or is the embodiment of the peace that exists between Gentile Christians and God and His covenant people, Israel.

The third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί), "**personifies**" expresses the idea that Jesus Christ Himself "personifies" the peace that exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God. In other words, He Himself is the "embodiment" of this peace or we could say He Himself is this peace incarnate.

The articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη), "**peace**" not only speaks of the peace between Gentile and Jewish Christians but also by way of implication, it pertains to the peace that exists between both groups and

God. This is indicated by the fact that Gentile Christians could never be reconciled to Jewish Christians until both groups are first reconciled to God through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. This is also indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:16, which inserts that Jesus Christ reconcile both groups into one new humanity to God through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus Christ personifies this peace that exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God for four reasons. First, He is "the author" of peace since Ephesians 2:14 asserts that He caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be one group. Secondly, His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which constitute Him suffering the Father's wrath, are "the basis" for this peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians. The Lord's suffering propitiated the Father and thus reconciled the sinful humanity to a holy God. This interpretation is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:13 and 16. The former asserts that Gentile Christians have been brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by means of the blood of Christ, which is a representative analogy that speaks of Christ suffering the wrath of God by suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross. The latter asserts that Jesus Christ reconciled both Jewish and Gentile Christians to God through His cross, which again speaks of Him suffering the wrath of God by suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross. Thirdly, Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God because He is "the medium" of this peace. This is indicated by the fact that Ephesians 2:18 asserts that it is through Him that both Jew and Gentile Christians have access to the Father by the Spirit. Lastly, Ephesians 2:17 asserts that Jesus Christ is "the proclaimer" of this peace to those who were near to God, the Jews and those who were far away from Him, the Gentiles.

The referent of the genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), "**our**" is two-fold: (1) the recipients of this epistle, who Paul identifies as Gentile Christians in Ephesians 2:11 (2) Paul himself, who was of course a Jewish Christian. Paul employs himself to represent the Jewish Christian community. Thus, this peace "belongs to" both the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities. In other words, it is "the possession" of both groups.

The second assertion, which appears in Ephesians 2:14, namely *ho poiēsas ta amphotera hen* (ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφότερα ἕν), "**Namely, by causing both groups to be one**" is clarifying the previous assertion that Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities in relation to God. It is identifying how or by what means Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Gentile and Jewish Christian communities.

The referent of the articular accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *amphoteroi* (ἀμφότεροι), "**both groups**" is the Gentile and Jewish races. This is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:11-13, which asserts that Gentile Christians

have been brought near to God and His covenant people, Israel and in particular regenerate Jews. It is also indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:14-18, which asserts that Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be as one group and reconciled both groups to God through His finished work on the cross.

The participle conjugation of this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) functions as a participle of means, which identifies the means by which Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. Therefore, it expresses the idea that Jesus Christ Himself personifies the peace that now exists between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities "by" causing both groups to be one single entity.

Some expositors argue that the articular construction of the participle conjugation of this verb substantives the verb and thus would rule out an adverbial use of this participle. However, the articular nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) and the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *luō* (λύω) contain the Granville Sharpe rule. This would indicate that both words have the same referent and that the anarthrous participle *luō* (λύω) is explaining in further detail the articular participle *poieō* (ποιέω).

The third and final assertion, which appears in Ephesians 2:14, namely, *kai to mesotoichon tou phragmou lysas, tēn echthran* (καὶ τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ λύσας, τὴν ἔχθραν), "**Specifically, by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two)**" is epexegetical. This is indicated by the fact that it identifies or explains specifically how or by what means Jesus Himself caused both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities to be one group and is thus personification of the peace, which now exists between the two. He caused both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities to be one group and is thus personification of the peace, which now exists between the two "by" destroying the wall, which served as a barrier, which caused the hostility between the two.

The articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *mesotoichon* (μεσότοιχον), "**the wall**" is used in a figurative sense for the Mosaic Law. This is indicated by the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *echthra* (ἔχθρα), "**the hostility**" here in Ephesians 2:14. It is also indicated by the expression *en tē sarki autou, ton nomon tōn entolōn en dogmasin katargēsas* (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας), "**when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees**" (NET) in Ephesians 2:15.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *phragmos* (φραγμός), "**which served as the barrier**" is used in a figurative sense because it pertains of a divisive element keeping two groups separated. It is also used in a figurative sense for the Mosaic Law. This is indicated by the articular accusative feminine singular

form of the noun *echthra* (ἔχθρα), "**the hostility**" here in Ephesians 2:14. It is also indicated by the expression *en tē sarki autou, ton nomon tōn entolōn en dogmasin katargēsas* (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ,τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας), "**when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees**" (NET) in Ephesians 2:15.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *phragmos* (φραγμός) functions as an epexegetical genitive, which means that it is identifying what type of wall Paul is speaking of, namely, it is a barrier in the sense of being a divisive element keeping Jews and Gentiles from interacting with each other.

The articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *echthra* (ἔχθρα), "**specifically that which caused hostility**" appears in Ephesian 2:14 and 16. In both instances it is used to describe the Mosaic Law. The word here in Ephesians 2:14 pertains to a state of enmity with someone. Here is speaks of the state of enmity between the Jews and Gentiles because of the Mosaic Law.

This author believes the expression *to mesotoichon tou phragmou…tēn echthran* (τὸ μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ…τὴν ἔχθραν), "**the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two)**" speaks specifically of the Mosaic Law in a two-fold sense.

First, it refers to the dietary regulations of the Mosaic Law, which prohibited the Jews from eating with the foods that God ordained as unclean because they were used by the Gentiles in their idolatrous worship practices. Thus, these dietary regulations prevented the Jews from eating with Gentiles. Not only are these dietary regulations in view but the various Sabbath restrictions and circumcision would have separated the Jewish people from Gentile culture.

Secondly, it speaks of the Jews misuse and misinterpretation of the Mosaic Law, which alienated the Gentiles. The dietary regulations of the Law were to protect the Jew from the idolatrous practices of the Gentiles. Israel was to be a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6) and represent Him to the Gentiles as the true and living God. They were to obey the Law and by doing so would provide them the opportunity to witness to their Gentile neighbors of God's lovingkindess and faithfulness and power. However, instead of using the Law as a witness to the Gentiles, it served to make them arrogant and proud and caused them to look down on the Gentiles whom they considered sinners. They thought that they were better than the Gentiles because they received the Law and circumcision and were descendants of Abrahamic, Isaac and Jacob and were made custodians of God's Law. Consequently, this caused hostility between Jews and Gentiles because it produced arrogant pride in the Jews when interacting with the Gentiles.

The nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *luō* (λύω), "**namely, because He destroyed**" is used figuratively in relation to the Mosaic Law serving as a barrier between the Jewish and Gentile races. Specifically,

it is used figuratively of the various dietary regulations and Sabbath restrictions as well as circumcision. It is also used figuratively of the Jews misuse and misinterpretation of the Law, which was a divisive element that separated the Jews and Gentiles from interacting with each other. Therefore, this verb is expressing the idea that Jesus Christ "destroyed" the barrier, i.e., the various dietary regulations and Sabbath restrictions as well as circumcision and the Jews misuse and misinterpretation of the Mosaic Law. He destroyed this this wall, which served as a barrier between the two groups and caused hostility between them in the sense that He caused this problem to cease to exist.

This destruction is two-fold sense: (1) By obeying the Law perfectly during His First Advent, He fulfilled the Law perfectly which the Father requires in order to enter into a relationship and fellowship with Him. (2) By propitiating the Father by means of His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, He suffered the consequences of the members of the human race not fulfilling the holy requirements of the Law.

Jesus Christ fulfilled perfectly the requirements of the Mosaic Law during His First Advent. He also suffered the wrath of God in the place of all of sinful humanity because of their failure to keep the Law perfectly by suffering a substitutionary spiritual and physical death on the cross. His physical death brought to completion the Father's will for His life to provide eternal salvation to all of sinful humanity. Consequently, at the moment of His physical death, the problem of the Mosaic Law causing hostility between the Jews and the Gentiles was resolved.

By suffering the wrath of God in the place of all of sinful humanity, both Jew and Gentile, Jesus Christ redeemed the entire human out of the slave market of sin. He also propitiated the Father and reconciled all of sinful humanity to a holy God. By suffering the wrath of God in the place of all of sinful humanity, the Lord Jesus Christ delivered all of sinful humanity from the wrath of God the eternal lake of fire. He also delivered all of sinful humanity from enslavement to the sin nature, the devil and his cosmic system. He also delivered them from condemnation from the Mosaic Law. He also delivered them from spiritual and physical death as well as the consequences for committing sin.

This deliverance is appropriated by the unregenerate sinner, both Jew and Gentile exercises faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Simultaneously, the Father imputes His Son's righteousness to them and declares them justified. Simultaneously, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the regenerate sinner is placed in union with Jesus Christ and under His headship by the Holy Spirit. Through the baptism of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit identified both Jewish and Gentile believers with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, the Mosaic Law is no longer an issue between Jewish and Gentile Christians because both died to the Mosaic Law and are under no longer under the jurisdiction of the Law because of Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilling the requirements of the Law and suffering the consequences for both groups failing to keep the Law perfectly. Correspondingly, the Mosaic Law is no longer an issue between Jewish and Gentile Christians because both died to the Mosaic Law and under no longer under the jurisdiction of the Law because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This union and identification united Jewish and Gentile believers.

The participle conjugation of this verb *luō* (λύω) functions as a participle of means, which would indicate that the word identifies "the means by which" or "how" Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. It also identifies "the means by which" or "how" He caused both groups to be one single entity. Thus, it expresses the idea that Jesus Christ Himself personifies the peace that now exists between Gentile and Jewish Christian communities by causing both groups to be one single entity "by means of" destroying the wall, which served as a barrier that separated Jews and Gentiles from interacting with each other and caused hostility between the two groups. Again, this wall or barrier which caused hostility between the two was the result of the various dietary regulations, Sabbath restriction and circumcision as well as the Jews misuse and misinterpretation of the Mosaic Law in relation to the Gentiles.

The aorist tense of the verb *luō* (λύω) is a culminative or consummative aorist, which emphasizes the completion of the act of Jesus Christ Himself destroying the wall, which served as a barrier that separated Jews and Gentiles from interacting with each other and was the cause of the hostility between both groups.

The articular nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) and the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *luō* (λύω) contain the Granville Sharpe rule. This rule would indicate that the referent of the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *luō* (λύω) is the same referent of the articular nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω). In other words, the former presents a further description of the latter. Thus, the second and third assertions in Ephesians 2:14 are linked because of the Granville Sharpe rule. Therefore, this would indicate that the third explains in greater detail the second in that it identifies the means by which Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be one entity or group and thus personifies the peace that now exists between both groups. Namely, He destroyed the wall, which served as a barrier, which caused hostility between Jews and Gentiles.

There is an interpretation issue with regards to the expression *tēn echthran en tē sarki autou* (τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ). This author believes that the

prepositional phrase *en tē sarki autou* (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ) belongs with verse 15 and is thus modifying the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *katargeō* (καταργέω), "**when He nullified**" (NET). This view expresses the idea that Christ destroyed the wall, which was the hostility, by means of making the law inoperative in his flesh or humanity. This author adheres to this view because it is consistent Paul's writings in other places, in which he states that the believer is not under the Law but died to the Law because of His identification with Christ in His death and that Christ fulfilled the Law (Rom 7:1-6; 10:4; Gal 2:19; 3:24–25).

Like Ephesians 2:14, Ephesians 2:15 contains three assertions: (1) *en tē sarki autou ton nomon tōn entolōn en dogmasin katargēsas* (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας), "**In other words, by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws**." (2) *hina tous dyo ktisē en autō eis hena kainon anthrōpon* (ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα ⸀καινὸν ἄνθρωπον), "**in order that He might cause the two to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification**." (3) *poiōn eirēnēn* (ποιῶν εἰρήνην), "**Thus, He caused peace to be established (between the two and God)**."

Now, the first of these three assertions is in the form of a participial clause, which presents the specific means by which Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and God and these two groups amongst themselves. It states that Jesus Christ personifies this peace by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws. The second assertion presents the purpose of Jesus Christ doing this and states that He did so in order that He might cause these two groups to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. The third and final assertion is in the form of a participial clause as well, which presents the result of Jesus Christ causing these two groups to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. It states that He caused peace to exist between the two and God and peace between these two groups in relation to each other.

Now, the first assertion presents the specific means by which Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and God and these two groups in relation to each other. It states that Jesus Christ personifies this peace by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws.

This author believes that the prepositional phrase *en tē sarki autou* (ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ) belongs with verse 15 and is thus modifying the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *katargeō* (καταργέω), "**when He nullified**" (NET). This author adheres to this view because it is consistent with Paul's writings in other places, in which he states that the believer is not under the Law but died to the Law because of their identification with Christ in His death and that Christ fulfilled the Law (Rom 7:1-6; 10:4; Gal 2:19; 3:24–25).

The articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *sarx* (σάρξ), "**human nature**" is employed with the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), whose referent is Jesus Christ, which indicates that this human nature belongs to Jesus Christ. This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**by means of**" which indicates that "by means of His impeccable human nature," the Lord Jesus Christ nullified the Law of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws. In other words, the eternal Son of God nullified the law composed of commandments consisting of a written code of laws "by means of" His incarnation. The implication is that by becoming a human being, the Son of God was able to nullify the Mosaic Law in the sense of fulfilling perfectly and suffering the consequences of sinners not obeying it and which Law was the cause of the hostility between the Jewish and Gentile races.

Now, in Ephesians 2:15, the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *nomos* (νόμος), "**the law**" which appears in the first assertion in this verse refers to the Mosaic Law. Specifically, it speaks of the Mosaic law system, which is also known as the Torah. It was composed of a system of laws, civil statutes and priestly ordinances, which revealed the will of God for the Jewish people, the nation of Israel who were in a covenant relationship with God.

The articular genitive feminine plural form of the noun *entolē* (ἐντολή), "**the commandments**" refers to the 613 written commandments of the Mosaic Law, which are composed of both commands and prohibitions.

The dative neuter plural form of the noun *dogma* (δόγμα), "**a written code of laws**" refers also to the 613 mandates which appear in written form in the Mosaic Law but from a different perspective than *entolē* (ἐντολή), "**the commandments**." It signifies that these various commands and prohibitions appear as a written code of laws, which the Lord gave to Moses on Mount Sinai.

This author believes that the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *katargeō* (καταργέω) means "to nullify" rather than "set aside." This is indicated by the fact that Paul uses the word in the context of the hostility, which the Mosaic Law caused between the Jewish and Gentile races. In context, Paul is not speaking of the Law as to how it relates to the conduct of Jewish and Gentile believers but rather the hostility that was caused by the Mosaic Law.

Therefore, this verb *katargeō* (καταργέω) expresses the idea that Jesus Christ by means of His impeccable human nature "nullified" the Mosaic Law, which was the cause of hostility between the Jew and Gentile races as well as hostility between these two groups and God. He indicates that He nullified the Law in the sense that He made the Law legally null and void or to make of no consequence.

The inauguration of the new covenant was among the Jewish people was on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem in approximately 33 A.D. with the gift of the Spirit on the day and manifested itself with the gift of the Spirit for those Jews who trusted in Jesus Christ as the Savior, which resulted also in the forgiveness of sins (Acts. 2). It manifested itself among Gentile believers with Cornelius the Roman centurion and his family as recorded in Acts 10. This inauguration of the new covenant, which was based upon the finished work of Christ on the cross (1 Cor. 11:23-26), marked the end of the Mosaic covenant as Paul taught in 2 Corinthians 3.

The Lord Jesus Christ nullified the Law in a two-fold sense: (1) During His First Adent, He fulfilled the Law perfectly by always obeying the Law's various commands and prohibitions. (2) He suffered the wrath of God on the cross in the place of every member of the human race who violates these commands and prohibitions of the Law.

In other words, He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Law, which was required by the Law in order to possess a relationship and fellowship with a holy God. Secondly, He suffered the penalty required by the Law for those who violate these commands and prohibitions. The implication being that Jesus Christ through His incarnation counteracted completely the force, effectiveness or value of the Mosaic Law.

The nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *katargeō* (καταργέω) functions as a nominative of simple apposition. This means that it is identifying how or by what means Jesus Christ Himself not only personifies the peace that now exists between Gentile and Jewish Christian communities and between these two communities and God but also how or by what means by He caused both groups to be one single entity.

The participle conjugation of this verb *katargeō* (καταργέω) functions as a participle of means, which would indicate that the word identifies "the means by which" or "how" Jesus Christ not only personifies the peace that now exists between Gentile and Jewish Christian communities as well as the peace that now exists between these two groups and God but also "how" or "by what means" He caused both groups to be one single entity.

In Colossians 2:17, Paul teaches the Colossian Christian community that Jesus Christ is the substantive reality of the various system of laws, civil statutes and priestly ordinances, which appear in the Mosaic Law.

Colossians 2:16 Therefore, continue making it your habit of not letting anyone condemn any of you as guilty because of food or because of drink or because of a particular feast or new moon or a Sabbath. 17 These are, as an eternal spiritual truth a shadow, namely, the things which will inevitably come but the substantive reality is, as an eternal spiritual truth, specifically the Christ. (Author's translation)

In Romans 8:4, Paul teaches that the Father's purpose for Christ's physical death was so that the righteous requirement of the Law, i.e., perfect obedience might be fulfilled in those Christians who conduct themselves in submission to the Spirit rather than the sin nature.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus. 2 Because, the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ, who is Jesus, has set you free from the sin nature's authoritative power as well as spiritual death's. 3 Because with reference to the Law's inability in which it was always powerless through the flesh, God the Father accomplished by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. 4 In fact, with regards to the sin nature, He (the Father) executed the sin nature by means of His (Son's) human nature. In order that the Law's righteous requirement would be fulfilled in us, those of us who are not, as an eternal spiritual truth, conducting our lives in submission to the flesh but rather in submission to the Spirit. (Author's translation)

The first assertion in Ephesians 2:15 is echoed in Colossians 2:14.

Colossians 2:8 Don't stop making it your habit of watching out for anyone belonging to a group who would seek to take each and every one of you captive through empty, deceitful philosophy based upon the tradition produced by human beings, based upon the elementary teachings promoted by the cosmic system, which are by no means based upon the teaching originating from Christ. 9 The reason for this command is that in Him, the totality of attributes which compose the divine nature permanently dwell in bodily form. 10 Also, by means of your union and identification with Him, each and every one of you as an eternal spiritual truth exist in the state of being made complete, who is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in the state of being the head over each and every ruler and authority. 11 Furthermore, because of your faith in Him, each and every one of you was circumcised by means of a circumcision which was not performed by human beings, by means of the removal of your body composed of that which is flesh, by means of this circumcision which is specifically your identification with the Christ. 12 Specifically each and every one of you were buried with Him by means of the baptism which is essential and superior. Correspondingly, by means of which each and every one of you

were raised together with Him by means of your faith in God the Father's exertion of power who caused Him to enter into the state of being raised out from the dead ones. 13 In other words, even though each and every one of you existed in the state of being spiritually dead ones because of your transgressions, specifically because of the uncircumcision, which is your flesh, He caused each and every one of you to be made alive together with Him. Simultaneously for His own glory, He graciously forgave each and every one of our transgressions for the benefit of each and every one of us. 14 Specifically, He caused the cancellation of that which was against each and every one of us, namely a certificate of debt which is according to a written code of laws, which was continually existing in the state of being opposed to each and every one of us. To be more explicit, He eradicated it, removing this partition by causing it to be nailed to the cross. (Author's translation)

Now, the second assertion in Ephesians 2:15 is a purpose clause, which presents the purpose of Jesus Christ nullifying the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws by means of His human nature. It states that He did this in order that He might cause both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

The articular accusative masculine plural cardinal number *duo* (δύο), "**the two**" refers of course in context to the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. The articular accusative masculine plural cardinal number *duo* (δύο) functions as an accusative direct object of the verb *ktizo* (κτίζω), which pertains to bringing something into existence, which had not existed before the act. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is of course the Lord Jesus Christ.

The referent of the dative third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**Himself**" is again the Lord Jesus Christ emphasizing identity and is the demonstrative force intensified. This word contains the figure of metonymy which means that Jesus Christ is put for faith in Him at justification as well as union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. The word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions this time as a marker of means which indicates the means by which Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into one new humanity. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ) indicates that Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into one new humanity "by means of their faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification."

The active voice of this verb is a causative active voice, which is significant because it indicates that Jesus Christ is the ultimate cause of Jewish and Gentile Christians being created into one new humanity but is not directly involved in this

new creation. A comparison of Scripture with Scripture indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into the state of being one new humanity as a result of the Father declaring them justified through faith in Him. Simultaneously, at their justification, both Jewish and Gentile Christians were placed into union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Holy Spirit,.

The accusative neuter singular form of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**" refers to both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities constituting a single human entity. The accusative masculine singular form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος), "**humanity**" is used with reference to the church, the body of Christ composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and speaks of them as a corporate human entity. The accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *kainos* (καινός), "**new**" describes this humanity composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christians as new in the sense of this humanity being original and of a kind not seen before in creation. It speaks of that which is recent in contrast to something that is old. Here it is referring to the new humanity composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities as a result of the creative active of Jesus Christ. This word is modifying the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) and is ascribing the attribute of being new to this humanity composed of both Jewish and Gentile church age believers, which is union with the last Adam, Jesus Christ, which stands in marked contrast with fallen humanity, which is in union with the first Adam. The noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is also the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which marks Jewish and Gentile Christians going from the state of being hostile toward each other and God to existing in the state of being one new humanity.

It is extremely important that the reader understand that Paul is not teaching that there is no Jewish section of the church or that the racial distinctions between the Jewish and Gentile races no longer exist. In other words, the racial identity of both races is not abolished or done away when Paul asserts that Jesus Christ created both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities into one new humanity. What it does mean is that Jews remain Jews and Gentile remains Gentiles with all their distinctions and differences. There is a unity with distinctions. The reason for this is that both Ephesians 2:11-22 and Romans 11 teach that the Gentile Christian is united to the Jewish Christian. The Gentile Christian experiences the blessings of the New Covenant with the gift of the Spirit and forgiveness because they have been united to the Jewish Christian who received the New Covenant through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. Paul asserts in Romans 9:4-5 that the covenants, which would include the New covenant were given to the Jews and not the Gentiles. This is clear from the teaching of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Jesus taught in John 4:22 that salvation is of the Jews. Therefore, the Gentile Christian experiences the

blessings of the New covenant, which was given to Israel, as a result of the Holy Spirit uniting them with Jewish Christians at the moment of their justification through the baptism of the Spirit.

The apostle Paul in Romans 11:16 employs two metaphors to illustrate his assertion in Romans 11:2 that God has by no means rejected Israel forever and his assertion in Romans 11:11-15 that there will be a future national regeneration of Israel.

Romans 11:16 Now, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that the first portion is, as an eternal spiritual truth holy and of course, we agree it is because it is taught in the Scriptures, then the lump is, as an eternal spiritual truth also. Furthermore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that the root is, as an eternal spiritual truth holy and of course, we agree it is because it is taught in the Scriptures, then the branches are, as an eternal spiritual truth, also. (Author's translation)

This passage contains two metaphors to further illustrate Paul's assertion in Romans 11:2-6 that God has by no means rejected the nation of Israel forever and his assertion in Romans 11:11-15 that Israel's rejection by God is not final but there will be a future regeneration and restoration of the nation.

The first metaphor, the first piece of dough and the lump is taken from Numbers 15:17-21. The first piece of dough is analogous to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who were the progenitors of the nation of Israel because they accepted by faith the promises that God made to them.

The second metaphor, the root and the branches parallels the first. The root parallels the first piece of dough in that it is analogous to the patriarchs whereas the branches are analogous to the lump in that they are analogous to the saved biological descendants of Abraham, Israel.

Let's take a look at the first metaphor, which is taken from Numbers 15:17-21.

Numbers 15:17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you enter the land where I bring you, 19 then it shall be, that when you eat of the food of the land, you shall lift up an offering to the LORD. 20 Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as an offering; as the offering of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up. 21 From the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD an offering throughout your generations.'" (NASB95)

In this passage, the Lord instructs Moses to instruct Israel to take a cake from the first of their ground meal and present it as an offering to Him after they entered the land of Canaan and reaped their first wheat harvest and this was to be repeated every year. The cake made from the first ground meal of the wheat harvest was sanctified or set apart for God by being offered to God. So the first part of the dough was to be offered up to God as a symbol that the entire lump belonged to Him.

Numbers 15:17-21 implicitly teaches the principle that what is considered first contributes its character to what is related to it.[10] In other words, as Wiersbe states, "when God accepts the part He sanctifies the whole."[11]

Numbers 15:17-21 does not explicitly state that the first piece of dough offered to the Lord sanctified the rest of the lump. However, it does imply this since the Lord explicitly tells Israel when they eat of the food of the land that they shall present the offering of the first of their dough to the Lord, which implies that the food of the land they eat is sanctified by that first piece of dough they offered to the Lord.

In Romans 11:16, Paul takes the principle taught in Numbers 15:17-25 to teach that if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are holy, then their descendants who compose the nation of Israel and had faith in the Lord like Abraham are sanctified as well. If God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified or set apart those descendants of his who had faith in the Lord like him.

The first piece of dough and the root parallel each other and are analogous to the patriarchs and in particular Abraham. The lump and the branches also parallel each other and are analogous to the saved biological descendants of Abraham through Sarah.

In the protasis of the first metaphor, Paul's readers would agree that the first piece of dough is holy because this principle is implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21. Paul takes the principle implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21 and applies it to Israel in the sense that if God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified or set apart his saved descendants as well. He is not attempting to prove that his protasis is true, rather he is saying with the first class condition that we agree that it is taught in the Old Testament Scriptures that the first piece of dough is holy. The first class condition would then persuade them to respond to the conclusion that the whole lump of dough is as well. Therefore, Paul's audience would have to come to his conclusion if they submit to this line of argumentation.

"**The branches**" (*klados*) refer to the biological descendants of Abraham who like Abraham had faith in the Lord. This is indicated in that they are on the olive tree in contrast to the "**branches broken off**" in Romans 11:17, which refers to the unsaved biological descendants of Abraham. This is indicated by the statement in Romans 11:20 "**they were broken off for their unbelief**."

In Romans 11:17-24, "**the branches**" are connected to an "**olive tree**," which in the Old Testament was a figure for the nation of Israel (See Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6). Thus, "**the branches**" of the "**olive tree**" is a reference to born-again

[10] The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament; page 484; Walvoord and Zuck Victor Books; SP Publications, 1985
[11] Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, volume 1, page 551; Victor Books, SP Publications, 1989

Jews since the latter is used in Jeremiah 11:16-17 and Hosea 14:4-6 as a figure for Israel and unbelieving Jews are broken off.

Now we know that the Jews originated from Abraham and that branches originate from the root of a tree. Therefore, "**the branches**" are analogous to born-again Jews and since they come from "**the root**," then *aparche*, "**the first portion**," which parallels *rhiza*, "**root**" must refer to Abraham as well.

Furthermore, in Romans 11:16, Paul is arguing that the beginning of the nation of Israel guarantees that Israel has a future. Paul is taking from the principle implicitly taught in Numbers 15:17-21 that when God accepts the first part, He sanctifies the whole.

Further indicating that *rhiza*, "**the root**" is a reference to Abraham is Paul's statement in Romans 4:16 where he teaches that the patriarch is the spiritual "father" or "progenitor" of both Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Now, the remnant of believers in Israel does not constitute the first part or the beginning of the nation of Israel and neither does Christ Himself but rather Abraham is the progenitor of Israel. Therefore, in Romans 11:16, Paul uses this first portion/lump metaphor to teach that if God had accepted the progenitors of the nation of Israel, especially, Abraham, He has then sanctified those of his descendants who had faith like him. He sanctified these biological descendants of Abraham because they like Abraham had faith in Him.

In the protasis of the second first class condition, Paul's readers would agree that it is taught in the Scriptures that the root, which is analogous to Abraham, is holy. Again, the first class condition would then persuade them to respond to the conclusion in the apodosis that the branches, which are analogous to saved Israelites, are as well. Therefore, Paul's audience would have to come to his conclusion if they submit to this line of argumentation.

In both of these first class conditional statements, Paul wants his readers to come to his line of argumentation because he does not want them to be prejudice against the Jews because of their rejection of Christ and to think that they are superior to the Jews. Therefore, it is essential that they agree with him on this point since it will help them to understand that God has a future planned for the nation of Israel and has not rejected her as a national entity. He is also attempting to build unity between Jew and Gentile Christians.

In Romans 11:17, Paul presents the protasis of a first class conditional statement. In this protasis, he reminds his Gentile Christian readers that branches were broken off, i.e., unsaved Israelites and they as a wild olive tree have been grafted in among the branches, i.e., born-again Israelites. He also reminds them in this protasis that they have become partakers of the rich root of the olive tree, Abraham and in particular the divine promises given to him contained in the "Abrahamic covenant."

Romans 11:17 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that some, which are a part of the branches were broken off but because you are a wild olive, you were grafted in among them so that you became joint-partakers of the olive tree's root, which produces abundant oil and of course, we agree that this is a fact of history. (Author's translation)

Gentile Christians are joint-partakers with regenerate Israel of these divine blessings because they are his spiritual descendants and they are his spiritual descendants because like Abraham they exercised faith in the Lord. The protasis in Romans 11:17: "If and let assume that it is true for the sake argument some branches were broken off (unsaved Israelites) and you (Gentile Christians), being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them (saved Jews) and became partaker with them (saved Israel) of the rich root (Abraham) of the olive tree (Israel)." The responsive condition would say: "Of course we agree that this is an historical fact." Paul's readers would agree that some branches were broken off because it was a historical fact the majority of Jews rejected Jesus Christ. His readers would also agree that they have been grafted in among Jewish Christians and had become partakers with them of the promises to Abraham who is the progenitor of the nation of Israel because he taught in Romans 4:16 that Abraham is the spiritual father of their faith.

"**Were broken off**" is the third person plural aorist passive indicative form of the verb *ekklao*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *ek*, "out from" and the verb *klao*, "to break off," thus the word literally means "to break off from."

The verb appears only three times in the Greek New Testament, namely Romans 11:17, 19 and 20. In each instance, it is used to describe God's rejection of those Jews who rejected His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior by not exercising faith in Him. Paul's statement in Romans 11:20 makes clear that these branches were rejected by God because of their unbelief and no other reason.

"**You**" is the nominative second person singular personal pronoun *su*, which refers to Gentiles who trusted in Christ but with emphasis upon their racial background as indicated by the statement to follow, "**being a wild olive (tree) were grafted in among them and became a partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree**."

"**A wild olive**" is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *agrielaios*, which is related to the adjective *agrios*, "wild" and *elaion*, "olive" and denotes the wild shoot of the wild olive tree.

As a rule the wild olive is but a shrub, with small leaves, a stem more or less prickly, and a small, hard drupe with but little or no oil. The wild olive tree was very unproductive and actually a shoot or slip of a cultivated tree was inserted into a wild one in order to produce fruit. The varieties of olives are grafted on to seedlings of the wild olive. Paul uses the noun *agrielaios* in a metaphorical sense for the Gentiles

in contrast to the "**olive tree**," which in the Old Testament was used metaphorically of Israel (Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6).

"**Were grafted in**" is the second person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *enkentrizo*, which means "to cause (a shoot or bud: scion) to unite with the stock of a growing plant, graft of trees."

In Romans 11:17, the verb is used in a metaphorical sense of Paul's Gentile Christian readers being united with Jewish Christians.

Now the usual procedure was to insert a shoot or slip of a cultivated tree into a wild one. However, in Romans 11:24 Paul makes clear that the metaphor he is using is "**contrary to nature**" of grafting a wild olive branch (a Gentile) into a cultivated olive tree.

Such a procedure was unnatural and would be unfruitful, which is precisely Paul's point with his Gentile Christian readers. He wishes to underscore the miraculous nature of their new relationship with God and other Jewish Christians.

The normal procedure was to take a shoot from an olive tree that bears good fruit and graft it onto a wild olive stock whose fruit is poor. The result is a tree with vigorous growth, which bears good olives. However, Paul reverses the procedure and speaks of grafting a wild olive onto the stock of a good olive and then later he speaks of grafting back some of the good olive branches that have been cut out.

So a procedure of grafting a wild olive onto a good olive was not the normal process, which is why Paul reverses the normal procedure in order to humble those Gentile Christians who might become arrogant towards Jewish Christians and unsaved Jews. He rebukes those Gentile Christians who might be arrogant towards the Jews, saved and unsaved because their spiritual heritage is from the Jews, salvation is of the Jews (John 4:23).

The second person singular form of the verb *enkentrizo* refers to Paul's Gentile Christian readers.

"**Among them**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**among**" and the dative third person masculine plural form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos*, "**them**."

The intensive personal pronoun *autos* refers to Jewish Christians since Paul is reminding his Gentile Christian readers that they were grafted onto the olive tree with the other branches, who are Jewish Christians since they are in contrast to those branches, which were broken off because of their unbelief. Paul is saying that the Gentile Christians, "**wild olive**" were united with Jewish Christians who unlike the Jewish Christians were related to the root, Abraham by race or in a biological sense.

The preposition *en* is used in a distributive sense with respect to persons indicating that the "**wild olive**" (Gentile Christians) was grafted in "among" the Jewish Christians. Gentile Christians like Jewish Christians are a part of the olive tree, which is a symbol of Israel.

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Now, Paul is not saying in Romans 11:17-24 that saved Gentiles are members of the nation of Israel but rather the olive tree metaphor simply illustrates the importance of Israel in relation to God's plan of salvation. It also demonstrates to Paul's Gentile Christian readers that they owe much to the Jews since salvation is of the Jews. With this passage, Paul is attempting to illustrate to his Gentile Christian readers that they owe their spiritual heritage to the nation of Israel. He is not teaching that Gentiles are now members of the nation of Israel along with Jewish believers. Rather, he is attempting to illustrate how Gentile Christians are related to Jewish Christians through Abraham, the progenitor of the Jews and all believers so as to produce unity in the churches between both groups and to prevent anti-Jewish sentiment creeping in among the Gentile believers.

"**Partaker**" is the nominative masculine singular form of the noun *sunkoinonos*, which is a compound word composed of the preposition *sun*, "with" and the noun *koinonia*, "partnership," thus the word literally means "joint-partners." The word refers to one who shares jointly with someone else in a possession or relationship, with emphasis upon that which is in common."[12]

The noun denotes that Gentile Christians are "joint-partakers" with Jewish Christians of the divine promises that God made to Abraham. This word excludes the idea that Gentile Christians are now members of the nation of Israel since they maintain their racial character and saved Jews do so as well. Israel is a racial descendant of Abraham who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Gentile and Jewish Christians share jointly in a relationship with the Trinity and possess through faith the divine promises that God made to Abraham, who is "**the root**" and. Paul speaks of this Ephesians 3:6. The mystery is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham. (2) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. (3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel.

Although, the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel were specifically given to Israel (Romans 9:1-6), the church will still and does benefit from them since they are in union with Christ who is the ruler of Israel.

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[12] Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*, volume 2, page 559; United Bible Societies, New York, 1988, 1989

"**Of the rich root**" is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *rhiza*, "**the root**" and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *piotes*, "**rich**."

The noun *rhiza* refers to Abraham as indicated by Paul's statements in Romans 11:17-24. The "**first portion**" in this passage, "**the branches**" (*klados*) refer to the biological descendants of Abraham who like Abraham had faith in the Lord. This is indicated in that they are on the olive tree in contrast to the "**branches broken off**" in Romans 11:17, which refers to the unsaved biological descendants of Abraham. This is indicated by the statement in Romans 11:20 "**they were broken off for their unbelief**."

In Romans 11:17-24, "**the branches**" are connected to an "**olive tree**," which in the Old Testament was a figure for the nation of Israel (See Jeremiah 11:16-17; Hosea 14:4-6). Thus, "**the branches**" of the "**olive tree**" is a reference to born-again Jews since the latter is used in Jeremiah 11:16-17 and Hosea 14:4-6 as a figure for Israel and unbelieving Jews are broken off.

Now we know that the Jews originated from Abraham and that branches originate from the root of a tree. Therefore, "**the branches**" are analogous to born-again Jews and since they come from "**the root**," then *rhiza*, "**root**," which parallels *aparche*, "**the first portion**" must refer to Abraham as well.

Further indicating that *rhiza*, "**the root**" is a reference to Abraham is Paul's statement in Romans 4:16 where he teaches that the patriarch is the spiritual "father" or "progenitor" of both Jews and Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The noun *piotes* in classical literature means "fattiness" and is often used metaphorically to mean "wealth" or "prosperity."[13] The word appears only once in the Greek New Testament, namely, here in Romans 11:17 and refers to the state of oiliness and denotes the sap produced by the root.[14]

The noun *piotes* functions as a genitive of product meaning that the word is the "product" of the noun to which it stands related, which in our context is the noun *rhiza*, "**root**." This indicates that the root produces the olive tree's abundant sap or oil that extends to the branches of the tree and their leaves.

Paul is saying then that the Gentile Christians are joint-participants of the root, i.e., Abraham, which produces the olive tree's abundant oil, which is analogous to the abundant blessings of the Abrahamic covenant. He teaches the Galatians this in Galatians 3.

This author's interpretation that Paul in Ephesians 2:11-22 and Romans chapter 11 is not teaching that there is no Jewish section of the church or that the racial

[13] Liddell-Scott, page 1406

[14] Danker, Frederick William, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*; page 814; Third Edition; University of Chicago Press; Chicago and London

distinctions between the Jewish and Gentile races no longer exist or that the racial identity of both races is abolished or done away is supported within the text of Ephesians 1:3-2:10. Specifically, this interpretation is supported by the fact that Paul he employs the second person plural in Ephesians 2:8-9 but then switches to the first person plural in Ephesians 2:10. In fact, this writer has addressed this switch in our study of Ephesians 1:1-2:5.

Many expositors contend that the referent of the first person plurals in Ephesians 1:3-2:4 is Jewish believers and the Gentile believers are addressed with the second person plural in Ephesians 1:13. This author believes that the referent of the first person plurals is both Jewish and Gentile believers with Paul represented the Jewish remnant in the church and the referent of the second person plurals is the Gentile Christian community.

From the beginning of the Ephesian epistle, Paul makes no distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers. In Ephesians 1:1, he make no distinctions between Jewish and Gentile believers but simply addresses them both as "saints" as well as "faithful" in this verse. Then, in Ephesians 1:2, he addresses them with the second person plural form "all of you, you." He does this very same thing in Ephesians 1:13. After addressing the recipients of this epistle in Ephesians 1:3-12 with the first person plurals, he then addresses them in Ephesians 1:13 with the second person plural. He then switches right back to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:14 to address the recipients of the letter.

So therefore, Paul is not employing an "editorial we" or "epistolary we" in these verses, which means that although he is using the first person plural, he is referring to only himself in reality. He is also not using the "exclusive we," which means that he is referring to himself and his associates (like Timothy) as distinct from the recipients of the letter.

If Paul is not making a distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers by switching from the first person plural to the second person plural on two occasions in this letter when addressing its recipients, then why is he doing so? This author believes that he employs the second person plural in Ephesians 1:2 but then switches to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:3-12 because he is simply attempting to identify with the recipients of the Ephesian epistle who were Gentile Christians. This is indicated by the fact that he addresses them as Gentiles in Ephesians 2:11-22 and he of course, was a Jewish Christian. When he makes this switch in Ephesians 1:13 and 14, it is for the same reason. In other words, he, as a Jewish believer, is demonstrating his solidarity with the Gentile Christian community.

Though Paul never mentions any specific problem or problems taking place within the Christian community in this epistle, it can be inferred from the contents of the letter that he was concerned that the Christian community remained united experientially through practice of the command to love one another. This is indicated

by the fact that Paul opens the practical application of his teaching in the first three chapters by commanding the recipients of the letter to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:3. This would be accomplished by living in a manner worthy of their calling and by practicing humility, gentleness, patience and tolerance of one another through the practice of the command to love one another, which Paul instructs them to do in Ephesians 4:1-2. In fact, in Ephesians 2:11-22, he emphasizes this unity that exists among Jewish and Gentile believers in a positional sense through the baptism of the Spirit, which took place at the moment of justification.

Unity is the first major overriding theme in the Ephesian epistle because this is the purpose of the letter. Again, Paul was concerned that the Christian community remained united experientially through practice of the command to love one another. They were unified in a positional sense through their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Consequently, this set up the guarantee of being united in a perfective sense when they receive their resurrection bodies at the rapture or resurrection of the church. This unity in a positional sense is taught in the first three chapters of the epistle. This unity positionally sets up the potential to experience this unity when interacting with each other, which is accomplished through obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He loved them. In fact, Paul makes a point of mentioned this unity in a positional sense in relation to Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians interaction with each other. They would experience that which was true of them positionally through the practice of the command to love one another. Consequently, they would reflect the character and nature of the Trinity, who are united eternally since this love is a part of their character and nature.

Therefore, in Ephesians 1:3-14, when Paul employs the first person plural to address the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, he is using an "inclusive we," which refers to both himself as the author and the recipients of the letter. By switching from the second person plural to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:2-12 and then back again to the second person plural to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul, as a Jewish believer, is attempting to identify with Gentile Christians. In other words, he is expressing his solidarity and promote unity among Jews and Gentiles in the Christian community in the Roman province of Asia.

In Ephesians 2:1-2 again employs the second person plural but then switches to the first person plural in Ephesians 2:3-5a. Paul does this for the same reason as he does it in Ephesians 1:2-12 and 13-14. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the concessive clause here in Ephesians 2:5 is nearly identical to the one in Ephesians 2:1, whose thought is resumed and completed here in Ephesians 2:5 by the statement *synezōopoiēsen tō Christō* (συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ), "**He caused**

each and every one of us to be made alive together with the one and only Christ" (Author's translation). The only difference between these two concessive clauses is that the one in Ephesians 2:1 employs the accusative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which refers to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle. On other hand the one in Ephesians 2:5 employs the accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), which refers to both Paul and the recipients of this epistle. So therefore, both the concessive clause in Ephesians 2:1 and the one here in Ephesians 2:5 are both completed by the same declarative statement in Ephesians 2:5. Therefore, this indicates that Paul who is a Jew and the recipients of the Ephesian letter who were Gentile Christians both were made a live with Christ at their justification by the Father through the baptism of the Spirit even though they were both spiritually dead because of their transgressions. In Ephesians 2:5, Paul, a Jewish believer, is identifying with the Gentile Christians who are the recipients of this epistle and is again attempting to promote solidarity and unity between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities.

Paul again switches from the second personal plural in Ephesians 2:5b to the first person plural in Ephesians 2:6-7. Lastly, he does this again by employing the second person plural in Ephesians 2:8 and then switching to the first person plural in Ephesians 2:10. He does this again because he as a Jewish Christian is identifying with the recipients of this letter who were Gentile Christians according to Ephesians 2:11. This switch is an attempt to express his solidarity with them.

Now, Ephesians 2:15 is not the first time that Paul speaks of this new humanity composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christians since he alludes to it in Ephesians 2:10.

Ephesians 2:1 Now, correspondingly, even though, each and every one of you as a corporate unit were spiritually dead ones because of your transgressions, in other words, because of your sins. 2 Each and every one of you formerly lived by means of these in agreement with the standard of the unregenerate people of this age, which is the production of the cosmic world system, in agreement with the standard of the sovereign ruler, namely the sovereign governmental authority ruling over the evil spirits residing in the earth's atmosphere. Specifically the spirit who is presently working in the lives of those members of the human race who are characterized by disobedience. 3 Among whom, each and every one of us also formerly for our own selfish benefit conducted our lives by means of those lusts, which are produced by our flesh. Specifically, by indulging those inclinations which are produced by our flesh, in other words, those impulses, which are the product of our flesh. Consequently, each and every one of us caused ourselves to be children who are objects of wrath because of our natural condition from physical birth. Just as the rest correspondingly caused themselves to be children who are objects of wrath because of their

natural condition from physical birth. 4 But because God is rich with regards to mercy, because of the exercise of His great love with which He loved each and every one of us, 5 even though each and every one of us as a corporate unit were spiritually dead ones because of our transgressions, He caused each and every one of us to be made alive together with the one and only Christ. Each and every one of you as a corporate unit are saved because of grace! 6 Specifically, He caused each and every one of us as a corporate unit to be raised with Him. Correspondingly, He caused each and every one of us as a corporate unit to be seated in the heavenlies because of our faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ. 7 He did this so that He could display for His own glory during the ages, which are certain to come, the incomparable wealth, which is the product of His grace because of kindness for the benefit of each and every one of us because of our faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ, who is Jesus. 8 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit are saved because of grace by means of faith! In other words, this never originated from any one of you as a source. It originated as the gift from God. 9 It does not originate from meritorious actions as a source so that a person cannot for their own glory enter into the state of boasting. 10 For each and every one of us are His creative workmanship. For each and every one of us has been created by means of our faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ who is Jesus in order to produce actions, which are divine good. These God prepared in advance so that each of us would conduct our lives by means of them. (Author's translation)

In Colossians 3:9-11, the apostle Paul speaks of this new creation.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each one of you have been raised up with Christ and we agree that this is true. Then, continue to make it your habit of diligently seeking after the things above, where Christ is seated at God's right hand. 2 Each one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth 3 because each one of you has died. Consequently, the life of each one of you is concealed with Christ by means of the power of God the Father. 4 When Christ, the life of each one of you is revealed, then, at that time, each one of you will be revealed with Him in glory. 5 Therefore, I solemnly charge each one of you to put to death the members of that which belongs to your earthly nature with regards to the practice of sexual immorality, sexual impurity, sexual lust, evil desire as well as that which is greed which is characterized as idolatry. 6 These things are the reason why the wrath exercised by God the Father is and will be directed against the people characterized by disobedience. 7 Each one of you also lived your lives among them at one time when each one of you were living among them. 8 But now, I also solemnly

charge each one of you to lay aside every one of the following: destructive, uncontrolled anger, malice, slander, filthy language from the mouth of each and every one of you. 9 Each one of you continue making it your habit of not lying to one another because each one of you have stripped off the old man with its practices. 10 Likewise, each one of you have clothed yourselves with the new man which is desiring to be replenished for the purpose of an experiential knowledge in conformity with the image produced by the One who created him. 11 In the sphere of which, absolutely no distinctions are existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free person. But rather, Christ is everything as well as in each person. (Author's translation)

Now, the third and final assertion that appears in Ephesians 2:15, like the first assertion in this verse, is in the form of a participial clause. It presents the result of Jesus Christ causing these two groups to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. It states that He caused peace to be established between the two and between these two and God.

The articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη), "**peace**" not only speaks of the peace between Gentile and Jewish Christians but also by way of implication, it pertains to the peace that exists between both groups and God. This is indicated by the fact that Gentile Christians could never be reconciled to Jewish Christians until both groups are first reconciled to God through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. This is also indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:16, which inserts that Jesus Christ reconcile both groups into one new humanity to God through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.

The articular nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) pertains to causing something to come into being or come into existence since the word refers to the actual achievement of a final result. The referent of the masculine singular form of this verb is of course, the Lord Jesus Christ. The noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη) functions as the accusative direct object of this verb. Therefore, this indicates that the peace that now exists between God and the Jewish and Gentile Christians and between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities in relation to each other receives the action of being caused to be brought into existence by the creative activity of Jesus Christ.

Now, the participle conjugation of this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) functions as a nominative of simple apposition. This means it is identifying the result of Jesus Christ causing both Gentile and Jewish Christian communities to be created into one new humanity by means of their faith in Him at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification.

It also functions as a participle of result, which indicates that the former identifies "the result of" Jesus Christ causing both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into the state of being one new humanity.

The present tense of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is a perfective present which is used to emphasize that the results of a past action are still continuing. In context, the past action is Jesus Christ creating one new humanity out of both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities by means of the faith of these Christians at their justification as well as by means of their union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. The results of this past at their justification that are still continuing into the present is the peace that now exists between these communities with each other and with God. Therefore, the perfect present tense of this verb emphasizes the results of this past action, which took place at the moment these Jewish and Gentile Christians were declared justified by the Father as a result of their faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ.

The present tense of this verb is contemporaneous in time to the action of its main verb, which is the third person singular aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *ktizo* (κτίζω). The present participle conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is subsequent in time in a sense to the time of the main verb *ktizo* (κτίζω). Therefore, this indicates that this peace was established between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities with each other and with God is subsequent to or the direct result of their justification and union and identification with Jesus Christ.

The active voice of this verb is also a causative active voice, which is significant because it indicates that Jesus Christ is the ultimate cause of peace existing between Jewish and Gentile Christians and God but not directly involved causing peace to exist between these groups and God. A comparison of Scripture with Scripture indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to exist in the state of experiencing peace with each other and God as a result of the Father declaring them justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, at their justification, He caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to experience peace with each other and God as a result of being placed in union with Himself and identified with Himself in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Holy Spirit at justification.

Ephesians 2:16 is composed of the following: (1) epexegetical *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause: *kai apokatallaxē tous amphoterous en heni sōmati tō theō dia tou staurou* (καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ), "**In other words, in order that He would reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross**." (2) Result participle clause: *apokteinas tēn echthran en autō* (ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ), **Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in**

Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification."

The epexegetical *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause *kai apokatallaxē tous amphoterous en heni sōmati tō theō dia tou staurou* (καὶ ἀποκαταλλάξῃ τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους ἐν ἑνὶ σώματι τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ), "**In other words, in order that He would reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross** " explains the previous assertions which are found in the contents of Ephesians 2:14-15. Specifically, it explains the previous *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause in Ephesians 2:15.

That this first statement in Ephesians 2:16 is a *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause is indicated by the fact that the subjunctive conjugation of the verb *apokatallassō* (ἀποκαταλλάσσω) is employed with the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), which appears in Ephesians 2:15, in order to form a clause which presents the purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ nullifying the law composed of commandments consisting of a written code of laws, i.e. the Mosaic law system by means of His impeccable human nature in hypostatic union. Thus, this *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause in Ephesians 2:16 asserts that it was the for the purpose of reconciling Jewish and Gentile Christians to God through the cross of Jesus Christ that the Lord Jesus Christ nullified the law composed of commandments consisting of a written code of laws, i.e., the Mosaic law system by means of His impeccable human nature in hypostatic union.

The *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause in Ephesians 2:16 asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ reconciled Jewish and Gentile Christians into one body to God through the cross, by means of which cross, the hostility has been killed. That this *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause is epexegetical is indicated by the fact that the concepts of peace mentioned in Ephesians 2:14-15 and reconciliation here in Ephesians 2:16 are obviously related and synonymous. Also, the cross, which is mentioned in Ephesians 2:16, is referred to in verse 14 with the reference to the Lord Jesus Christ destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility between the Jew and Gentile races and the two with God. On other hand, verse 15 speaks of the Lord nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws. Lastly, the reference to "one body" in Ephesians 2:16 is alluding to what Paul taught in verse 15 that the Lord Jesus nullified by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws in order that He might cause the Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Therefore, we can see that the assertion in Ephesians 2:16 summarizes the contents of Ephesians 2:14-15.

In this first statement in Ephesians 2:16, the verb *apokatallassō* (ἀποκαταλλάσσω) speaks of the act of Jesus Christ "reconciling" Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God in the sense of reestablishing proper friendly

interpersonal relations with God. This disruption of friendly relations was disrupted by the Mosaic Law according to Ephesians 2:15. In other words, this verb speaks of the restoration of the relationship between the human race and God, which was severed because of the fall of Adam and Even in the garden of Eden. In other words, this verb speaks of the act of Jesus Christ reconciling the human race, both Gentile and Jewish Christians to God.

In Ephesians 2:11-15, Paul has been discussing the reconciliation that has taken place between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Now, here in Ephesians 2:16, for the first time, he discusses the reconciliation which has taken place between these two groups and God the Father. There would be no reconciliation between these two communities with each other unless there was first a reconciliation between them and God the Father.

In Ephesians 2:14, we saw the articular accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *amphoteroi* (ἀμφότεροι). However, here in Ephesians 2:16, we have the articular accusative masculine plural form of the word. In both instances, the word means "both groups" since the word pertains to two considered together and refers to a group greater than two. In other words, it pertains to the totality of two. In each instance, the referent of this word is the Gentile and Jewish races and specifically, the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities.

Now, the question arises as to why Paul employs the masculine plural form of this word in Ephesians 2:16 and the neuter plural form of this word in Ephesians 2:14? The reason why he makes this shift from the neuter to the masculine plural form of this word is the referent of this word in Ephesians 2:16 is the accusative masculine singular form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος), "**man**," which appears at the end of Ephesians 2:15. This word is modified by the accusative masculine singular form of the adjective *kainos* (καινός), "**new**" and the accusative neuter singular form of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**." These three words means "one new humanity" or "one new man."

The noun *sōma* (σῶμα), "**body**" is used in a figurative sense to describe the church as being like the human body in that it has diversity among its members but yet they possess a unity. The word refers to church age believers who are joined together as a corporate unit with the implication of each member having a distinctive function within this unit. The referent of this word is of course the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities emphasizing not only the diversity between the two but also the unity that exists between the two as a result of both being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Him and identifying them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

The dative neuter singular form of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**" pertains to a single unit or thing and not two or more or in other words, it pertains to one in contrast to more than one. It is ascribing to this body of Jewish and Gentile Christians as being a unified single human entity despite the diversity between the two.

The accusative masculine singular form of the noun *sōma* (σῶμα) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of a change of state or condition. Therefore, this word marks Jewish and Gentile Christians going from the state of being hostile toward each other and in relation to God to existing in the state of being one body which is unified despite the diversity between the two.

The referent of the articular dative masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) is God the Father. It functions as a dative of indirect object, which indicates that God the Father received the action of being reconciled to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities through the finished work of His Son on the cross.

The noun *stauros* (σταυρός), "**cross**" refers to the place where Jesus Christ experienced the wrath of God as a substitute for all of sinful humanity by suffering a substitutionary spiritual and physical death on the cross so as to reconcile all of sinful humanity, both Jew and Gentile to the Father. Suffering this wrath of God on the cross is signified by this noun *stauros* (σταυρός), "cross."

This word *stauros* (σταυρός), "**cross**" is the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), which is functioning as a marker of means. Therefore, this would indicate that the cross of Jesus Christ, which is a reference to Him experiencing the wrath of God on the cross of Calvary by suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross, was the means by which the Father reconciled Jewish and Gentile Christians with God the Father.

The participial result clause in Ephesians 2:16, namely, *apokteinas tēn echthran en autō* (ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ), "**Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification**" presents the result of Jesus Christ reconciling both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities to God through the former's finished work on the cross. Thus, this would express the idea that Jesus Christ reconciled both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities to each other and to God through His finished work on the cross "with result that" the hostility caused by the Mosaic Law was put to death by means of His Son Jesus Christ's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:14, the noun *echthra* (ἔχθρα), "**the hostility (between the two groups and the two with God)**" here in Ephesians 2:16 is used to describe the Mosaic Law and pertains to a state of enmity with someone. Here it speaks of the state of enmity or hostility which existed between the Jews and Gentiles in relation to God. The articular construction of this abstract noun

distinguishes the hostility that existed between the Gentiles and Jews and God from the hostility that exists between the Jewish and Gentile races with each other.

The verb *apoktennō* (ἀποκτέννω), "**Consequently, He put to death**" speaks of Jesus Christ killing the hostility between Jewish and Gentile Christian communities caused by the Mosaic Law in the sense of causing this hostility to cease between the two with His suffering undeservedly the wrath of God on the cross as a substitute for both groups.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:15, the referent of the dative third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) here in Ephesians 2:16 is again the Lord Jesus Christ emphasizing identity and is the demonstrative force intensified. This word contains the figure of metonymy which means that Jesus Christ is put for faith in Him at justification as well as union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

Also, as was the case in Ephesians 2:15, the dative third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) here in Ephesians 2:16 is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions again as a marker of means which indicates the means by which Jesus Christ put to death the hostility that existed between the Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God.

Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ) indicates that Jesus Christ put to death the hostility that existed between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities in relation to God, which was caused by the Mosaic Law, "by means of their faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification." In other words, these two groups appropriated the elimination of this hostility between themselves and God, which was caused by the Mosaic Law, "by means of their faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification." This interpretation is indicated by the fact that these two groups appropriated this reconciliation with God, which Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross by means of their faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

This interpretation of this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ), "**by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification**" here in Ephesians 2:16 is supported by the immediate context because this same prepositional phrase appears in Ephesians 2:15 with the same referent and meaning. Also, this prepositional phrase, which modifies the result participle clause *apokteinas tēn echthran* (ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἔχθραν), "**Consequently, He put to death this hostility (between the two and the two with God)**" is epexegetical because it is explaining the previous assertions which are found in the contents of Ephesians 2:14-15. Specifically, it explains the previous *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause in Ephesians 2:15. In

Ephesians 2:15, this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ) presents the means by which Jesus Christ caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be created into one new humanity. However, in Ephesians 2:16, it expresses the means by which the Lord put to death the hostility between these two groups in relation to God. In both instances, it was by means of their faith in Jesus Christ resulting in the Father declaring them justified as well as their union and identification with Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification that they were created into one new humanity and that the hostility between them and God was eliminated.

Furthermore, this interpretation is supported by the fact that this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ) has appeared four times already in the Ephesian epistle and in each instance, Jesus Christ is the referent. Three times the referent is the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit, which took place at their justification (cf. Eph. 1:4, 9; 2:15). One time, the referent is Jesus Christ's sovereign authority during the millennium (cf. Eph. 1:10). Lastly, the referent of the masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) in Ephesians 2:18 and 20 is Jesus Christ.

Now, most expositors believe the referent of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) is the noun *stauros* (σταυρός), "**cross**" because they agree in gender (masculine) and number (singular) and are in close proximity to each other in the text. However, although, the finished work of Christ, which is signified by the noun *stauros* (σταυρός), "**cross**," accomplished this reconciliation between Jewish and Gentile Christians and both of these groups in relation to God, this double reconciliation can only be appropriated and thus experienced by both groups by means of faith in Jesus Christ at justification. In other words, they could never experience this double reconciliation until the Father declared them justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, they are placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

Therefore, this author believes that this prepositional phrase *en autō* (ἐν αὐτῷ) here in Ephesians 2:16 expresses the means by which Jesus Christ put to death the hostility that existed between both Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God. Both groups appropriated this double reconciliation by means of their faith in Him at justification, which resulted in them being placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him through the baptism of the Spirit.

The declarative statement contained in Ephesians 2:17 corresponds to the previous assertions presented in Ephesians 2:11-16. Therefore, by way of review, let's take a look at these assertions, which appear in the latter. The apostle Paul teaches in Ephesians 2:14 that Jesus Christ Himself personifies the peace that exists between the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities and the peace that exists

between these two groups with God. Paul then identifies specifically how this is the case by asserting that He caused both groups to be one. Specifically, He did this by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier that is that which hostility between the two with each other and the two with God. Then, in verse, Paul develops this further by stating that Jesus Christ nullified by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of law, and which law is a reference to the Mosaic Law. The purpose of which was that Jesus Christ might cause the two races to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Consequently, Jesus Christ caused peace to be established between the two with each other and the two with God. Then, in verse 16, Paul develops this purpose further by noting that the purpose of Jesus Christ nullifying the Mosaic Law was to reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross. Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

Now, in verse 17, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ came and preached peace to the Gentiles who were far off from God and peace to the Jews who were near. The Jews were near because they were given many privileges by God and were entered into a covenant relationship with God. Paul lists these privileges in Romans 3:1-3 and 9:4-5. The former asserts that the Jews were given the Old Testament scriptures. On the other hand, latter asserts that they were adopted as sons by God, received the Shekinah Glory. They were also given the patriarchs and the Abraham, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants and the unconditional promises contained in these covenants. Lastly, they were given the Mosaic Law, the temple worship, and the Messiah would be a Jew. On the other hand, God never gave these privileges to the Gentiles and nor did He ever enter into a covenant relationship with them.

This statement in Ephesians 2:17 corresponds to the statements recorded in Ephesians 2:14-16 because as we have shown both speak of Jewish and Gentile Christian communities are experiencing peace with each other and with God through faith in Christ and through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. However, Ephesians 2:14-16 describes how Jesus Christ accomplished this peace between the two and these two with God whereas Ephesians 2:17 states that He came to these two groups and preached this peace to both of them.

The noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη) appears twice in Ephesians 2:17. The first time it is modified by the articular expression *tois makran* (τοῖς μακρὰν), "**those who were far off**" and the second is modified by the articular expression *tois engys* (τοῖς ἐγγύς), "**those who were near**."

As was the case in Ephesians 2:14 and 15, the noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη) in both instances here in Ephesians 2:17 means "peace" since the word pertains to

harmonious relations and freedom from disputes and the absence of war between groups of people. In other words, it pertains to the state of experiencing reconciliation. It not only speaks of the peace between Gentile and Jewish Christians but also it pertains to the peace that exists between both groups and God. This is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:16, which inserts that Jesus Christ reconcile both groups into one new humanity "to God" through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.

Jesus Christ personifies this peace that exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God for four reasons. First, He is "the author" of peace since Ephesians 2:14 asserts that He caused both Jewish and Gentile Christians to be one group. Secondly, His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which constitute Him suffering the Father's wrath, are "the basis" for this peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians. The Lord's suffering propitiated the Father and thus reconciled the sinful humanity to a holy God. This interpretation is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:13 and 16. The former asserts that Gentile Christians have been brought near to God and His covenant people Israel by means of the blood of Christ, which is a representative analogy that speaks of Christ suffering the wrath of God by suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross. The latter asserts that Jesus Christ reconciled both Jewish and Gentile Christians to God through His cross, which again speaks of Him suffering the wrath of God by suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross. Thirdly, Jesus Christ personifies the peace that now exists between Jewish and Gentile Christians in relation to God because He is "the medium" of this peace. This is indicated by the fact that Ephesians 2:18 asserts that it is through Him that both Jew and Gentile Christians have access to the Father by the Spirit. Lastly, Ephesians 2:17 asserts that Jesus Christ is "the proclaimer" of this peace to those who were near to God, the Jews and those who were far away from Him, the Gentiles.

This preaching of peace to both groups refers to the work of the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ since He Himself preached to only the nation of Israel during His First Advent (cf. Matt. 10:5-6; 15:24-27). He makes that He was not sent to the Gentiles during His First Advent. However, He would send His apostles fifty days after His session at the right hand of the Father on the day of Pentecost in approximately June of 33 A.D. On that day, Peter began proclaiming the gospel to the Jews as recorded in Acts chapter 2 whereas Acts 10 records him communicating the gospel to the Gentiles. Both received the baptism of the Spirit, which united for the first time these two communities.

The Lord Jesus Christ peached this peace to both groups through the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit preached this peace through the apostles of Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ preached this peace to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities through the Spirit working through the apostles. Paul was sent to the

Gentiles and the other apostles were sent to the Jews. Furthermore, not only the apostles were employed by the Lord Jesus Christ to proclaim the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles by the power of the Holy Spirit, but also many evangelists and pastors and Christians operating in their royal ambassadorship have done this work throughout the centuries since the apostles.

Now, here in Ephesians 2:17, the referent of the dative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you**" is of course the recipients of this epistle who Paul describes here in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians. The word not only refers to these Gentile Christians living in the various Christian communities throughout the Roman province of Asia as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:13, the adverb of separation *makran* (μακράν) here in Ephesians 2:17 means "far away" and is used in a figurative sense of the relationship that did not exist between these Gentile Christians and God and His covenant people Israel.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:13, the adverb *engys* (ἐγγύς) here in Ephesians 2:17 means "near"and is also used in a figurative sense of the close, intimate relationship that now existed between God and His covenant people, Israel.

The repetition of the noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη) here in Ephesians 2:17 emphasizes that both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities were experiencing not only peace with each other but both were experiencing peace with God.

The verb *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι) pertains to moving in the direction of a particular geographical location in which certain persons live. The referent of the masculine singular form of this verb is Jesus Christ but in the sense of Jesus Christ performing the action of this verb through the Holy Spirit and His apostles. This verb is used in relation to the proclamation of the gospel by the apostles to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. Therefore, this verb *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι) speaks of Jesus Christ coming to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities in the sense of traveling to and arriving at the geographical locations of both of them through His Spirit led and empowered apostles.

The nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι) functions as a nominative of simple apposition. Therefore, the participle conjugation of this verb is identifying an activity of Jesus Christ which corresponds with Him reconciling both Gentile and Jewish Christian communities to each other and with God through His finished work on the cross.

The participle conjugation of this verb *erchomai* (ἔρχομαι) functions as a participle of result, which indicates the actual outcome or result of the action of the main verb, which appears in Ephesians 2:16 and is the third person singular aorist active subjunctive form of the verb *apokatallassō* (ἀποκαταλλάσσω). Therefore, this would indicate that the former identifies "the result of" Jesus Christ reconciling both

Jewish and Gentile Christian communities to each other and both groups with God through His finished work on the cross. Namely, He preached peace to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities through the Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel by His apostles.

The verb *euangelizō* (εὐαγγελίζω) pertains to the proclamation of the gospel message. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is of course Jesus Christ. The noun *eirēnē* (εἰρήνη), "**peace**" appears twice here in Ephesians 2:17 and in each instance it functions as the accusative direct object of this verb. Therefore, this indicates that this peace receives the action of being proclaimed by Jesus Christ through the Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. Therefore, this verb speaks of Jesus Christ proclaiming peace to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities through His apostles' Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel to both groups.

Of course, this peace refers to the reconciliation that exists between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and the reconciliation that these two groups now enjoy with a holy God as a result of the Father declaring them justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Consequently, they were identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit which took place at justification. This justifying faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ united these two communities with each other and these two groups with God.

Paul is alluding to Isaiah 52:7 and 57:19 here in Ephesians 2:17 in order to emphasize the peace God the Father established between the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and these two groups with Himself.

Isaiah 52:7 How delightful it is to see approaching over the mountains the feet of a messenger who announces peace, a messenger who brings good news, who announces deliverance, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (NET)

Isaiah 57:19 "creating the fruit of the lips. Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the LORD, "and I will heal him." (ESV)

Ephesians 2:14-16 teaches that the Father accomplished this two-fold reconciliation through the finished work of His Son, Jesus Christ on the cross. The Father also accomplished this two-fold reconciliation through the work of the Holy Spirit at justification when at which time, the Spirit placed these two groups in union with His Son and identifying them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand.

Ephesians 2:18 is a *hoti* (ὅτι) result clause, which presents the result of the previous declarative statement in Ephesians 2:17. The statement which it introduces asserts that through the intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit access to the presence of God the Father. Specifically, it asserts that through Jesus Christ's

crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access to the presence of God the Father by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit. The statement in Ephesians 2:17 asserts that Jesus Christ came and proclaimed peace for the benefit of the Gentiles who were far off from God and peace to those who were near, namely, the Jews. Jesus Christ accomplished this through Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel by His apostles and pastor-teachers and evangelists. Therefore, a comparison of these two statements indicates that Jesus Christ through His Spirit empowered communicators of the gospel came and proclaimed peace for the benefit of Jewish and Gentile church age believers "with the result that" through Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of God the Father.

Some expositors argue that the conjunction *hoti* (ὅτι) in Ephesians 2:18 is casual, which would mean that the statement, which it introduces presents the reason for the statement in Ephesians 2:17. This would express the idea that Jesus Christ came proclaiming peace for the benefit of the Gentiles and the Jews "because" through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father. This obviously does not make sense.

Some like Thielman asserts that the statement in verse 18 presents "the basis for, or proof of, the peace that Christ has proclaimed and this proof comes in the form of the access that Christ has provided to God for both Jews and Gentiles."[15] This view can be rejected on the basis of the customary present or stative present tense of the verb *echō* (ἔχω). It expresses the idea that both Jewish and Gentile Christians are "existing in the state of" experiencing access to the Father by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. Thus, how could the present access to the Father by both groups be the reason why the Lord through His apostles preached the gospel to them? In other words, they are already experiencing access to the Father, thus why the need to proclaim the gospel to them, which speaks of this peace with each other and both groups with God through faith in Jesus Christ at justification and through the baptism of the Spirit at justification?

Thus, it makes much better sense if the conjunction *hoti* (ὅτι) is interpreted as a marker of result presenting the reason why Jesus Christ came proclaiming peace for the benefit of the Gentiles and the Jews through the Spirit empowered communicators of the gospel. In other words, it presents the result of this proclamation of peace to both groups through the communication of the gospel. The result of this peace being proclaimed to both groups through the communication of

[15] Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 174). Baker Academic.

the gospel was that through Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of God the Father.

In Ephesians 2:18, the referent of the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**Himself**" is Jesus Christ. We also noted that this word of the preposition *dia* (διά), which functions as a marker of agency, which indicates that Jesus Christ is the personal intermediate agency through whom both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit into the presence of the Father. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *di' autou* (δι' αὐτοῦ), "**through Himself**" indicates that both Jewish and Gentile Christians experience access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit into the presence of the Father "through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself."

This interpretation is supported by the fact that the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father brought the Jewish and Gentile Christian into the presence of the Father. This is indicated by the fact that when the Father declared them justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, simultaneously, the omnipotence of the Spirit united them with Jesus Christ and placed them under His headship. Also, at their justification, the omnipotence of the Spirit identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This is called the baptism of the Spirit (Rom. 6).

Thus, both Jewish and Gentile Christians were brought into the presence of the Father because of the work of both the Son and the Spirit. Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father brought regenerate church age believers into the presence of the Father because He is the intermediary between a holy God and sinners (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5). The church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ resulting in the Father declaring them justified simultaneously, appropriated the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit who brought them into the presence of the Father. The Spirit did this by placing them under Jesus Christ's headship and uniting them with Him and identifying them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, Jesus Christ is the personal intermediate agency who enables both Jewish and Gentile church age believers to experience access to the presence of the Father because when He declared them justified through faith in His Son, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit appropriated for them the benefits of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

In Ephesians 2:18, the verb *echō* (ἔχω) means "to experience" a state or condition indicating that through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself both Jewish and Gentile Christians are "experiencing" access to the Father by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit.

The first person plural of this verb is an inclusive "we" or literary plural which is used to include both the author and his audience. Paul was of course a Jewish Christians and the recipients of this letter were Gentile Christians according to Ephesians 2:11. Therefore, when Paul employs the first person plural because he is referring to both himself and the recipients of the Ephesian epistle with himself representing the Jewish Christian community. Thus, it specifically refers to both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities.

The present tense of this verb is a customary present or stative present, which indicates that through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself the apostle Paul and the recipients of the Ephesian epistle "exist in the state of" experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father.

The present tense can also be interpreted as a gnomic present which is used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact and says that something does happen. Here it would indicate that through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself Paul and the recipients of the Ephesian epistle "as a general timeless fact" or "an eternal spiritual truth" are experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:14 and 16, the articular nominative masculine plural form of the adjective *amphoteroi* (ἀμφότεροι) here in Ephesians 2:18 means "both groups" and in each of these verses the referents are both the Gentile and Jewish Christian communities.

In Ephesians 2:18, the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *patēr* (πατήρ), "**the Father**" refers of course to the first member of the Trinity. We also noted that the articular construction of this word functions indicates that the Father is "in a class by himself" or the extreme of those who are fathers. Thus, it indicates that there is only one Father worth mentioning as far as Jewish and Gentile Christians are concerned.

The noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή), "**access**" here in Ephesians 2:18 appears only in this verse and two other places in the Greek New Testament (Romans 5:2; Ephesians 3:12). It means, "to lead someone into the presence of another" with the assistance of another and with the implication that the person doing the receiving is of higher status. In each instance, the word denotes "access to the presence" of the Father. In these passages, the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) is used in relation to God the Father, thus the word denotes the sinner being led into the presence of the

Father through the intermediary agency of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with the Father.

John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (NASB95)

The noun *patēr* (πατήρ) is the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which means "face to face with, in the presence of" since it functions as a marker of close personal association with the implication of personal intimacy with someone and of an interrelationship or reciprocal relation. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα) indicates that both Jewish and Gentile Christians are experiencing access to "the personal presence of the Father" through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ and by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

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The church age believer gains permanent access into the presence of the Father for an eternal relationship and fellowship through the Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. When the Father declared the church age believer justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit placed them in union with His Son and under His federal headship and identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. The church age believer's identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial is important because the Lord's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross propitiated the Father's holiness that demanded that sin be judged (1 John 2:1; 4:10). Through His finished work on the cross, the Lord opened the way for the sinner to approach God and gain access to the Father and which access is gained by the sinner through faith in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior. The church age believer identification with Jesus Christ is important because it guarantees them a resurrection body, which will be minus the old indwelling Adamic sin nature. Their identification with Him in His present session at the right hand of the Father is essential because it seats them positionally at the right hand of the Father and in a perfective sense when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church. They experience this identification when they are experiencing fellowship with God by appropriating this union and identification with

Jesus Christ by considering themselves to be crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Him in the Father's presence at His right hand.

This word *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) is also related to prayer. Access to the Father in prayer is made possible for the justified sinner solely through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. The Lord's session, or present position at the right hand of the Father, provides the believer with a Great High Priest, interceding on their behalf (Heb 7:25; 1 John 2:2). Therefore, Jesus Christ serves as the believer's advocate and intermediary. As a result, the believer is commanded to pray to the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ because, only through Christ, may the believer boldly approach the throne of God and offer prayers to Him (cf. John 16:26-27; Heb. 4:14-16). Through the Lord Jesus Christ and His saving work on the cross, the believer is blessed with free access to God the Father (cf. Heb. 10:10-14, 19-22). The throne of judgment was transformed to a throne of grace because the Lord Jesus Christ propitiated God the Father with His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross (cf. Heb. 2:17). The righteous demands of God's holiness—namely, that the sins of the entire world be judged were satisfied through the merits of the voluntary, substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of the impeccable incarnate Son of God on the cross, thus, opening the airwaves and allowing access to God the Father (Rom. 3:23-26). Our Lord's propitiatory sacrifice changed the *hilasterion*, 'mercy seat," from a place of judgment to a "throne of grace," a place where mercy may be extended to man.

The Lord Jesus, therefore, commands the believer to pray in His name to the Father, consciously aware that the merits of His impeccable character and of His impeccable work on the cross made it possible. The Holy Spirit is another who, as the Spirit of grace and supplication (Zech. 12:10), assures us of our relationship with God, guides us in our prayer life, intercedes for us, and enables us to pray (Rom. 8:26-27).

Therefore, in Ephesians 2:18, the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) indicates that because Jewish and Gentile church age believers have been declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ and have been identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit, they always possess access to the presence of the Father. They have permanent access to His presence in the sense that they always possess an eternal relationship with the Father. The word also indicates the continuing availability of this access to the presence of the Father or in other words, it indicates the continued availability of approaching the Father for fellowship.

Now, in Ephesians 2:18, the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) means, "access" and not simply "entrance" since the former accurately reflects the meaning of the word because it denotes not only entrance into the presence of the Father but also the continuing availability of that access to the presence of the Father.

The English word "access" denotes the ability or permission to approach, enter, speak with or use; admittance and is the state or quality of being approachable. If we paraphrase this definition, we could say that the believer has the ability and permission to approach the Father and enter His presence in order to speak with Him in prayer through the personal intermediate agency of the Lord Jesus Christ. This access was made possible through His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It was also made possible through the believer's identification with Jesus Christ in these events in His life through the baptism of the Spirit when the Father declared them justified.

Now, in Ephesians 2:18, the referent of the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is of course the Holy Spirit, who is the third member of the Trinity. This word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence at the church age believer's justification. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that when the Father declared both Jewish and Gentile church age believers justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Jesus Christ and under His federal headship and identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

In verse 18, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is modified by the dative neuter singular form of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**." The use of this adjective parallels its usage in Ephesians 2:16 where it modifies the noun *sōma* (σῶμα), "body," which refers the body of Jewish and Gentile Christians as being a unified single human entity despite the diversity between the two. The use of the adjective *heis* (εἷς) in Ephesians 2:18 emphasizes that it was by means of the omnipotence of one Spirit, namely the Holy Spirit that Jewish and Gentile Christians form a single unified human entity. It emphasizes that the Spirit unifies both groups and specifically, it emphasizes that the exercise of His power or omnipotence is the unifying force between these two groups with each other and these two groups with God.

We also noted that the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means indicating that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit was the means by which both Jewish and Gentile Christians exist in the state of experiencing access to the Father. The Spirit's omnipotence appropriated for the benefit of the church age believer the benefits of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father when the Father declared them justified through faith in His one and only Son.

This expression *en heni pneumati* (ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι), "**by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit**," which appears in Ephesians 2:18, also is found in

1 Corinthians 12:13 and Philippians 1:27. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 it is used in relation to the baptism of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Whether Jews or Greeks or slaves or free, we were all made to drink of the one Spirit. (NET)

In Ephesians 2:18, the noun *patēr* (πατήρ), "**the one and only Father**" is the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which means "face to face with, in the presence of" since it functions as a marker of close personal association with the implication of personal intimacy with someone and of an interrelationship or reciprocal relation. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα), "**to the presence of the Father**" indicates that both Jewish and Gentile Christians are experiencing access "to the personal presence of the Father" through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ and by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. This prepositional phrase emphasizes the intimate fellowship both groups are experiencing with the Father through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ and by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's vocabulary here in Ephesians 2:18 is similar to that of the vocabulary he employs in Romans 5:1-2.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by means of faith as a source, we always have peace with God through our Lord who is Jesus, who is the Christ. 2 Through whom also, we have as a permanent possession access to this gracious benefit in which we forever stand and in addition we make it a habit to rejoice upon the confident expectation of sharing God's glory. (Author's translation)

In these verses, the apostle Paul employs the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) in relation to the reconciliation of the justified sinner with a holy God, which is based upon the merits of the object of their faith at justification, namely, Jesus Christ. This reconciliation results in them experiencing peace with God.

Ephesians 2:18 contains a "triadic pattern," which means that all three members of the Trinity are mentioned. In fact, the Trinity is a major theme that appears in the Ephesian epistle. As we also noted in our study of Ephesians 1:3, this verse contains a triadic pattern. In fact, Ephesians 1:3-14 itself contains a triadic pattern.

Ephesians 2:19 is composed of the following: (1) emphatic inferential clause *Ara oun ouketi este xenoi kai paroikoi* (Ἄρα οὖν οὐκέτι ἐστὲ ξένοι καὶ πάροικοι), "**Indeed therefore, each and every one of you as corporate unit are no longer foreigners (to the covenants of promise), that is, foreign citizens**." (Author's translation) (2) strong adversative clause *all' este sympolitai tōn hagiōn kai oikeioi tou theou* (ἀλλ' ἐστὲ συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων καὶ οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ), "**But rather each and every one of you as a corporate unit are fellow citizens with the saints, that is, members of God's household**." (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 2:19, the apostle Paul employs two metaphors to describe Gentile Christians not only in relation to the Jewish Christian community but in relation to every believer in every Old Testament dispensation in the past. The first metaphor is that Gentile Christians are citizens in a city. The second is that they are members of a family. He uses these two metaphors in order to emphatically emphasize that they are share equal status in the kingdom of God with Jewish believers in past Old Testament dispensations and with those believers who lived in the dispensations before the establishment of the nation of the Jewish race, which was through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In other words, Paul is stating in emphatic terms to the Gentile Christian community that they are no second rate citizens. Therefore, we can see that these two metaphors present an emphatic contrast between the unregenerate state of these Gentile church age believers and their present regenerate state as justified sinners who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, we can see that in Ephesians 2:19 the emphatic inferential clause is asserting that each and every of the recipients of this epistle, who are identified in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile church age believers, are no longer foreigners, that is foreign citizens. It is the result of an inference from the previous assertions in Ephesians 2:11-18. Thus, it presents a summarizing statement with regards to the contents of Ephesians 2:11-18.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:12, the adjective *xenos* (ξένος), "**foreigners**" here in this emphatic inferential clause in Ephesians 2:19 is used to describe Gentile Christians as being strangers to the Mosaic covenant as well as the four unconditional covenants of promise, which were given by God to His covenant people, Israel. These four unconditional covenants were the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants.

The adjective *paroikos* (πάροικος), "**foreign citizens**" pertains to someone who lives in a particular nation in which they are without the right of citizenship. Specifically, here in Ephesians 2:19, the word describe the members of the Gentile Christian community as no longer being foreigner citizens.

The adjective *xenos* (ξένος), "**foreigners**" describes a person who is a foreigner in a land which has given travelling rights throughout the country whereas the adjective *paroikos* (πάροικος), "**foreign citizens**" describes a person who is legally a resident alien and possesses a residence visa.

In Ephesians 2:19, the strong adversative clause asserts that each and every one of these Gentile church age believers are fellow citizens with the saints, that is, they are members of God's household. It presents an emphatic contrast with the emphatic inferential clause. Thus, it presents an emphatic contrast between these Gentile church age believers being foreigners or in other words, foreign citizens in relation to Jewish church age believers prior to their justification and that of them being

fellow citizens with them and members of God's household from the moment of their justification.

The noun *sympolitēs* (συμπολίτης), "**fellow citizens**" describes Gentile church age believers as fellow citizens with the saints. As was the case when the word appeared in Ephesians 1:1, 15 and 18, the articular genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**with the saints**" here in Ephesians 2:19 describes all the members of the body of Christ who have been set apart through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification in order to order serve God exclusively. However, here it is used to describe sinners justified by faith in the Lord in every dispensation of history including the church age. This is indicated by the fact that this term *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**saints**" is not only used in the New Testament with church age believers as its referent, but also it is used with Old Testament believers as its referent (cf. Matt. 27:52; Rev. 11:18; 18:24). The word's referent is also believers living during the seventieth week of Daniel (Rev. 13:7; 14:12) and believers living during the seventieth week who have been martyred (Rev. 8:3; 16:6; 18:24). Those believers living during the millennial reign Christ from all dispensations including the church age are the word's referent in Revelation 20:9).

The referent of this term *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**saints**" cannot be church age believers exclusively and specifically its referent cannot be Jewish church age believers being contrasted with Gentile church age believers. This is indicated by the fact that Ephesians 2:11-18 does not distinguish Jewish and Gentile church age believers but rather asserts that they together form the new humanity which is in union and identified with Jesus Christ who is the head of the new humanity. Secondly, it is indicated by the fact that Galatians 3:26-28 asserts that during the church age there is neither Jew nor Gentile.

When Paul asserts in Ephesians 2:19 that the Gentile Christian community are fellow citizens with the all the believers throughout the past Old Testament dispensations, he is alluding to their heavenly citizenship, which Paul develops quite a bit in the epistle to the Philippian Christian community because in it he teaches them that they are citizens of heaven. In the Philippian epistle, Paul was addressing Roman citizens regarding their spiritual citizenship in heaven. To teach this, Paul employs the verb *politeuomai* (πολιτεύομαι) in Philippians 1:27 and the noun *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) in Philippians 3:20 which are terms the Philippian believers would be familiar with since Philippi was a Roman *politeuma* (πολίτευμα). This citizenship is also alluded to in Ephesians 2:19 and Hebrews 11:14-16.

Philippians 1:27 Only <u>conduct yourselves</u> (*politeuomai*) **in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. (NASB95)**

Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship (*politeuma*) **is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)**

"**Citizenship**" is the noun *politeuma* (πολίτευμα), which occurs only in the NT in this passage and means "citizenship" since the word pertains to "the place or location in which one has the right to be a citizen – 'state, commonwealth, place of citizenship.'"[16]

Here in Philippians 3:20, the word should be translated "citizenship" since it denotes the status of being a citizen. It denotes the concept of possessing the privileges and responsibility of a citizen of your homeland although living in a foreign land. It is a concept that the Philippians would be familiar with since they were Roman citizens living in a Roman colony.

Paul is writing as a citizen to citizens: (1) Roman citizen to Roman citizens. (2) Heavenly citizen to heavenly citizens. *Politeuma* (πολίτευμα) in Paul's day meant a Roman colony in a foreign land. It meant the rights and privileges of Roman citizens in a Roman colony.

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ became a citizen of heaven at the moment of justification through faith alone in Christ alone which results in regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit. Therefore, they did not have to pay for this citizenship since they received it simply by making the non-meritorious decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). In fact, the doctrine of election states that the church age believer was elected to privilege in eternity past since God the Father from His omniscience looked down the corridors of time and saw that the believer would make the non-meritorious decision to believe in Christ for salvation if given the opportunity to do so. So actually the apostle Paul is referring here to election since he employs the verb *hyparch* (ὑπάρχω), which refers to antecedent condition protracted into the present.

This word *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) also conveys the fact of the church age believer's position in Christ is a result of the baptism of the Spirit where the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ at the moment of justification. Paul is saying that the Philippians and himself possess the status of a citizen of heaven from eternity past under election and that they are people given great privilege and as a result, great responsibility.

The Christian is positionally a citizen of heaven because of the baptism of the Spirit and in fact it originates from eternity past under the doctrine of election. He is stating here by using this word that they should live in a manner that is in agreement with their status and position as a citizen of heaven. Their conduct should agree with their position or status as citizens of heaven, sons of God.

[16] Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, volume 2, page 132

There are three characteristics that the believer as a citizen of heaven now possesses positionally as a result of regeneration and the baptism of the Spirit: (1) Christ is their King rather than Satan. (2) They have a different life rather than death and live under a different system than the cosmic system. (3) They have new rights, privileges and responsibilities.

The church age believer as a citizen of heaven has the privilege of having an audience with the King through prayer in order to make petitions and requests. As a citizen of heaven the believer has his name registered on the legal records in heaven and in particular the "book of life," which is mentioned in Philippians 4:3.

In the metaphor, the foreign land is the world in which we live as born-again believers. Rome always set up the colony hence, heaven sets up the royal family of God. The third heaven (the abode of God) is analogous to the metaphor Rome while on earth is the locale of the *politeuma* (πολίτευμα). Born-again believers are a special privileged group as members of the royal family of God. The special privileges are the two great divine provisions: (1) Word of God (2) Spirit of God.

Church age believers are a colony on earth. They live on earth with all the privileges of heaven. They are a privileged group of people because of their *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) in heaven. In the *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) metaphor, heaven is the abode of God and is analogous to Rome while planet earth is the local of the *politeuma* (πολίτευμα), which is a heavenly colony. The *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) metaphor is related to the uniqueness of the church age, the Christian's responsibility to become an invisible hero through the divine provision of the unique grace support of this Christological dispensation. In the dispensation of the hypostatic union there was *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) for one person-the Lord Jesus Christ. In the dispensation of the church age there is *politeuma* (πολίτευμα) for *all* believers-the royal family of God.

Paul is writing as a Roman citizen to Roman citizens and as a heavenly citizen to heavenly citizens. Paul is commanding the Philippians in Philippians 1:27 and 3:20 and all church age believers to whom it is applicable to conduct themselves as citizens of heaven while here on earth. He is commanding the Philippians and all church age believers to function or conduct themselves under all the privileges and responsibilities that their heavenly citizenship confers.

Now, in Ephesians 2:19, the adjective *oikeios* (οἰκεῖος), "**household**," which also appears in the strong adversative clause and is used figuratively here to describe sinners justified by faith in the Lord in every previous dispensation prior to and during the church age.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), "**God**" refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. The articular construction of this word also indicates that

it is in a class by itself expressing the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worshipped was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity in the first century A.D. which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

When Paul asserts that Gentile church age believers are fellow citizens with the saints, he means that they are members of God's household. In other words, the expression *oikeioi tou theou* (οἰκεῖοι τοῦ θεοῦ), "**God's household**" makes explicit the expression *sympolitai tōn hagiōn* (συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων), "**fellow citizens with the saints**." God's household is composed of sinners justified by faith in the Lord from every dispensation who are designated by the term *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**with the saints**."

The "God's household" metaphor appears in only two other places in Paul's writings, namely, Galatians 6:10 and 1 Timothy 3:15.

Galatians 6:10 So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who belong to the family of faith. (NET)

1 Timothy 3:15 However, if possibly I am delayed, I am writing at this particular time in order that you would know for certain how one ought to always conduct oneself in God's household, which indeed by virtue of its unique, privileged and divine character is, as an eternal spiritual truth the living God's church, the pillar as well as support of the truth. (Author's translation)

So therefore, Paul is asserting in Ephesians 2:19 that not only is the Gentile church age believer a citizen of heaven but also they are now members of God's household, which is a metaphor which expresses the intimacy they now possess with God the Father. This metaphor connects to Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:18, in which he asserts that both Jew and Gentile church age believer are experiencing access to the Father through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ and by the omnipotence of the one Spirit. The metaphor of being a member of God's household is also connected to Paul's assertion in Ephesians 1:5 that both Jewish and Gentile church age believers have been elected by the Father in eternity past by means of the Father predestinating them to adoption as His sons. He also asserts in this verse that the Father did this because of His love through faith in Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will.

Ephesians 2:20 is composed of the following: (1) causal participial clause *epoikodomēthentes epi tō themeliō tōn apostolōn kai prophētōn* (ἐποικοδομηθέντες ἐπὶ τῷ θεμελίῳ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν), "**because each and every one of you as a corporate unit have been built upon the foundation, which is the communication of the gospel to each one of you by the apostles as well as prophets**." (2) temporal participial clause *ontos akrogōniaiou autou Christou Iēsou*

(ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), "**Simultaneously, He Himself, namely, Christ Jesus is the cornerstone**."

The causal participle clause presents the reason why the recipients of this epistle, who were Gentile church age believers living in the Roman province of Asia, were fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household. It asserts that it was because they had been built upon the foundation, which is the communication of the gospel to them by the apostles and New Testament prophets, which resulted in the Father declaring them justified as a result of having exercised faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. The temporal participial clause indicates contemporaneous action with the causal participial clause and asserts that He Himself, the Christ, who is Jesus, is the cornerstone of this building and specifically, temple of God.

Like Ephesians 2:19, Ephesians 2:20-22 contains a metaphor. In the former, the apostle Paul employs two metaphors to describe Gentile Christians not only in relation to the Jewish Christian community but in relation to every believer in every Old Testament dispensation in the past. The first metaphor is that Gentile Christians are citizens in a city. The second is that they are members of a family. He uses these two metaphors in order to emphatically emphasize that they are share equal status in the kingdom of God with Jewish believers in past Old Testament dispensations and with those believers who lived in the dispensations before the establishment of the nation of Israel. In other words, Paul is stating in emphatic terms to the Gentile Christian community that they are by no means second rate citizens. Therefore, we can see that these two metaphors present an emphatic contrast between the unregenerate state of these Gentile church age believers and their present regenerate state as justified sinners who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Now here in Ephesians 2:20, Paul employs a building metaphor and specifically a temple metaphor in order to describe the church.

Now, the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος), "**the apostles**" is used by Paul to describe himself and the other eleven men whom Jesus Christ personally selected to be those who serve as His witnesses to His life, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. The twelve men who were selected by the Lord Jesus Christ to the office of apostle were Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Simon the Canaanite, James, the son of Alphaeus, not the lesser, Thaddaeus, also called Jude, and Saul of Tarsus, also known as Paul. In Acts 1:26, Matthias was selected to be an apostle by lot to replace Judas Iscariot, however, this selection was not honored by God since he was not personally selected by the resurrected Christ as the other eleven men were, nor did he demonstrate any sign gifts.

Therefore, this word *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) refers to the office of an apostle, which was given by the Lord Jesus Christ to only thirteen men. Paul replaced Judas

Iscariot. The noun appears in the salutation of several of Paul's epistles, namely, Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1. However, it doesn't appear in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philippians and Philemon. Paul uses the word to establish that his authority is from the Lord Himself (Romans 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1). He uses it when his authority or teaching is being questioned or rejected by those to whom he is writing (1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians). The Thessalonians and Philippians were faithful to Paul's teaching and had a great friendship with Paul. Philemon was a personal note, thus there was no need of him to establish his authority with these churches and Philemon.

One of the requirements for holding the "office" of apostle was the experience of seeing the resurrected Christ as Paul had when defending his ministry in 1 Corinthians 9:1-2. Another requirement for holding the "office" of apostle was that of possessing the "sign gifts" such as healing, which Paul demonstrated he had many times during the course of his ministry (Acts 14:10; 16:18; 19:11; 20:10; 28:8) or "tongues," which Paul also demonstrated he possessed (1 Corinthians 14:18).

The office and spiritual gift of apostleship was not appointed until after the resurrection and ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ (See Ephesians 4:1-16). Distribution of spiritual gifts was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of His death, resurrection, ascension and session. However, the actual appointment of the spiritual gift of apostleship was made by God the Holy Spirit according 1 Corinthians 12:11.

The spiritual gift of apostleship functioned under two categories: (1) Writers of the New Testament (2) Establishment of local churches: (a) The clarification of mystery doctrine (b) The maintenance of a true systematic theology with dispensational emphasis (c) The training of pastors (d) Establishment of local church policy.

Paul was personally commissioned by the resurrected Christ to be the apostle to the Gentiles (See Acts 9:15; 22:21; Romans 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 1:15-16; 2:2, 7-9; Ephesians 3:1; First Timothy 2:7).

Now, here in Ephesians 2:20, the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) is employed as designation for the temporary spiritual gift assigned to the twelve men Jesus Christ sovereignly chose and delegated authority to exercise over the church. It is extremely important to understand with regards to this word that the gift of apostleship is in view here and not the twelve men themselves. It is through the exercise of this gift which serves as the foundation of the church. This gift was bestowed upon these twelve men at their justification. The Spirit worked through them when they exercised this gift by communicating the gospel. Therefore, this word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the apostles are put for the exercise of their Spirit imparted gift these twelve men received at justification. Again, this gift manifested itself when they communicated the gospel. This interpretation is

supported by the contents of Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28, which reveal that the gift of apostleship was foundational to the growth of the church numerically and with regards to the spiritual growth of individual believers.

Now, in Ephesians 2:20, the noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης), "**prophets**" refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet, which is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed (See 1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; 14:22; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11). As was the case with the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος), it is also extremely important to understand with this noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης), "**prophets**" that the gift of prophecy is in view here and not the men and women who possessed this gift. It is through the exercise of the gift of prophet which serves as the foundation of the church along with the exercise of the gift of apostleship. These New Testament prophets are also mentioned in Acts 11:27, 13:1, 15:32, 21:10, 1 Corinthians 12:28, 14:29, 32, 37 and Ephesians 4:11.

Like the gift of apostleship, the gift of prophet was bestowed upon people at justification. The Spirit worked through those who possessed this gift when they communicated the gospel. Therefore, this word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the prophets are put for the exercise of their Spirit imparted gift they received at justification. This interpretation is supported by the contents of Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28, which reveal that the exercise or function of the gift of prophecy along with the exercise or function of the gift of apostleship was foundational to the growth of the church both numerically and with regards to the spiritual growth of the individual members of the church.

The temporary spiritual gift of prophecy is the second spiritual gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11. Like the spiritual gift of apostle, this gift was temporary and is no longer extant today. The prophets were given to the church for the purpose of communicating God's will, purpose and plan for the church age before the canon of Scripture was completed in 96 A.D.

Now that the canon of Scripture has been completed there is no longer a need for prophets. Everything that God desires to say to us today is found in the completed canon of Scripture. We now have the completed revelation from God now that the canon of Scripture is closed. God does not communicate to man in the church age through dreams or visions or through prophets because everything He desires to communicate to the church is found in the completed canon of Scripture (Hebrews 1:1-2).

The noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης) in the Greek New Testament refers many times to the Old Testament prophets of Israel. They were the authorized spokesmen for God and proclaimed His will, purpose and plan (See Hebrews 1:1-2). The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures (See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). There were a number of activities that the

prophets of God were involved in such as communicating doctrine, issuing judgments, communicating future events, serving in the Temple, performing miracles, proclaiming Messianic prophecies, and interceding through prayer for the people (Hab. 3). An inspired prophet could be identified using the tests for prophets in Deut. 13:1-5; 18:14-22.

An inspired prophet could be identified using the tests for prophets in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:14-22. Moses wrote the Pentateuch (Ex. 17:14; 24:4-7; 34:27; Deut. 31:9,22,24; Ezra 7:6; Ps. 103:7; Josh. 8:31, 23:6; I Kings 2:3). Some prophets clearly state that they were ordered to write (Jer. 30:2; Ezek. 43:11; Is. 8:1) and each of the Twelve Minor Prophets call themselves prophets. The historical books were written by prophets (I Chron. 29:29; II Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 32:32; 33:19). Daniel accepted the book of Jeremiah as scripture (Dan. 9:2) and Joshua received Moses' writing as Scripture (Josh. 1:26) and Isaiah and Micah accepted each other's writings as scripture contemporaneously (Is. 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4). Solomon, Samuel, Daniel, Isaiah and Ezekiel all had dreams and visions, which squares with God's description of a prophet (Deut. 13:1; Num. 12:6-8).

The New Testament quotes the Old Testament over six hundred times (all of the Old Testament books are quoted except Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon and Acts 2:30 and Matthew 24:15 identify David and Daniel as prophets). Not only did the apostles learn from the Old Testament Scriptures and quote them extensively in their writings but also our Lord in His human nature did as well. After His resurrection from the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ employed the Old Testament Scriptures to instruct His disciples that the Messiah had to die and rise again from the dead (See Luke 24:44-47).

The prophets of God who were sent to Israel were in effect covenant enforcers in the sense that they called the people to repent by confessing their sins to God to be restored to fellowship with God. They also exhorted them to obedience to God to maintain that fellowship with God. By rejecting this message, Israel put themselves under divine discipline. The fact that God sent the prophets to warn Israel reveals that God did not want to judge the nation and in fact loved the nation.

That the noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης) here in Ephesians 2:20 does not refer to the Old Testament prophets of Israel is indicated by the fact that Paul is describing the foundation of the church, which was a mystery not known to the Old Testament prophets as indicated by Paul's statements in Ephesians 3:5.

The articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) has been a cause of great controversy and consternation among exegetes and expositors of Ephesians 2:20. This author does not believe that it signifies that the Granville Sharp rule is in effect, which would signal that the prophets and apostles are one in the same.

The Granville Sharp rule is as follows, "When the copulative και connects two nouns of the same case, [viz. nouns (either substantive or adjective, or participles)

of personal description, respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connexion, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill], if the article ὁ, or any of its cases, precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: i.e. it denotes a farther description of the first-named person.

Dan Wallace writes "Although Sharp discusses here only personal substantives in the singular, it is not clear from this statement whether he intended to restrict his rule to such. However, a perusal of his monograph reveals that he felt the rule could be applied absolutely only to personal, singular, non-proper nouns.[17]

In other words, in the TSKS construction, the second noun[18] refers to the same person mentioned with the first noun when: (1) neither is impersonal; (2) neither is plural; (3) neither is a proper name.[19]

Therefore, according to Sharp, the rule applied absolutely only with personal, singular, and non-proper nouns. The significance of these requirements can hardly be overestimated, for those who have misunderstood Sharp's principle have done so almost without exception because they were unaware of the restrictions that Sharp set forth."[20]

Therefore, the presence of the article before the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) does not indicate that the Granville Sharp rule is in effect. If it was in effect, this would indicate that the nouns *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) and *prophētēs* (προφήτης) are one in the same. However, as Wallace points out, this rule does not apply to plural nouns but only singular nouns since both these nouns are in the plural. Rather, the articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) is simply used by Paul to tie both the temporary spiritual gifts of apostles and prophets together as being the foundation of the church. Specifically, the article simply binds them together signifying that the exercise of both of these discontinued communication spiritual gifts constitutes the foundation of the church.

This author interprets the articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) as simply joining both the temporary spiritual gifts of apostle and prophet together as being the foundation of the church. Specifically, the article simply binds them together signifying that the exercise of both of these discontinued communication spiritual gifts constitutes the foundation of the church.

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[17] See Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 47–48, for documentation.

[18] By "noun" we mean what Sharp meant: substantival adjective, substantival participle, or noun.

[19] A *proper* noun is defined as a noun which *cannot* be "pluralized"—thus it does *not* include titles. A person's name, therefore, is proper and consequently does not fit the rule. But θεός is not proper because it can be pluralized—thus, when θεός is in a TSKS construction in which both nouns are singular and personal, it fits Sharp's rule. Since θεοί is possible (cf. John 10:34), θεός is not a proper name. For a detailed discussion on the grammatical use of θεός in the NT, cf. B. Weiss, "Der Gebrauch des Artikels bei den Gottesnamen," *TSK* 84 (1911) 319-92, 503–38; R. W. Funk, "The Syntax of the Greek Article: Its Importance for Critical Pauline Problems" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1953) 46, 154–67; Wallace, "The Article with Multiple Substantives," 260–63.

[20] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (pp. 271–272). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

Now, in the causal participial clause in Ephesians 2:20, the noun *themelios* (θεμέλιος), "**the foundation**" is used in a figurative sense for the Spirit empowered communication of the gospel by the apostles and the New Testament prophets to the members of the body of Christ when they were unregenerate. The word describes the exercise of the temporary spiritual gifts of apostleship and prophecy as the foundational support of the church. In other words, it was the gifts of apostleship and prophet that were the foundation and not the men themselves since these gifts were imparted to them by the Holy Spirit at their justification. The Spirit worked through them as they exercised their gifts in communicating the gospel. In fact, Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28 reveal that these two gifts were foundational in relation to the church. Lastly, the church grew numerically and spiritually as a result of the function of these two temporary spiritual gifts. The church grew numerically as a result of both Jews and Gentiles responding to the communication of the gospel by the apostles and prophets by exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Consequently, the Father declared them justified and simultaneously, placed them in union with His Son and identified them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand through the baptism of the Spirit.

The nouns *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) and *prophētēs* (προφήτης) function as epexegetical genitives, which are clarifying the ambiguity expressed by the noun *themelios* (θεμέλιος). Thus, the former are identifying the referent of the latter indicating that the apostles and New Testament prophets are in fact the foundation of the church. Specifically, the former identify the referent of the latter indicating that the function or exercise of the gift of apostleship and prophet are the foundation of the church. The articular construction of the *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) unites these temporary spiritual gifts of apostleship and prophets. In other words, the articular construction indicates that both gifts define the referent of the noun *themelios* (θεμέλιος), "the foundation." Thus, both words are functioning as epexegetical genitives defining the noun *themelios* (θεμέλιος), "**the foundation**."

The noun *themelios* (θεμέλιος) is the object of the preposition *epi* (ἐπί), which is marking the exercise or function of the gift of apostle and prophet as those who exercise authority over the church through the exercise of their spiritual gifts.

The verb *epoikodomeō* (ἐποικοδομέω) pertains to establishing a foundation of a particular building. It is used here in a figurative sense for the members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church having been constructed or established upon the foundation, which is the Spirit empowered communication of the gospel to them by the apostles and New Testament prophets. When they were exercised faith in Jesus Christ, the Father declared them justified. Simultaneously, they were placed in union with His Son and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Spirit.

The referent of the masculine plural form of this word is Paul and the recipients of this epistle who are identified by Paul in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians with Paul representing the Jewish wing of the church.

The verb *epoikodomeō* (ἐποικοδομέω) is not used with reference to the spiritual growth of the members of the body or Christ, i.e., the church or spiritual development of the individual members of the church. But rather it refers to the moment of justification. This is indicated by the aorist tense of this verb, which is a constative aorist which describes the action of these Gentile Christians having been built upon the function of the gift of apostle and prophet in summary fashion without focusing on the beginning or end of the action. It simply places emphasis upon the fact of the occurrence, not its nature.[21]

Therefore, the aorist tense of this verb describes in summary fashion the members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church having been built upon the foundation, which is the Spirit empowered communication of the gospel to them by the apostles and New Testament prophets. It simply emphasizes the fact of this taking place. When they exercised faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, the Father declared them justified. Simultaneously, at that moment, they were placed in union with His Son and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit.

This same verb *epoikodomeō* (ἐποικοδομέω) is used in Ephesians 2:22 but in the present tense to emphasize the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ at that time Paul wrote to the recipients of this epistle. This was accomplished by obedience to the Spirit inspired and empowered teaching of the apostles and New Testament prophets.

The participle of this verb is in the nominative case and functions as a nominative of simple apposition, which means that it is further describing these Gentile Christians as having been built upon the foundation, which is the Spirit empower proclamation of the gospel to them by the apostles and New Testament prophets.

The passive voice of this verb indicates that the recipients of this letter who were Gentile Christians in the Roman province of Asia as the subject received the action of having been built upon the foundation, namely by the Holy Spirit speaking to them through the communication of the gospel by the apostles and New Testament prophets, which resulted in their justification. The Holy Spirit made the gospel understandable to them and when they responded in faith to the gospel as it was communicated to them by the apostles and prophets, He imputed His Son's righteousness to them and declared them justified. Simultaneously, He placed them in union with His Son and identified them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial,

[21] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 557). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. For these reasons, this is a "divine-passive."

The participle conjugation of the verb is a causal participle which indicates that it is presenting the reason why Gentile Christians are fellow citizens with the saints from every past Old Testament dispensation and members of God's household. Therefore, this verb would express the idea that Gentile Christians are fellow citizens with the saints from every past dispensation as well as with the Jewish believing remnant during the church age and members of God's household "because" they have been built up upon the foundation, which is the Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel to them by the apostles and New Testament prophets.

Now, the adjective *akrogōniaios* (ἀκρογωνιαῖος), "**cornerstone**," which appears in the temporal participial clause here in Ephesians 2:20 pertains the first stone laid in the construction of a building at the outer corner of two intersecting masonry walls. Specifically, it refers to the cornerstone of a building. It is used figuratively of Jesus Christ being the cornerstone of the church. Specifically, it describes His person, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father as the cornerstone of the church.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the Christ is put for His person, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The genitive masculine singular form of the proper noun *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**Jesus**" refers to the human nature of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. It functions as a genitive of simple apposition which means that it simply clarifies who is Christ here, namely Jesus of Nazareth since there were many in the first century who made the claim.

The verb *eimi* (εἰμί) is expressing the idea that Jesus Christ's person, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father "possesses inherently the characteristic" of being the chief cornerstone of the church.

The participle conjugation of this verb functions as a temporal participle indicating that it is contemporaneous with the action of the aorist tense of the verb *epoikodomeō* (ἐποικοδομέω). Therefore, this would express the idea that the church is built upon foundation, which is the Spirit empowered proclamation of the gospel to them when they were unregenerate by the apostles and prophets, "while simultaneously" Jesus Christ's person, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father is the chief cornerstone of the church.

The participle conjugation of this verb functions as a genitive absolute which serves to distinguish Jesus Christ from His apostles and prophets by asserting that He is the chief cornerstone of the church. Specifically, it serves to distinguish Him from His apostles and prophets by emphasizing that His person, teaching,

crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father is the chief cornerstone of the church.

Ephesians 2:21 is composed of the following: (1) causal participial clause *en hō pasa oikodomē synarmologoumenē* (ἐν ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη), "**On the basis of its being continually fitted inextricably together by means of its union and identification with Him**." (2) declarative statement *auxei eis naon hagion en kyriō* (αὔξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ), "**the whole building is growing into a holy temple by means of fellowship with Lord.**"

The causal participial clause presents the basis or the reason why for the declarative statement which follows it. Therefore, Paul asserts in Ephesians 2:21 that the members of the Christian community are growing experientially into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ because or on the basis that they are being continually fitted inextricably together by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ. Thus, this verse teaches that the church age believers' fellowship with the Lord is based upon their union and identification with Him. Without the latter, there could be no former. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that this assertion is bookended by the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by means of its union and identification with Him**" and *en kyriō* (ἐν κυρίῳ), "**by means of fellowship with Lord**" to bookend this assertion. Together, they emphasize this spiritual principle.

Ephesians 2:20-22 like Ephesians 2:19 contains a metaphor. In the former, the apostle Paul employs two metaphors to describe Gentile Christians not only in relation to the Jewish Christian community but in relation to every believer in every Old Testament dispensation in the past. The first metaphor is that Gentile Christians are citizens in a city. The second is that they are members of a family. He uses these two metaphors in order to emphatically emphasize that they are share equal status in the kingdom of God with Jewish believers in past Old Testament dispensations and with those believers who lived in the dispensations before the establishment of the nation of Israel. In other words, Paul is stating in emphatic terms to the Gentile Christian community that they are by no means second rate citizens. Therefore, we can see that these two metaphors present an emphatic contrast between the unregenerate state of these Gentile church age believers and their present regenerate state as justified sinners who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Now here in Ephesians 2:20, Paul employs a building metaphor and specifically a temple metaphor in order to describe the church.

Now, in Ephesians 2:21, the referent of the dative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is Jesus Christ and contains the figure of metonymy which means that the person of Jesus Christ is put for justification by faith and union and

identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

This is indicated by the fact that the members of the body of Christ are being continually inextricably joined together through the baptism of the Spirit the moment the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ by placing them together in union with His Son. The Spirit also identified them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The dative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means, which indicates that justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ is "the means by which" church age believers are fitted or inextricably connected together to form a coherent whole or corporate unit.

As was the case in 1 Corinthians 3:9, the noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή) here in Ephesians 2:19 is used in a figurative sense of the body of Christ, the church as the building of God. In other words, the word is employed as a building metaphor to describe the members of the body of Christ as a corporate unit. The metaphor describes the members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church as part of a building or construction project undertaken by God and accomplished through the work of His Son and the Spirit.

We also noted that this word is modified by the nominative feminine singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), which pertains to the totality of the members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church or we could say it pertains to them as a corporate unit.

We also noted that the nominative feminine singular present passive participle conjugation of the verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω) is used in a figurative or metaphorical sense for the members of the body of Christ being fitted or connected inextricably together to form a coherent whole or corporate unit of people.

The participle conjugation of this verb is a causal participle presents "the reason why" or "the basis upon which" the members of the Christian community exist in the state of growing into a holy temple in the Lord. Thus, it expresses the idea that "on the basis of" the members of the Christian community existing in the state of being continually fitted or connected inextricably together as a coherent whole or corporate unit by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ, they are growing into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord.

The present tense of this verb is a customary or stative present which expresses the idea that the church being "continually" joined inextricably together by means of their union and identification with Jesus Christ. It indicates that the church is a work in progress in the sense that it is growing every day as a result of sinners exercising faith in Jesus Christ. This results in the Father imputing His Son's righteousness to them with the result that He declares them justified.

Simultaneously, the Father through the work of the Spirit in baptism places these justified sinners in union with His Son and identifies them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The passive voice of this verb indicates that church age believers as the subject of this verb receive the action of existing in the state of being fitted inextricably together as a coherent whole and corporate unit by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ. This is another "divine-passive" because church age believers receive this action of being fitted inextricably together with each other and Jesus Christ as a result of the Father imputing His Son's righteousness to them with the result that He declares them justified. Also, it is a "divine-passive" because church age believers are fitted inextricably to together with each other and Jesus Christ because the Holy Spirit places them in union with His Son at justification and identifies them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *auxō* (αὔξω) is used in a figurative sense in relation to the body of Christ and speaks of the spiritual growth in the individual members of the body of Christ. The present tense of this verb is a customary or stative present which expresses the idea that the church "continually" growing spiritually into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord.

The accusative masculine singular form of the noun *naos* (ναός) refers to the inner sanctuary of the temple, which was inhabited by the presence of God and not the entire temple complex. Here it is used in a figurative sense to describe the members of the Christian community as a corporate unit.

The noun *naos* (ναός) is modified by the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), which is describing the members of the church or body of Christ as being set apart to serve God exclusively in an experiential sense. This is indicated by the present tense of the verb *auxō* (αὔξω) which is used in a figurative sense in relation to the body of Christ and speaks of the spiritual growth in the individual members of the body of Christ.

The noun *naos* (ναός) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which marks the members of the church as a group of individuals whose character is being transformed from the state of sin, evil and rebellion to those who possess experientially a holy character.

Therefore, by Paul describing church age believers as growing into a holy temple of God here in Ephesians 2:1, he is implying that the church indwelt by God, i.e., Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The book of Exodus presents the Lord dwelling in the midst of the nation of Israel in the tabernacle. He indwelt the temple Solomon had built (1 Kings 6, 8). He also indwelt Zerubbabel's temple according to the book of Haggai. The Gospels record

the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ indwelling and teaching and healing in Herod's temple. In each of these temples, Jews were separated from Gentiles. In fact, Gentiles were not permitted to enter the tabernacle, as well as the temples of Solomon, Zerubbabel's and Herod but were relegated to a section, which separated them from the Jewish worshippers of the God of Israel. However, both Jewish and Gentile church age believers are permanently indwelt by the Father, (John 14:22-23; Ephesians 4:6; Philippians 2:13; 1 John 4:15; 2 John 9), the Son (John 14:20; 17:22-23, 26; Romans 8:10; 2 Corinthians. 13:5; Galatians 2:20a; Colossians 1:27) and Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16).

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:2, 3, 15, and 17, the referent of the dative masculine singular form of the noun *kurios* (κύριος) is Jesus Christ. The word means "Lord" and indicates the following about Jesus Christ: (1) His equality with the Father and the Spirit. (2) His joint-rulership with the Father over the entire cosmos. (3) His highest ranking position as Chief Administrator in the divine government. (4) His absolute sovereign authority as Ruler over all creation and every creature. (5) His victory over the sin nature and Satan and His kingdom.

In His deity, Jesus Christ is "**Lord**" (See Luke 20:42). However, in His human nature He received this title as a result of His obedience to the Father's will, which called for Him to suffer a spiritual and physical death on the cross as a substitute for every member of the human race-past, present and future (See Philippians 2:5-11).

The noun *kurios* (κύριος) emphasizes the victory that Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Christ, accomplished for the believer through His spiritual and physical deaths and resurrection. His spiritual death solved the problem of personal sins, which are produced by the sin nature through the function of human volition. His physical death solved the problem of the sin nature, which resides in the genetic structure of the human body. His resurrection guarantees the believer that he or she will receive a resurrection body at the rapture of the church, which will be immortal and minus the sin nature.

The noun *kurios* (κύριος) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the Lord is put for the church age believer appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In other words, the Lord is put for experiencing fellowship with Him as a result of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This interpretation is supported by the meaning of the verb *auxō* (αὔξω), which speaks of the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ as a result of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It is also supported by the present tense of this verb, which expresses a present state. In other words, the church age believer grows up spiritually into Christ-

likeness by experiencing fellowship with the Lord. This is accomplished by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In fact, it is also accomplished by obeying the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions of Scripture with the greatest being the command to love one another as Christ has loved the believer (John 13:34; 15:12).

The noun *kurios* (κύριος) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means. This indicates that it is "by means of" church age believers experiencing fellowship with the triune God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with the Lord in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father that they are growing spiritually into a holy temple experientially.

So therefore, Ephesians 2:21 reveals that the church is a work in progress numerically as well as spiritually or experientially. The participial causal clause makes clear that sinners are being added to those who are already members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church as a result of exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savor. Consequently, the Father imputes His Son's righteousness to them and declares them justified. Simultaneously, the Holy Spirit in baptism places these justified sinners in union with His Son and identifies them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Thus, these justified sinners are added to the church membership.

The declarative statement in Ephesians 2:21 also reveals that these justified sinners who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him are growing spiritually and experiencing their sanctification or in other words, experiencing the holiness of God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This is accomplished by considering themselves dead to the sin nature (Rom. 6:11-12) and the cosmic system of Satan (Gal. 6:14) and alive to God.

Now, we come to Ephesians 2:22, which completes a section of this epistle, which began in Ephesians 2:11 and teaches that Gentile church age believers are united with Jewish church age believers through their union and identification with Jesus Christ, which took place at their justification through the baptism of the Spirit. We noted in our study of Ephesians 2:11 that this section is broken out into three parts. The first appears in Ephesians 2:11-12 and describes the Gentile church age believer's pre-justification unregenerate state in relation to the Jews (2:11-12). The second occurs in Ephesians 2:13-18 and describes the Gentile church age believer's post-justification regenerate state. It also teaches that Jesus Christ reconciled the Jew and Gentile races through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross. The third and final part occurs in Ephesians 2:19-22 and describes the new status of these Gentile Christians in that they along with Jewish Christians form the

new humanity with Jesus Christ and the teaching of His apostles as the foundation of this new humanity.

Ephesians 2:22 is composed of an epexegetical statement *kai hymeis synoikodomeisthe eis katoikētērion tou theou* (καὶ ὑμεῖς συνοικοδομεῖσθε εἰς κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ), "**in other words, all of you without exception are being built together into God's dwelling place**." It is modified by two prepositional phrases, which serve as bookends for this epexegetical statement. The first *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by appropriating by faith union and identification with Him**" fronts this epexegetical clause while the latter *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit**" completes this epexegetical statement.

Just as Paul employed the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Him**" and *en kyriō* (ἐν κυρίῳ), "**by appropriating by faith union and identification with the Lord**" in Ephesians 2:21 to serve as bookends for his assertion in this verse so he does the same with these two prepositional phrases here in Ephesians 2:22.

The prepositional phrases in Ephesians 2:21 serve to emphasize that the members of the Christian community are growing experientially into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ because or on the basis that they are being continually fitted inextricably together by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ. Thus, they ultimately serve to emphasize the spiritual principle that the church age believers fellowship with the Lord is based upon their union and identification with Him. Without the latter, there could be no former.

Now, in the same manner, the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by appropriating by faith union and identification with Him**" and *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit**" here in Ephesians 2:22 serve to emphasize Paul's assertion in this verse. Thus, they serve to emphasize that Gentile church age believers are being built together into a dwelling place of God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with the Lord, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

So therefore, we can see that these prepositional phrases actually parallel each other. In Ephesians 2:21, the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Him**" parallels the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**by appropriating by faith union and identification with Him**" in Ephesians 2:22. This is clearly indicated by the fact that both speak of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ. The prepositional phrase *en kyriō* (ἐν κυρίῳ), "**by appropriating by faith union and identification with the Lord**" in Ephesians 2:21 also parallels the prepositional phrase *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit**" in Ephesians 2:22. This is clearly indicated by the fact that both also

speak of appropriating by faith one's union and identification with Jesus Christ, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Spirit which enables the church age believer to grow up spiritually into the image of Jesus Christ.

These parallel expressions serve to emphasize with Paul's readers that the members of the body of Christ and in particular both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities which compose the body of Christ are inextricably tied to each other by their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It also emphasizes that their growth spiritually as individuals and as a corporate unit is inextricably tied to appropriating by faith this union and identification with Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, the expression *hō pasa oikodomē* (ᾧ πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ), "**the whole building**," and *naon hagion* (ναὸν ἅγιον), "**holy temple**" in Ephesians 2:21 parallels the expression *katoikētērion tou theou* (κατοικητήριον τοῦ θεοῦ), "**God's dwelling place**" in Ephesians 2:22. This is indicated by the fact that the referent of each of these metaphor is the Gentile church age believer. Each of these parallel metaphorical expressions also serve to emphasize with Paul's Gentile readers the Gentile Christian community are not second class citizens in relation to the Jewish Christian community since both together form the church, which is the body of Jesus Christ and His bride.

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 2:19-21, Ephesians 2:20-22, like the former contains a metaphor. In the former, the apostle Paul employs two metaphors to describe Gentile Christians not only in relation to the Jewish Christian community but in relation to every believer in every Old Testament dispensation in the past. The first metaphor is that Gentile Christians are citizens in a city. The second is that they are members of a family. He uses these two metaphors in order to emphatically emphasize that they are share equal status in the kingdom of God with Jewish believers in past Old Testament dispensations and with those believers who lived in the dispensations before the establishment of the nation of Israel. In other words, Paul is stating in emphatic terms to the Gentile Christian community that they are by no means second rate citizens. Therefore, we can see that these two metaphors present an emphatic contrast between the unregenerate state of these Gentile church age believers and their present regenerate state as justified sinners who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Now, here as was the case in Ephesians 2:21, Paul continues and completes this temple metaphor here in Ephesians 2:22 in order to describe the church.

David MacLeod writes "The Jerusalem temple was an exclusively Jewish edifice. No Gentile was allowed to enter. But now Gentiles are not only admitted; they are themselves constituent parts of the temple.[22]

Archeologists have carefully examined ancient Inca structures in Peru, which have been standing for two thousand years. They were built of hand-hewn rocks of different sizes and shapes. Some were three-sided, some four-sided, and some seven-sided. Without the use of mortar, they were fitted together so perfectly that they have stood for many centuries, even through earthquakes.

The Lord Jesus Christ is building his church in much the same way. The stones come in different sizes and shapes. People come from a variety of ethnic and social backgrounds. They have different backgrounds, abilities and interests. Yet out of all this diversity Christ is building a strong, solid edifice. The Inca buildings will eventually crumble. The church will last for eternity.

God builds His church with different stones,
He makes each one belong;
All shapes and sizes fit in place
To make the structure strong.—Sper[23]

Paul presented the metaphor of the building in two ways. First, he used the metaphor statically (v. 20) by depicting the people of God as an edifice. Second, he used it dynamically of the maturing of Christians in their faith. In the first case it is God who erected the edifice; in the second it is believers who build one another up in the faith.[24]

The purpose of this new temple is the same as the old: to be a dwelling place for God. The new temple, however, unlike the old, is not a material building, nor a national shrine, nor has it a localized site. It is a spiritual building, an international community, and it has a worldwide spread."[25]

Now, Ephesians 2:22 is an epexegetical statement, which means that it is defining for the reader Paul's assertion in Ephesians 2:21. It asserts that Gentile church age believers are being built together into a dwelling place of God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with the Lord, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, in Ephesians 2:21 Paul asserts that on the basis of these Gentile church age believers being continually fitted inextricably together by means of justification by faith in Christ and union and identification with Him, like a building they are growing into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord. Therefore, this assertion in Ephesians 2:22 explains in greater detail the one in Ephesians 2:21 because it is defining what this holy temple is, namely a dwelling place of God.

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[22] Stott, *God's New Society*, 108.
[23] David C. Egner, "Built to Last," in *Our Daily Bread*.
[24] Best, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians*, 280.
[25] MacLeod, D. J. (2005). The Broken Wall, or: From Alienation to Reconciliation. *Emmaus Journal*, *14*(2), 164.

In Ephesians 2:22, the referent of the dative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is Jesus Christ and contains the figure of metonymy. This means that the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is put for the church age believer appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In other words, the Lord is put for experiencing fellowship with Him as a result of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

This interpretation is supported by the meaning of the verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι), which like the verb *auxō* (αὔξω) in Ephesians 2:21 speaks of the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ as a result of appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It is also supported by the present tense of this verb *auxō* (αὔξω), which like the verb *auxō* (αὔξω) in Ephesians 2:21, expresses a continual present state. In other words, the church age believer grows up spiritually into Christ-likeness by experiencing fellowship with the Lord. This is accomplished by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. In fact, it is also accomplished by obeying the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions of Scripture with the greatest being the command to love one another as Christ has loved the believer (John 13:34; 15:12).

This relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ) indicates that it is "by means of" church age believers experiencing fellowship with the triune God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with the Lord in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father that they are being built together into dwelling place of God by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

We also noted that the referent of the nominative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) is of course the recipients of this epistle who Paul describes in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians. The word not only refers to these Gentile Christians living in the various Christians community throughout the Roman province of Asia as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The use of this personal pronoun *su* (σύ) is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the subject. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

Here in Ephesians 2:22 it is used for emphasis and contrast. First, is used to emphasize that these Gentile church age believers are being built together into a dwelling place of God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with the Jesus Christ, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, it serves to contrast these Gentile church age believers with Jewish church age believers who they have been inextricably joined together through the baptism of the Spirit, which took place at their justification, and like these Jewish Christians, identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

We also noted that the verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι) pertains to building undergoing construction along with another. Specifically, it pertains to building an edifice or constructing one from various parts. Therefore, this verb is used in a metaphorical or figurative sense of the Gentile Christian community being built together into a dwelling place of God. They are not only built together with each other but also with the members of the Jewish Christian community which is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 2:19. The means by which this is accomplished is by experiencing fellowship with the Lord by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him, which in turn appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father. The articular construction of the word expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worshipped was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity in the first century A.D. which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

The noun *katoikētērion* (κατοικητήριον) we also noted refers to the place in which God the Father dwells, which is the souls and bodies of these Gentile church age believers.

Andrew Lincoln writes "The noun τὸ κατοικητήριον, which occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Rev 18:2, is used in the LXX both of God's abode in the temple in Jerusalem (cf. 1 Kgs 8:13) and of his heavenly dwelling place (cf. 1 Kgs 8:39, 43, 49). Now his dwelling place can be said to be neither a literal temple in Jerusalem nor simply heaven, but the Church, of which the Gentile Christian readers in Asia Minor were a part."[26]

Frank Thielman writes "Although κατοικητήριον appears often in the LXX for the dwelling place of people (Exod. 12:20; Pss. 32:14 [33:14 MT, Eng.]; 106:4

LXX Septuagint
[26] Lincoln, A. T. (1990). *Ephesians* (Vol. 42, p. 158). Word, Incorporated.
LXX Septuagint (the Old Testament in Greek)
MT Masoretic Text
Eng. English (versification in English Bibles)

[107:4]; Jer. 21:13) or animals (Nah. 2:12 [2:11]; Jer. 9:10 [9:11]; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 9.241), it is sometimes used of God's dwelling place, whether in heaven (1 Kings 8:39, 43, 49; 2 Chron. 6:30, 33, 39; 30:27; 3 Macc. 2:15; cf. Dan. 2:11) or in Zion's sanctuary (Exod. 15:17 [cf. Philo, *Planting* 47]; Ps. 75:3 [76:3 MT; 76:2 Eng.]). Paul probably chose this word because of its biblical associations with God's temple.[27],,[28]

Harold Hoehner writes "This word is not found in classical literature but is found twenty times in the LXX (eighteen times in the canonical books), primarily from: (1) the verb יָשַׁב, meaning 'to sit, remain, dwell'[29] (Exod 15:17; 1 Kgs 8:39, 43, 49; 2 Chr 6:30, 33, 39; 2 Kgs 19:15 = Isa 37:15–16; Ps 33:14 [LXX 32:14]) and the corresponding masculine noun מוֹשָׁב, meaning 'seat, assembly, dwelling-place, dwelling'[30] (Exod 12:20; Ps 107:4, 7 [LXX 106:4, 7]); and (2) from the masculine noun מָעוֹן, meaning 'refuge, habitation'[31] (2 Chr 30:27; Jer 9:11 [MT & LXX 9:10]; Nah 2:11 [MT & LXX 2:12]) and the corresponding feminine noun מוֹשָׁב, meaning "den, habitation"[32] (Ps 76:2 [MT 76:3; LXX 75:3]; Jer 21:13; Nah 2:12 [MT & LXX 2:13]). Most of the references speak of God's dwelling place either in heaven (1 Kgs 8:39, 43, 49 = 2 Chr 6:30, 33, 39; 2 Chr 30:27; Ps 33:14 [LXX 32:14]) or in the temple with his people Israel (1 Kgs 8:13; Ps 76:2 [MT 76:3; LXX 75:3]). Besides the present context, the only other place in the NT that κατοικητήριον occurs is in Rev 18:2, which refers to fallen Babylon as the dwelling place of demons. Babylon is depicted as that which opposes God, so imagery of the dwelling place of demons is fitting in contradistinction with heaven as the dwelling place of God. The genitive that follows (τοῦ θεοῦ) is possessive, denoting that this place of settled dwelling is God's in reference to the body of believers. It is not only a dwelling place

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Ant. Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*
Planting Philo, *On Planting*
MT Masoretic Text
Eng. English (versification in English Bibles)

[27] A search of the *TLG* shows that prior to its use here in Ephesians, the term is used only of the dwelling place of a deity in the LXX, ten times of God and once of the gods (Dan. 2:11; cf. Rev. 18:2). It was not, in other words, a term used outside Judaism for the temple of a deity. This bolsters the case for seeing both κατοικητήριον here and its counterpart ναός in 2:21 as references not to just any temple but to the biblical temple.

[28] Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians* (pp. 184–185). Baker Academic.
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979

[29] BDB 442; M. Görg, "יָשַׁב *yāšaḇ*; מוֹשָׁב *môšāḇ*," *TDOT* 6 (1990): 421–38.
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979

[30] BDB 444; Görg, *TDOT* 6 (1990): 426, 430.
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979

[31] BDB 732–33; H. D. Preuss, "מָעוֹן *māʿôn*; מְעֹנָה *mᵉʿônâ*," *TDOT* 8 (1997): 449–52.
MT Masoretic Text
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979
MT Masoretic Text
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979

[32] BDB 733; Preuss, *TDOT* 8 (1997): 450.
MT Masoretic Text
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979
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but a deep or settled dwelling place. It has the idea of a dwelling place that is firmly rooted. It signifies the endurance and permanence of God's inhabitance in the body of believers. This is the ἅγιος ναός, 'holy temple,' in which God dwells, as mentioned in the previous verse. Not made with hands, it is a living temple in which God is pleased to dwell."[33]

The noun *katoikētērion* (κατοικητήριον) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions a marker of a change of state or condition. Therefore, it marks the members of the Gentile Christian community as a group of individuals whose character is being transformed from the state of unregenerate sinners enslaved to the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system to those whom God the Father indwells.

The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of possession, which expresses the idea that this dwelling place, which is the souls and bodies of these Gentile Christians, "belong to" God the Father. In other words, they are His possession. This harkens back to Paul's statements in Ephesians 1:11 and 14. The former asserts that the church age believer have been claimed by God as His possession because He predestinated them in eternity past to adoption as His sons according to His predetermined plan. The latter asserts that the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in church age believers is the down payment of their inheritance until the Father redeems them who are His possession at the rapture of the church.

The referent of the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is of course the Holy Spirit, who is the third member of the Trinity. This word also contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence on behalf of these Gentile church age believer when they experience fellowship with the Lord. This is accomplished by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him, which in turn appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, this post-justification faith enables the Spirit to accomplish this task of building these Gentile Christians into a dwelling place, which belongs to the Father.

The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means, which indicates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is the means by which the Gentile church age believer is being built together with Jewish church age believers into a dwelling place of God the Father.

The present tense of this verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι) is a customary or stative present which is used to signal an ongoing state. Therefore, the customary present tense of this verb expresses the idea that these Gentile church age believers "continually exist in the state or condition of" being built together with each other and with members of the Jewish Christian community into a dwelling place of God the Father. In other words, like the present tense of the verb of the verb

[33] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (pp. 413–414). Baker Academic.

synarmologeō (συναρμολογέω) in Ephesians 2:21, the present tense of the verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι) here in Ephesians 2:22 indicates than this spiritual building process or construction is presently underway and continuing to its completion at the rapture.

However, the present tense of the former indicates that the church is a work in progress in the sense that it is growing every day as a result of sinners exercising faith in Jesus Christ. This results in the Father imputing His Son's righteousness to them with the result that He declares them justified. Simultaneously, the Father through the work of the Spirit in baptism places these justified sinners in union with His Son and identifies them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This is supported by the fact that *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω) in Ephesians 2:21 functions syntactically as a causal participle, which presents "the reason why" or "the basis upon which" the members of the Christian community exist in the state of growing into a holy temple in the Lord. Thus, it expresses the idea that "on the basis of" the members of the Christian community existing in the state of being continually fitted or connected inextricably together as a coherent whole or corporate unit by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Jesus Christ, they are growing into a holy temple by means of fellowship with the Lord.

On the other hand of the latter indicates that the church is a work in progress in the sense of the individual members of the Christian community growing up spiritually and as a corporate unit. This is indicated by the fact that Ephesians 2:22 associates the growth of the dwelling place of God with appropriating by faith one's union and identification with Jesus Christ. This post-justification faith is the responsibility of those who are already children of God through justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with Him.

The passive voice of this verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι) here in Ephesians 2:22 indicates the subject receives the action of the verb by an expressed or unexpressed agency. Of course, the subject are these Gentile church age believers.

There are two expressed agencies, which are inextricably linked together. The first is the prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), which contains the figure of metonymy. This indicates that the person of the Lord Jesus Christ is put for these Gentile church age believers appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. The second is the prepositional phrase *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), which also contains the figure of metonymy. This indicates that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence on behalf of these Gentile church age believers when they appropriate by faith their union and identification with the Lord Jesus Christ. This post-justification faith appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy

Spirit, which thus enables the Spirit to accomplish this task of building them into a dwelling place, which belongs to the Father.

Therefore, the passive voice of the verb *synoikodomoumai* (συνοικοδομοῦμαι) indicates that these Gentile church age believers as the subject of this verb receive the action of being built together with each other and with members of the Jewish Christian community into God's dwelling place. This is accomplished by these Gentile church age believers appropriating by faith their union and identification with Him. This post-justification faith in turn appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit and enables the Spirit to accomplish this task of building them into a dwelling place, which belongs to the Father.

The contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 should deeply affect the Gentile Christian community here in the twenty-first century in the sense that it should prompt them to offer up thanksgiving to the Father for what He has accomplished for them through both the work of His Son and the Spirit but also inspire worship of Him. It should prompt them to offer thanksgiving to the Father for what He did for them at justification and through the baptism of the Spirit.

One of the essential elements of a productive prayer life for the church age believer, namely, thanksgiving (Matt 15:36; 26:27; Mark 8:6; 14:23; Luke 22:17-19; John 6:11; 23; 11:41; Acts 27:35; 28:15; Rom. 1:8; 7:25; 1 Cor. 1:4; 11:24; Eph. 5:20; Col. 1:12; 3:17; Phlp. 1:3-4; 4:6; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13). We should never forget to thank God in prayer. Our gratitude demonstrates our respect and appreciation for God's grace policy, which blesses us without us ever earning or deserving blessings.

Colossians 4:2 Each of you must continue to make it your habit of being dedicated to persevering in prayer while at the same time continuing to exist in a state of being vigilant in it with thanksgiving. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 6:18 By means of every kind of specific detailed reverential prayer requests, all of you make it your habit to pray at each and every opportunity while in fellowship with the Spirit. Now, for this very purpose, all of you make it your habit to stay alert (in prayer) with every kind of persistent specific detailed requests with regards to each and every one of the saints. (Author's translation)

Psalm 9:1 I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders. (NASB95)

Also, the believer should always give thanks to the Father for His gift of salvation, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man Savior.

2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (NASB95)

Psalm 50:23 teaches that the believer who offers thanksgiving to God the Father in prayer honors Him.

Psalm 50:23 He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God. (NASB95)

We are to give thanks with other believers in our congregation. This too glorifies God, if done with the proper motivation, which is to worship God in prayer, not to make ourselves look holy.

Psalm 35:18 I will give You thanks in the great congregation; I will praise You among a mighty throng. (NASB95)

The humanity of Christ employed thanksgiving to God in prayer when performing miracles (Mat 14:19; 15:36; Mark 6:41; 8:6; Luke 9:16; John 6:11). One particular account was when Christ resuscitated Lazarus. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His humanity, showed immense gratitude towards His Father for hearing His prayer.

John 11:41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me." (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ also offered a prayer of thanksgiving to the Father when instituting the Lord's Supper for the Church (Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17, 19; 1 Co 11:23-26).

1 Thessalonians 5:18 Each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of giving thanks in each and every circumstance because this is God's will for each and every one of you because of your union and identification with the Christ who is Jesus. (Author's translation)

David MacLeod writes "When Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians, the Jewish temple built by Herod the Great stood in Jerusalem. Closer to home, in Ephesus itself, was the magnificent marble temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Two temples: one was pagan and the other, Jewish. Only Jews could enter into one, and only pagans could enter the other. Both were empty of the living God.[34] Those temples were lifeless. The true temple of God, his church, is a living growing thing. New stones are being added every day, on every continent, from every race and class of people."[35]

As was the case in Ephesians 2:18, Ephesians 2:19-22 contains a "triadic pattern," which means that all three members of the Trinity are mentioned. In fact, Ephesians 2:22 itself contains a triadic pattern. The Trinity is a major theme that appears in the Ephesian epistle. As we also noted in our study of Ephesians 1:3, this verse contains a triadic pattern. In fact, Ephesians 1:3-14 itself contains a triadic pattern.

Harold Hoehner writes "Again as in other passages in Ephesians one sees the Triune God in operation (cf. 1:4–14, 17; 2:18, 22; 3:4–5, 14–17; 4:4–6; 5:18–20). It is God the Father, the subject of the passage, who is creating this new person into a holy temple. Christ through his work of reconciliation is the cornerstone of this new temple of which the apostles and prophets are the foundation stones. It is a living and dynamic structure that continues to grow by God's gracious power. The Holy Spirit is the manner by which God dwells in this new structure he is creating.

[34] Stott, *God's New Society*, 109–10.
[35] MacLeod, D. J. (2005). The Broken Wall, or: From Alienation to Reconciliation. *Emmaus Journal*, *14*(2), 165.

Although the Holy Spirit resides in each individual believer, he resides also in the corporate body of believers called the holy temple, the church. This concept of the corporate body of believers as a temple indwelt with the Holy Spirit is seen elsewhere in Paul (1 Cor 3:16).

The relevance to the people of Ephesus is obvious. Before their conversion, the Jews thought of God as dwelling in the temple made with hands. On the other hand, the Ephesians thought of the goddess Artemis as the one who dwelt in the renowned temple at Ephesus. This temple was considered one of the seven wonders of the world (see Introduction). These were two diametrically different views of who God was and where he resided. After conversion, both believing Jews and Gentiles must view God and his dwelling place in a drastically different way. They have been made one new person, growing into a holy temple. God's abode is in this new creation. Before, both Jews and Gentiles could see the stone buildings in which their God or gods dwelt, but now the one true God is dwelling in them, the collective entity called the church. In 1:23 it is God who fills Christ with the fullness of moral excellence and power and Christ who fills the church. In the present context it is God in the person of the Holy Spirit who dwells in this corporate body made up of redeemed Jews and Gentiles called the church."[36]

Grant Osborne writes "It is difficult to overstate the importance of this section of the letter. While Ephesians 2:1–10 summarizes the doctrine of sin and salvation, this summarizes the doctrine of the church. Sin estranged us not only from God but from each other, as religious, racial, and socioeconomic divides dominated and made us enemies of one another. In Christ, all these barriers have been rendered null and void, and it is God's will that among his people all divisions among people groups disappear. The church is first of all a new humanity in which we all cherish and respect one another. In Christ there are no longer color differences, and ethnic divides no longer exist. This doesn't mean that we cease to be African or Asian or Caucasian but that we are all completely equal and brothers and sisters of each other. We cherish one another, and our differences are family differences. Moreover, the church constitutes God's building, a new, heaven-centered temple that celebrates God's presence with his people. Here there can be no place for alienation within God's new people group (never again "groups"), but only unity and togetherness."[37]

Harold Hoehner writes "In conclusion, Paul has shown that though the Gentiles were formerly foreigners outside of God's household, they are now one new people together with the Jews who became Christians. This new entity is portrayed as a temple built on the foundation of apostles and prophets, with Christ as the cornerstone. This temple is indwelt by God's Spirit. All three persons of the Trinity are here involved: God the Father, the subject of the passage, is creating the new

[36] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 415). Baker Academic.
[37] Osborne, G. R. (2017). *Ephesians: Verse by Verse* (pp. 75–76). Lexham Press.

holy temple, consisting of the corporate body of believing Jews and Gentiles; Christ is the cornerstone of this new temple; and the Holy Spirit resides within. Before Christ came, the Jews thought of God as the one who resided in the man-made Temple from which Gentiles were excluded. The pagan Gentiles in Ephesus thought that the goddess Artemis resided in the renowned temple in their city. These were two diametrically different views of who God was and where he resided. After conversion, both believing Jews and Gentiles were created into one new person portrayed as a temple, the foundation of which consisted of apostles and prophets with Christ as the cornerstone and in which God dwells in the person of the Holy Spirit. Whereas there previously was nothing but hostility between Jews and Gentiles, now there is one body of believers called the church."[38]

Darrell Bock writes "The dominant idea of this unit is the reconciliation and unity God has brought across racial lines in the work of Christ for those in the church.[39] The constant refrain of 'together,' repeated three times in the closing verses, makes clear this emphasis on appreciating reconciliation as a goal of the gospel. The powerful bringing together of Jew and Gentile into a new sacred work of God in the world is the point. That idea of appreciating the power of God takes us back to the prayer request of 1:19. This appreciation is not just for individuals but is a corporate idea to be shared across the church. Gentiles and Jews are to appreciate that all are full members of the household of God. Their shared identity does not obliterate who they were but accentuates the fact that it is God who has brought them together, giving them a new relationship and network, making them true spiritual kin. The passage calls them to recall these truths and then to act on them. The attitude runs counter to the normal ethnic focus people have. The point is not that people should not see race, but that they should live with an appreciation that races were designed by God in Christ to function together. As absent as that reality often is in the world, it should look different in the church. At the centre of it all is the work of Christ and the reception of it by those who are his."[40]

The contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 should deeply affect the Gentile Christian community here in the twenty-first century in the sense that it should not only prompt them to not only offer up thanksgiving to the Father for what He has accomplished for them through both the work of His Son and the Spirit but also inspire worship of Him. It should prompt them to offer thanksgiving to the Father for what He did for them at justification and through the baptism of the Spirit.

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[38] Hoehner, H. W., Comfort, P. W., & Davids, P. H. (2008). *Cornerstone biblical commentary: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon*. (Vol. 16, pp. 62–63). Tyndale House Publishers.

[39] [90] For how this reconciliation ties together many scriptural themes in Jesus' ministry, Paul and Revelation, see Keener, 'One New Temple in Christ', pp. 75–92. Here is Keener's conclusion (p. 92): 'How central is our unity in Christ? It is central enough to transcend all other loyalties, so that loyalty to Christ entails loyalty to one another as God's family, above all ethnic, cultural and earthly kinship connections. It is central enough that Paul repeatedly emphasizes it as a necessary corollary of the gospel. It is central enough that the worship God desires is a united worship of believers from many peoples and languages. We are different, bringing diverse cultural gifts; but we are one, for God, the Lord whom we worship, is One.'

[40] Bock, D. L. (2019). *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (E. J. Schnabel, Ed.; Vol. 10, p. 89). Inter-Varsity Press.

Another essential part of an effective and productive and joyful prayer life is that of worship and reverence of God is the fourth essential part to an effective, productive, and joyful prayer (Phi 4:6). Prayer is a means by which the believer can worship, adore, and revere God. To worship is to adore God, as the Holy Spirit reveals Him in the Scriptures and through the person of Christ. It is the act of paying honor and reverence to God, and it derives from love. Where there is little love, there is little worship.

Worship is the loving ascription of praise to God for whom and what He is. It is the bowing of the soul and spirit in deep humility and admiration before Him (Psalm 2:11-12). The believer is to worship the Father spiritually by means of truth, i.e., the Word of God (John 4:23-24). The church 's destiny is to worship the Lord, as revealed in Revelation 4-5.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples that the second part of a prayer is the worship, reverence, honor, and respect for the Father.

Luke 11:1 It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." 2 And He said to them, "When you pray [*proseuchomai***], say 'Father, hallowed** [*hagiazo*: to revere, honor and respect] **be Your name** [*onoma*: the person and character of God]**. Your kingdom come.'" (NASB95)**

"**Say**" is the word *lego*, which "emphasizes the substance of words chosen, to carefully choose your words." Prayer is to be a thoughtful exercise of meaningful words, not idle chatter.

"**Hallowed**" is the verb *hagiazo* and literally means, "may your person be revered, honored, and respected." To hallow God's name means to worship His person. *Hagiazo* is also used in Luke 11:2.

1 Peter 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence. (NASB95)

To revere God entails opening up our lives so that the Holy Spirit may work in making us more like His Son. Surely, this is to be a prayer of surrender and commitment, for God's name is never hallowed, at least not by us, as long as we are walking in rebellion and self-dependence. Psalm 145 is a perfect example of how we should worship God in prayer.

There are four English words, "reverence," "respect," "awe," and "wonder," which express the concept of worshipping God.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "reverence": "A feeling or attitude of deep respect tinged with awe; veneration."

Therefore, paraphrasing this definition and applying it to Ephesians 2:11-22, we would say that the Gentile Christian community's response to a study of the pericope

should be of possessing an attitude of deep respect and awe for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for what they accomplished for it through both the work of the Son and the Spirit at justification and after justification.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "respect": "esteem for or a sense of the worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or trait, or something considered as a manifestation of a personal quality or trait."

Thus, the Gentile Christian community in response to the revelation Paul provides them through the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 should be one of esteem for the excellence of each member of the Trinity as manifested through their personal qualities or attributes such as love, faithfulness, mercy, compassion, justice, righteousness, truth, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, immutability, and sovereignty.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "awe": "an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, fear, etc. produced by that which is grand, sublime, extremely powerful or the like."

Thus, the Gentile Christian community in response to the revelation Paul provides them through the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 should possess an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and specifically what they accomplished for them through both the work of the Son and the Spirit at justification and after justification.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the noun "wonder": "to be filled with admiration, amazement or awe; marvel."

Therefore, in response to the revelation provided in Ephesians 2:11-22, the Gentile Christian community should be filled with admiration, amazement and awe in response to the Father, Son and Spirit and specifically what they accomplished for them through both the work of the Son and the Spirit at justification and after justification.

Warren Wiersbe writes, "True wonder reaches right into your heart and mind and shakes you up. It not only has depth, it has value; it enriches your life. Wonder is not cheap amusement that brings a smile to your face. It is an encounter with reality, with God, which brings awe to your heart. You're overwhelmed with an emotion that is a mixture of gratitude, adoration, reverence, fear-and love. You're not looking for explanations; you're lost in the wonder of God"[41]

Therefore, paraphrasing this comment by Wiersbe on wonder we would say that the Spirit's revelation in the Scriptures concerning the Trinity should reach right into the hearts of the Gentile Christian community and shake them up and enrich their lives. It should overwhelm them with an emotion that is a mixture of gratitude, adoration, reverence, fear and love for each member of the Trinity. They shouldn't

[41] Real Worship, page 43, Baker Books

be looking for explanations but rather they should be lost in the wonder of the Trinity. Therefore, the Gentile Christian should approach the Trinity to worship them by manifesting an attitude of deep reverence, respect and awe for them for who and what they are and what they have done for them in the past at justification, what they are doing for them now through experiencing fellowship with them and what they will do for them at the rapture and the Bema Seat.

Psalm 68:35, "O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God!" (NASB95)

Warren Wiersbe defines worship, "Worship is the believer's response of all that they are –mind, emotions, will and body-to what God is and says and does. This response has its mystical side in subjective experience and its practical side in objective obedience to God's revealed will. Worship is a loving response that's balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better"[42]

If we paraphrase Wiersbe's definition, we could say the following: The members of the Gentile Christian community should respond in their mind, emotion, and body to the Spirit's revelation in Ephesians 2:11-22.

Psalm 2:11, "Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling." (NASB95)

Psalm 95:6, "Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. 7 For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand." (NASB95)

Worship is the act of paying honor and reverence to the Father, Son and Spirit and affection for each of them and flows from love and where there is little love, there is little worship. It is the loving ascription of praise to the Father, Son and Spirit in gratitude and appreciation for who and what they are, both in themselves and in their ways and in their work of salvation on our behalf. It is the bowing of the soul and spirit in deep humility and reverence before the Trinity.

Psalm 29:2, "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array." (NASB95)

The church's destiny is to worship the Trinity, as revealed in Revelation 4-5.

Revelation 4:8, "And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, 'HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.' 9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before

[42] Ibid. 26

Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.'" (NASB95)

Revelation 5:11, "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.' 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, 'Amen.' And the elders fell down and worshiped." (NASB95)

So let us worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit for who they are and what they have done for church age believers in the past, are doing for us now and will do for us in the future!

Now, in chapter three, the apostle Paul teaches the Christian community regarding the mystery of Christ, which is that Gentile believers are fellow-heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:1-6). Paul teaches that the Father's eternal plan was accomplished through His Son (Eph. 3:7-11). The believer has confident access to the Father in prayer because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:12). The apostle also asserts that he prayed to the Father that Christ would dwell in the hearts of the Christian community in the Roman province of Asia and that they would know experientially Christ's love for them (Eph. 3:14-21).

Ephesians 3:1 For this reason, I myself, Paul, the prisoner owned by and under the authority of the one and only Christ who is Jesus for the benefit of each and every one of you as a corporate unit, who are Gentiles—2 if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every one of you as a corporate unit have surely heard about the stewardship, which is unique to the grace, which originates from the one and only God, which was given to me for the benefit of all of you as a corporate unit without exception. (Of course, every one of you have in fact heard about it.) 3 Namely that, the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself as revelation as I wrote beforehand in a concise manner. 4 Concerning which, that is, by each one of you making it your habit of hearing read publicly, all of you will for your own benefit become able to comprehend my insight into this incomparable mystery, which is produced by your unique union and identification with Christ. 5 This mystery was by no means made known to members of the human race in previous generations as

it has now been revealed through the personal agency of His holy apostles as well as prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. 6 Namely, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel. 7 I assumed the position and responsibility of serving this gospel according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power. 8 To me, the less than least of all the saints, this grace was given in order to proclaim for my benefit to the Gentiles the unfathomable wealth brought about by this justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ. 9 Specifically, in order to cause everyone to be enlightened as to what constitutes this unique dispensation, which is a mystery, which has been hidden from previous ages because of God's will, who has caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be created. 10 Consequently, the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the will of God (the Father) was made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church. 11 This was in conformity with the eternal predetermined plan, which He caused to be accomplished by means of our faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ, who is Jesus, who is the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit. 12 On the basis of our faith in and union and identification with Him, each and every one of us are experiencing boldness, namely access with confidence to the presence of the Father by means of His faithfulness. 13 Therefore, I myself urgently request at the present time that each and every one of you as a corporate unit not be discouraged because of my adversities on behalf of all of you without exception, which are unique in character making possible for each and every one of you to receive honor. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 3:1, the referent of the genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" is the contents of the Ephesians 2:11-22 since this word is put in the neuter gender indicating the writer is not referring to a particular word in Ephesians 2:11-22 but rather the entire contents of this pericope.

The genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" is the object of the improper preposition *charin* (χάριν), which always appears after its object. It can express purpose or cause. Here it is marker of reason indicating that the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 are the basis or the reason for Paul's intercessory prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21.

It does not function as a marker of purpose, which would indicate that the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 are the purpose for which Paul intercedes in prayer to

the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle. This is indicated by the fact that these verses are not an object or end to be attained or the intended result Paul communicating this mystery of Christ. In other words, these verses do not constitute the intended result of Paul communicating this mystery because in Ephesians 3:2 he asserts that the reason why he communicates this mystery, i.e., the gospel is that the Father gave him this stewardship to do this. Rather, the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 serve as the basis for Paul interceding in prayer on behalf of the recipients of this epistle since they constitute the new humanity, which along with Jesus Christ, will rule over the works of God's hands during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, this expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν), "**for this reason**" is anaphoric rather than kataphoric. The former means that it is pointing to the immediate preceding context and specifically, the contents of the Ephesians 2:11-22, which serves as the basis for the intercessory prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21. The latter means that it is pointing forward to the contents of Ephesians 3:2-13, which is autobiographical. Specifically, it is a digression in that Paul does not communicate his intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this letter until Ephesians 3:14-21 in order to remind them that he is a communicator of the mystery of Christ, which he also identifies as the gospel in Ephesians 3:7. Paul interrupts himself and digresses in order to provide the reader with more insight into the church as a mystery and his responsibility to communicate this mystery to the Gentiles. He describes it as a mystery because it was not known to Old Testament prophets but has now been revealed by the Spirit through the teaching of the apostles and specifically himself. In Ephesians 3:2-6, he defines this mystery by asserting that Gentile believers are fellow-heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. Then in Ephesians 3:7-11, he asserts that the Father's eternal plan was accomplished through His Son. In Ephesians 3:12, he teaches that the believer has confident access to the Father in prayer because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ. Lastly, in Ephesians 3:13, he asks the recipients of this letter to not lose heart because of this imprisonment, which was for their glory.

Therefore, the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 could not possibly be the basis for the digression in Ephesians 3:2-13 because the church composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities and permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit is not the reason why Paul's has a stewardship to communicate the mystery of Christ. In fact, he asserts in Ephesians 3:2 that the reason why he possesses this stewardship is that the Father gave it to him. Rather, the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 are the basis for Paul's intercessory prayer recorded in Ephesians 3:14-21.

Lastly, the expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν), which appears in Ephesians 3:1, appears again in Ephesians 3:14 indicating that Paul is resuming his thought which began in Ephesians 3:1 and interrupted with an autobiographical digression

in Ephesians 3:2-13. This is not the first time in Ephesians that Paul has begun a thought but breaks it off temporarily but then resumes it again since he does this in Ephesians 2:1-5. The thought begun in Ephesians 2:1 is not completed until Ephesians 2:5-6, which thus creates an "anacoluthon" in Ephesians 2:2-4, which means that there is a break in the grammar. In Ephesians 2:1-3, the main verb and the subject have not been mentioned until Ephesians 2:4 where the subject God the Father is mentioned and the main verb is mentioned in Ephesians 2:5, which is the third person singular aorist active indicative conjugation of the verb *syzōopoieō* (συζωοποιέω), "**made alive together**" (NET). Ephesians 2:1-4 is one incomplete sentence in order leave the readers in suspense as to how God the Father would solve the dilemma the recipients of this epistle were in prior to their justification. To mark the resumption of this thought Paul employs almost the same identical protasis of a concessive clause, which appears in Ephesians 2:1. If you recall, in Ephesians 2:5, Paul asserts *ontas hēmas nekrous tois paraptōmasin* (ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν), "**Even though each and every one of us as a corporate unit were spiritually dead ones because of our transgressions**." (Author's translation). The only difference between the two is that the one in Ephesians 2:1 employs the accusative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which refers to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle. On the other hand, the one in Ephesians 2:5 employs the accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), which refers to both Paul and the recipients of this epistle. Therefore, the conjunction *kai* (καί) in Ephesians 2:5 introduces a concessive clause, which resumes and completes the one it introduces in Ephesians 2:1 but with a slight difference in subject.

Therefore, in Ephesians 3:1-14, Paul once again employs the figure of anacoluthon and in Ephesians 3:14, he marks the resumption of his thought by repeating the exact same expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν), which begins Ephesians 3:1. Thus, the evidence within Ephesians itself indicates that the expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν) in Ephesians 3:1 is anaphoric rather than kataphoric. This expression appears in only one other place in Paul's writings, namely, Titus 1:5.

Therefore, in Ephesians 3:1, the expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν), "**for this reason**" is anaphoric, which means that it is pointing to the immediate preceding context and specifically, the contents of the Ephesians 2:11-22, which serves as the basis for the intercessory prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21.

Now, in Ephesians 3:1, the nominative first person singular form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), "**I myself**" serves to emphasize with the reader that the apostle Paul is a prisoner of Christ Jesus Christ on behalf of the Gentile Christian community in order to proclaim this mystery of Christ.

The use of the nominative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) here in Ephesians 3:1 is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the subject. In context, the finite verb appears in Ephesians 3:14 and is the first person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *kamptō* (κάμπτω), "**I kneel**" which indicates the person, number and gender of the subject, which is the nominative first person singular form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) and refers to Paul. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

Here it is used for emphasis since it serves to emphasize with the reader that the apostle Paul is a prisoner of Christ Jesus Christ on behalf of the Gentile Christian community in order to proclaim this mystery of Christ. It is also used to mark a contrast between the apostle Paul who was Jewish Christian and the recipients of this epistle who were Gentile Christians.

The referent of the nominative first person singular form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) is the apostle Paul, which is indicated by the nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Paulos* (Παῦλος), "**Paul**," which means "little" or "short." He uses this name to refer to himself when he is communicating to or living among the members of the Gentile Christian community. When living among the Jews, he used his Jewish name Saul. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ authorized him to be the apostle to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9:15; 22:21; Romans 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 1:15-16; 2:2, 7-9).

The proper name *Paulos* (Παῦλος), "**Paul**" is further evidence in the Ephesian epistle that the apostle Paul was the author of Ephesians. The traditional view of the church from its inception is that the apostle Paul wrote Ephesians. However, in modern times, this view has been challenged. Some of the modern critics contend that the vocabulary, style and teaching differ from the writings which are universally accepted as Pauline. They also argue that the letter is "pseudonymous." The term "pseudonymity" refers to the practice of publishing one's writings under a revered person's name.

Ephesians was extensively, indisputably and universally accepted throughout the Roman Empire in the early church as a letter written by the apostle Paul. Church fathers such as Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement of Rome, and Origen all regarded the epistle as written by Paul. Both Marcion and the Muratorian canon list it as Pauline.

Furthermore, as in Ephesians 3:1, Ephesians 1:1 identifies *Paulos*, "**Paul**" as the author of the epistle to the Ephesians. The letter itself contains Pauline language including words that appear not only in this letter but also in the undisputed letters of Paul and yet these words do not appear anywhere else in the Greek New Testament. In typical Pauline fashion, Paul ascribes his apostolic authority to the

will of God (cf. Eph. 1:1; cf. 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:1; Col. 1:1). Paul's name is even found in Ephesians 3:1 just as it does in his so-called undisputed letters (cf. 2 Cor. 10:1; Gal. 5:2; Col. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:18).

The structure of the Ephesian epistle is in accordance with the rest of the Pauline corpus. It follows the usual structure of a Pauline letter in that it begins with a salutation followed by a thanksgiving section, then the body of the letter and ending with final remarks and a benediction. The entire letter is in line with Pauline theology found in his other letters.

The Ephesian epistle is not a "pseudonymous" letter since this practice was frowned upon by the early church. This is supported by the fact that Paul would guarantee the authenticity of his letters to protect against forgeries or someone posing as him in a letter by putting his own distinguishing mark at the end of the letter. (cf. 2 Thess. 3:17-18; Gal. ; Col. 4:18). Furthermore, Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter, which bears his name and there is no evidence whatsoever that this epistle was written by someone else.

The existence of the practice of pseudonymity in the ancient world is not disputed since it is well documented. It was used in Greco-Roman cultures as a literary means of drawing on ancient authorities to address contemporary situations. This process was accepted and understood and was not considered something that was deceptive. However, this cannot be applied to Christianity.

Tertullian describes an elder who has falsely written under the name of Paul in an attempt to increase Paul's fame because he loved him. However, he was removed from his office (*On Baptism*). The early church was very much concerned about receiving authentic Pauline epistles and would totally reject the practice of pseudonymity. The early church was very concerned with problems of literary fraud and Paul was too as we can see in 2 Thessalonians 2:2 and Galatians 6:11.

Some critics contend that Ephesians is pseudonymous because the contents are impersonal in nature. They argue that we would expect that Paul's lengthy stay in Ephesus would prompt him to send personal greetings in this epistle. However, the absence of personal greetings and specific issues and conditions supports the idea that the Ephesian epistle is a circulatory letter intended for all the various house churches in the Roman province of Asia.

Lastly, the scholars who reject Pauline authorship of Ephesians because of the close relationship between this letter and Colossians. They argue that it could not be possible for one person to write two letters which resemble each other so strikingly (cf. Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:7-8) and yet have significant differences (cf. Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:3-6). Guthrie answers by asserting "that two minds could not have produced two such works with so much subtle interdependence blended with independence."[43]

[43] Guthrie, 511

In the final analysis, the epistle of Ephesians should be regarded as written by the apostle Paul because the authenticity of this letter cannot be disproved.

In Ephesians 3:1, the nominative masculine singular noun *desmios* (δέσμιος), "**the prisoner**" is used of Paul's first Roman imprisonment because of the gospel. Acts 28 indicates that Paul was under house arrest during his first Roman imprisonment while awaiting his appeal before Caesar. However, in Second Timothy 1:8, the word is used of Paul's second Roman imprisonment.

The articular construction of the noun *desmios* (δέσμιος) is monadic, which expresses the "uniqueness" of Paul being a prisoner of the Roman civil authority despite the fact that he is owned by Jesus Christ and under His authority.

Where Paul was imprisoned has been debated by scholars in recent years. The traditional view of the church is that the Ephesian epistle was written while Paul was under house arrest in Rome awaiting his appeal before Caesar. This view went unchallenged for eighteen centuries. However, in modern times, there are those who dissent. Two locales have been put forth by scholars, namely Ephesus and Caesarea.

The burden of proof rests with an Ephesus and Caesarea origin since church tradition holds to Paul writing Ephesians, Philemon and Colossians while under house arrest in Rome. A critical factor in a Roman origin of this epistle is that Luke is with Paul during his imprisonment (see Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24). This is supported by Acts since it makes clear Paul's Ephesian ministry does not occur in the "we" section of Acts. The traditional view that Paul was in Rome when he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, is still by far the best view because of the obvious connection between Colossians and Ephesians. This is indicated by the fact that Tychicus is named the courier of both letters (cf. Col. 4:7-8; Eph. 6:21-22), thus both letters were written at the same place and time, namely during his first Roman imprisonment, which took place from approximately 60-62 A.D.

Paul had two Roman imprisonments: (1) A.D. 60-62: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon (2) A.D. 68: 2 Timothy, Hebrews. The apostle Paul wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon during his first Roman imprisonment while he was awaiting his appeal before Caesar and he was actually permitted to have his own rented quarters in Rome with a Roman soldier guarding him (See Acts 28).

As was the case in Ephesians 1:2, the proper nouns *Iesous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**Jesus**" and *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" here in Ephesians 3:1 are used by Paul to describe the incarnate Son of God as well as His person and work and what He has accomplished in history through this work as well as His status in relation to creation and every creature. Thus, they also describe His relationship to the church.

The word *Christos* (Χριστός) denotes the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth; thus He is the Deliverer of the human race in three areas through His death, resurrection, ascension and session: (1) Satan (2) Cosmic System (3) Old Sin Nature.

The Lord's Messiahship has a four-fold significance: (1) Separation unto God. (2) Authorization from God. (3) Divine enablement. (4) The coming Deliverer. It also signifies the uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth who is the God-Man.

Christos (Χριστός) signifies that Jesus of Nazareth served God the Father exclusively and this was manifested by His execution of the Father's salvation plan which was accomplished by His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross. The word signifies that Jesus of Nazareth has been given authority by God the Father to forgive sins, give eternal life, and authority over all creation and every creature as a result of His execution of the Father's salvation plan. It denotes that Jesus of Nazareth was perpetually guided and empowered by God the Holy Spirit during His First Advent. Lastly, *Christos* (Χριστός) signifies that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised deliverer of the human race from the bondage of Satan, his cosmic system and the old Adamic sin nature.

The articular construction of this word indicates that the referent of this word is in a class by himself and the only one deserving of the name since there were many individuals in the first century A.D. who claimed to be the Christ or were proclaimed to be the Christ. Thus, this construction emphasizes the "incomparability" of Jesus Christ.

The genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" functions as a possession, which indicates that Jesus Christ "possesses" or Paul or we could say that the Lord "owns" him. This word also functions as a genitive of subordination, which would indicate that Paul was under the authority of Jesus Christ. This expression *ho desmios tou Christou Iēsou* (ὁ δέσμιος τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), "**the prisoner, owned by and under the authority of Christ, who is Jesus**" is not only used by Paul in Ephesians 3:1 to describe himself but also he used it in Philemon 1 and 9. He uses the expression *ho desmios en kyriō* (ὁ δέσμιος ἐν κυρίῳ), "**prisoner of the Lord**" in Ephesians 4:1 to describe himself. In each instance, he was under house arrest during his first Roman imprisonment awaiting his appeal before Caesar.

The proper noun *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**Jesus**" refers to the human nature of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth and functions as a genitive of simple apposition, which indicates that it clarifies who is Christ here, namely Jesus of Nazareth since there were many in the first century who made the claim.

The genitive second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) means "each and every one of you as a corporate unit" or "all of you without exception" since the word not only refers to the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. As we have noted throughout our study of the first two chapters of Ephesians, the referent of the second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) are Gentile Christians according to the contents of Ephesians 2:11.

The articular genitive neuter plural form of the noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος), "**who are Gentiles**" pertains to persons from an ethnic group or nation not allied with and trusting in the God of Israel who is Jesus Christ and is used in a collective sense for these people. Thus, this word is used of those members of the human race who are not of Jewish racial descent and thus not members of the covenant people of God, Israel. The articular construction of the word is "generic" which means that the article is distinguishing the Gentile race from the Jewish race. This word functions as a genitive of simple apposition, which means that it is identifying specifically who the referent of the former is. Thus, this indicates that they are Gentiles racially.

The genitive second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) is the object of the preposition *huper* (ὑπέρ), which means "for the benefit of, on behalf of" since the word functions as a marker of benefaction or advantage expressing the idea that it was "for the benefit of" these Gentile Christians that Paul was a prisoner of the one and only Christ. This interpretation is supported by the contents of Ephesians 3:2, which asserts that the stewardship of God's grace, i.e., being a communicator of the mystery of Christ, i.e., the gospel, was given to Paul for the benefit of the Gentile Christian community. It is also indicated by the contents of Ephesians 3:8, which asserts that this grace which was given to Paul by God the Father in order to preach the unfathomable riches of Christ to the Gentiles.

Therefore, this prepositional phrase reveals that Paul did not consider himself a prisoner of the Roman civil authorities but rather a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Thus, he views his imprisonment as a part of the Father's sovereign plan for his life as an apostle to the Gentiles. Consequently, he is comforted in his imprisonment by this fact. In fact, Paul was imprisoned because of the opposition of unregenerate Jews possessed with regards to him communicating the gospel to the Gentiles.

Therefore, in Ephesians 3:1, the apostle Paul informs the recipients of this epistle, who were Gentile Christians that he was suffering persecution because of his ministry on behalf of the Gentiles. References to persecution abound in Paul's letters.

The apostle Paul taught Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:12 that every believer who does at any time desire to live a godly life by means of fellowship with Jesus Christ will certainly be persecuted.

Second Timothy 3:12 Now, in fact, each and every one who does at any time desire to live a godly life by means of fellowship with the Christ, who is Jesus, will certainly be persecuted. (Author's translation)

Persecution can take various forms in different countries and at different ages. Some persecution is blatantly overt and some persecution is very subtle taking the form of rejection which can include being ignored, patronized or mocked. It can take the form of condescension as well. Both forms express the hostility of those who are enslaved to sin and Satan and his cosmic system.

Ephesians 3:2 is composed of a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument and begins a sentence, which ends in Ephesians 3:7. The apodosis is not introduced until Ephesians 3:13, which leaves the protasis dangling. It is introduced explicitly in Ephesians 3:13 with the inferential use of the conjunction *dio* (διό). The first class condition is a tool of persuasion in that the writer uses it to persuade his audience to come to his conclusion in the apodosis. The idea behind the first class condition is not "since" but rather, "if-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that, then..." Here in Ephesians 3:2-12, the protasis of this first class conditional statement is designed to persuade the recipients of this epistle, who we noted were Gentile Christians, to follow a particular course of action, which in our context is obedience to the command in the apodosis to not become discouraged by Paul's Roman imprisonment.

Now, the protasis is not only contained in Ephesians 3:2 but also in Ephesians 3:3-12 with the latter explaining in greater detail the contents of the former. In other words, in Ephesians 3:3-12 explains in detail what Paul means by the expression "**the stewardship of God's grace**," which he also asserts was given to him for the benefit of the recipients of this epistle who are Gentile church age believers.

The idea of the protasis is "if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument that all of you as a corporate unit without exception have heard about the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for the benefit of each and every one of you as a corporate unit."

This is a responsive first class condition indicating that the recipients of this letter, whom Ephesians 2:11 identifies as Gentile church age believers, would all agree with the protasis. This is indicated by the fact that these Gentile Christians are the direct result of Paul communicating the gospel to them. Specifically, they are the result of him communicating the mystery doctrine that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. In fact, Paul affirms in Ephesians 3:3-12 that this stewardship of God's grace, which was given to him for the benefit of these Gentile church age believers was communicated to these Gentile church age believers by Paul through the Holy Spirit. As noted, "**the stewardship of God's grace**" is then explained in greater detail in Ephesians 3:3-12.

The apodosis is in Ephesians 3:13 and is "I ask each and every one of you as a corporate unit to not lose heart because of what I am suffering on behalf of all of you without exception, which is for the glory of each and every one of you as a corporate unit."

So therefore, the protasis is introduced in Ephesians 3:2 but explained in detail in Ephesians 3:3-12. In Ephesians 3:3-5, the apostle Paul defines this stewardship of

God's grace as the revelation of the mystery and asserts that he was given insight into this mystery of Christ, which was not known to Old Testament saints but has now been revealed to the apostles and New Testament prophets by the Spirit. In Ephesians 3:6, he defines this mystery of Christ as Gentile church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel.

Then, in Ephesians 3:7-8, Paul asserts that he became a servant of the gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given to him by the exercise of God's power to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ and to enlighten everyone about God's plan concealed from the saints in living in past dispensations. Thus, the implication is that Paul enlightened the recipients of this letter regarding God's secret plan to have Jewish and Gentile believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him with the Jewish church age believers as a result of their obedience to the gospel.

In Ephesians 3:10, Paul asserts that the purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaced wisdom of God would be disclosed during the church age to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms, which is a reference to Satan and his fellow evil spirits. Then, in Ephesians 3:11, he asserts that this was according to the eternal purpose that the Father accomplished by means of the Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, in this first class condition in Ephesians 3:2-12, Paul is persuading these Gentile church age believers to not lose heart because he was imprisoned unjustly because they have heard about his stewardship of God's grace, which was given to him on their behalf. He is attempting to engage them in dwelling upon God's amazing grace, i.e., unmerited blessing, which God bestowed upon him at his conversion.

This stewardship is the mystery of Christ, which was communicated through the gospel by the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ. The content of this revelation is that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. It was a mystery in the sense that it was a secret plan not known to Old Testaments but now communicated during the church age through the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ.

Paul became a servant of this gospel according to the gift of God's grace, which was given to him by the exercise of God's power in order to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ. He also was given this gift in order to enlighten

everyone in the Christian community about God's secret plan that was hidden for ages in God.

The purpose of this enlightenment we also noted was to disclose to Satan and his kingdom in the heavenly realms through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God. The implication is that they were not to lose heart because his imprisonment was the result of Satan and his kingdom persecuting him because of proclaiming this mystery that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus.

Now, in Ephesians 3:2 and 13, the relationship between the protasis and the apodosis is "cause-effect." The cause appears in the protasis, which appears in Ephesians 3:2-12. The effect appears in the apodosis, which appears in Ephesians 3:13. Therefore, this indicates that the Gentile Christian living throughout the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia must not be discouraged by Paul's imprisonment because the purpose of this stewardship was for him to disclose to Satan and his kingdom in the heavenly realms through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God. The implication is that they were not to lose heart because his imprisonment was the result of Satan and his kingdom persecuting him because of proclaiming this mystery that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. In other words, these Gentile Christians should never be discouraged by his imprisonment because Paul's proclamation of this mystery doctrine is an affront and presents a threat to Satan and his kingdom. Thus, it is no surprise that Satan and his fellow evil spirits, who temporarily govern the earth, attacked him to the point of causing him to be imprisoned unjustly by his own people, the Jews.

Why was Satan upset by Paul communicating the gospel throughout the Roman Empire? Because the message of the gospel meant the demise of his kingdom on the earth. As we noted in our study of Ephesians 2:11-22, both Jewish and Gentile church age believers constitute the new humanity which will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits when Jesus Christ returns with the church at His Second Advent, which brings to an end the times of the Gentiles and the seventieth week of Daniel. The Son of God had to become a human being in order to restore the human race to rulership over the earth (cf. Heb. 2:5-13). The Father placed His incarnate Son Jesus Christ as ruler over the earth as a result of His Son voluntarily suffering a spiritual and physical death on the cross as a substitute for the entire human race (Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 2:9-11). When He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, He was given the title deed to the earth and rulership over it (Rev. 5:1-5). At His Second Advent, He will bodily assume rulership over the earth (Rev. 19:11-20:4). At that time, He will imprison Satan for a thousand years

(Rev. 20:1-3). He will along with the church assume rulership over the earth for a thousand years.

Satan was instrumental in the fall of Adam and Eve because he tempted Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in disobedience to God's prohibition to not do so. Consequently, Adam did so as well as a result of his wife's prompting. Thus, the entire human race was not only enslaved to sin but also to Satan and his kingdom. However, the incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus Christ destroyed his works according to 1 John 3:8 as a result of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Those sinners who trust in Him as their Savior are delivered from not only eternal condemnation, i.e., the wrath of God but also delivered from enslavement to sin and Satan and his cosmic system. At His Second Advent, the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride the church will dispossess Satan and his angels from the rulership of the earth and will restore the human race to the rulership over the earth.

God's plan from the beginning was that Adam and Eve would rule over the works of His hands according to Genesis 1:26-27. However, they lost this rulership because of their disobedience. However, Jesus Christ, and His bride, the church will restore the human race to its rightful place as rulers of the earth (Heb. 2:5-9). The sentence of Satan and his angels to suffer eternal condemnation in the lake of fire will be executed at the end of human history according to Revelation 20:10-15.

Therefore, no wonder Paul was imprisoned unjustly because the god of this world, Satan was unhappy about this mystery doctrine of the church age, which asserts that Jewish and Gentile church age believers in resurrection bodies will dispossess him and his fellow evil spirits as rulers of planet earth. The proclamation of the gospel and in particular this mystery doctrine that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and their union and identification with Him meant the end of Satan's kingdom on earth.

The second person plural aorist active indicative conjugation of the verb *akouō* (ἀκούω) pertains to learning or becoming aware of something, conceived of as hearing about it. The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is the recipients of this letter, who were Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. The word not only speaks of them as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. Therefore, in context, this verb speaks of these Gentile church age believers who lived in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia receiving information about Paul's stewardship to communicate the mystery doctrine of the church age by hearing him and other teachers and prophets communicating it to them.

The enclitic particle *ge* (γέ), "**in fact**" emphasizes that each one of the recipients of this letter without exception, who were Gentile church age believers, heard about

the stewardship of God's grace that was given to Paul for the benefit of each and every one of them. In other words, in relation to the first class conditional statement, it is an emphatic confirmation that they have heard about his stewardship to the gospel and in particular the mystery doctrine of the church age that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and their resultant union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

Now, in Ephesians 1:10, the noun *oikonomia* is derived from *oikos*, "house" and the verb *nemo*, "to administrate," thus the word literally means "to administrate a household." From the time of Xenophon and Plato, the word represented household administration, the management of a household or of household affairs. It was generally used for the administration of the state and was eventually used to designate every type of activity that accrued from the position.[44] So it takes on the meanings "direction, provision" or "administration." It appears only twice in the Septuagint where it retains its original meaning of "office, administration" (Isaiah 22:19, 21).

The noun *oikonomia* occurs 9 times in the Greek New Testament (Luke 16:2, 3, 4; 1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:4). In Ephesians 3:9, *oikonomia* means "dispensation" and refers to the church age. However, in the remaining passages, it refers to a stewardship entrusted to someone. In 1 Timothy 1:4, the noun *oikonomia* means "administration of a household" and refers to these unidentified individuals in Ephesus fulfilling their stewardship as pastor-teachers. Specifically, it refers to "the administration" of God's household, which is the church. In 1 Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 3:2, and Colossians 1:25, the word is a reference to the stewardship that God gave to Paul as an apostle.

In Ephesians 1:10, the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία) means "dispensation" since the word pertains to "a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose."[45] Specifically, it refers to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ when the Father's kingdom will be visibly present on planet earth under the rulership of Jesus Christ and His bride. They will also be accompanied by Old Testament saints, tribulational martyrs in their resurrection bodies as well as the elect angels.

However, here in Ephesians 3:2, the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία) means "stewardship" because it pertains in this context to Paul's responsibility as an apostle to communicate the gospel. Also, it speaks of his responsibility to communicate God's secret plan that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ

[44] The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, General Editor, volume 2, page 253; Regency, Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1967, 1969, 1971

[45] Dispensationalism Today, page 29

Jesus. In other words, it speaks of his responsibility to communicate this mystery doctrine of the church age.

The idea of this word is two-fold: (1) It speaks of the office or spiritual gift of apostle. (2) It speaks of the activity of an apostle. Thus, the word not only speaks of Paul's apostleship but also the responsibility he was given to communicate the Father's secret plan to make Jewish and Gentile church age believers fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and their resultant union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

Acts 26:15-18 records Paul recounting to King Agrippa the Lord bestowing upon him this stewardship to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles.

Acts 26:15 So I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord replied, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this reason, to designate you in advance as a servant and witness to the things you have seen and to the things in which I will appear to you. 17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes so that they turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' (NET)

The apostle Paul employs the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" for the seventh time in this epistle (cf. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8) and in each instance, the word refers to God the Father's grace policy towards unregenerate sinners, which manifests His attribute of love. Grace is also a major theme in this epistle since the noun *charis* (χάρις), "grace" appears 12 times in this epistle (Eph. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5:, 7, 8; 3:2, 7, 8; 4:7, 29; 6:24). It is all that God the Father is free to do in imparting unmerited blessings to those who trust in Jesus Christ as Savior based upon the merits of Christ and His death on the cross. It is God treating the sinner in a manner that they don't deserve and excludes any human works in order to acquire eternal salvation or blessing from God. Grace means that God saved us and blessed us despite ourselves and not according to anything that we do but rather saved us and blessed us because of the merits of Christ and His work on the Cross. It excludes any human merit in salvation and blessing (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) and gives the Creator all the credit and the creature none. By means of faith, we accept the grace of God, which is a non-meritorious system of perception, which is in total accord with the grace of God. Grace and faith are totally compatible with each other and inseparable (1 Tim. 1:14) and complement one another (Rom. 4:16; Eph. 2:8). Grace, faith, and salvation are all the gift of God and totally exclude all human works and ability (Eph. 2:8-9).

However, here in Ephesians 3:2, the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" is employed by the apostle Paul to describe the stewardship the Lord Jesus Christ bestowed upon him at his justification as being an "unmerited blessing." Thus, it is not only

describing his spiritual gift of apostleship as an unmerited blessing but also the responsibility and task the Lord called or commissioned him to perform on behalf of the Gentiles. This interpretation is supported by the contents of Ephesians 3:8.

Ephesians 3: 8 To me—less than the least of all the saints—this grace was given, to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ (NET)

Now, in Ephesians 3:2, the referent of the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), "**the one and only God**" is God the Father. The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worshipped was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity in the first century A.D. which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

The noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" is identifying or describing the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), "**the stewardship**" as God's grace. Specifically, it identifies this stewardship as an unmerited blessing given to Paul, which originates from God the Father. In other words, Paul did not earn or deserve this stewardship but rather it was a gift from God the Father. The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of source, which expresses the idea that this grace or unmerited blessing bestowed upon Paul "originates from" God the Father. When Paul describes himself in Ephesians 3:8 as "**less than the least of all the saints**," he is alluding to the fact that his stewardship was manifestation of God's grace in the sense that the task the Lord gave him to communicate the gospel to the Gentile was an unmerited blessing. In other words, he certainly did not earn or deserve it.

In Ephesians 3:2, the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) means "to bestow as a gift" since the word pertains in this context of giving someone something as an expression of generosity. The referent of the feminine singular form of this verb is the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), "**the stewardship**," which is modified by the genitive adjunct *tēs charitos tou theou* (τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), "**God's grace**."

The dative first person singular form of the possessive personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ), "**to me**" and refers of course to the apostle Paul. The word functions as a dative indirect object, which indicates that the apostle Paul received this stewardship, which was an unmerited blessing originating from God the Father.

The accusative second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) means "each and every one of you as a corporate unit" or "all of you as a corporate unit without exception" because it not only refers to the recipients of this letter but is also used of them in a distributive sense emphasizing on exceptions. The referent of this word is the Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. This word is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of benefaction or advantage expressing the idea that the stewardship of God's grace,

which was given to Paul, was "for the benefit of" each and every Gentile church age believer without exception.

The aorist tense of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is a constative aorist, which describes in summary fashion Paul receiving as a gift the stewardship of communicating the Father's secret plan to make Jewish and Gentile church age believers fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of the faith in Christ Jesus at justification and their resultant union and identification with Him.

If you recall, the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), "the stewardship" not only speaks of Paul's apostleship but also the responsibility he was given to communicate the Father's secret plan to make Jewish and Gentile church age believers fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and their resultant union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Therefore, the aorist tense is not only describing the moment Paul received this stewardship at justification but also describes Paul receiving the revelation of the content of this mystery after justification.

The passive voice of this verb means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is expressed in Ephesians 3:5, which asserts that this mystery or God the Father's secret plan to make Jewish and Gentile believers fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus during the church age was revealed to the apostles and prophets *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by the Spirit**." Therefore, the passive of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) indicates that the stewardship of God's grace receives the action of being given to Paul when he received the gift of apostleship through the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit at justification and after justification when he received the revelation of the content of this mystery from the Holy Spirit.

The participle conjugation of this verb is in the genitive case and functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that the participle conjugation of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is identifying or describing the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), "**the stewardship**" as being given to Paul at justification for the benefit of the Gentile Christian community and after justification when he received the revelation of the content of this mystery.

In Colossians 1:25, the apostle Paul also mentions this same stewardship from God.

Colossians 1:24 Now, I am presently rejoicing because of my sufferings on behalf of each and every one of you. In fact, I am supplementing that which remains of the one and only Christ's intense sufferings by means of my physical body on behalf of His body which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the church.

25 Of which I myself became a servant because of the stewardship which is from God (the Father) which was given to me on behalf of each and every one of you in order to fulfill the task of communicating the message originating from God (the Father). 26 Specifically, the mystery which has been concealed from past ages, in other words from past generations but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 For the benefit of whom, God (the Father) wanted to make known what is of infinite value, namely the glorious revelation of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is, as an eternal spiritual truth Christ in each and every one of you, who is the confident expectation of glory, 28 whom we make it our habit of proclaiming everywhere. Specifically, by making it our habit of instructing each and every person, yes by making it our habit of providing authoritative instruction for each and every person by means of a wisdom which is absolute. The purpose of which is to present each and every person as mature in the presence of the Christ. 29 For which purpose, I in fact continue making it my habit of working hard. Specifically, by making it my habit of striving for my own benefit in the face of opposition because of His activity which is regularly made effective through me by means of power. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:3 is composed of the following: (1) *hoti* (ὅτι) epexegetical clause *hoti kata apokalypsin egnōristhē moi to mystērion* (ὅτι κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν ἐγνωρίσθη μοι τὸ μυστήριον), "**Namely that, the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself as revelation**" (Author's translation) (2) comparative clause *proegrapsa en oligō* (προέγραψα ἐν ὀλίγῳ), "**as I wrote beforehand in a concise manner**." (Author's translation)

The *hoti* (ὅτι) epexegetical clause explains the noun *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία), "**the stewardship**" and specifically, it explains the nature of this stewardship, namely it is being a steward of the mystery or the divine secret that was made known to Paul by revelation from the Holy Spirit.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:17, the noun *apokalypsis* (ἀποκάλυψις) here in Ephesians 3:3 means "revelation" since the word in both instances pertains to communication of knowledge which was previously hidden to man by a divine or supernatural agency. However, in Ephesians 1:17, it refers to the revelation the Holy Spirit provided Paul and his fellow apostles regarding the Father's plan for the church age believer, which now appears in the Greek New Testament. But here in Ephesians 3:3, it refers to the revelation the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:5) provided Paul in relation to his stewardship, which he describes in Ephesians 3:2 as unique to the grace, which originates form the one and only God which is a reference to the Father.

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:2, the protasis is introduced in Ephesians 3:2 but explained in detail in Ephesians 3:3-12. In Ephesians 3:3-5, the apostle Paul defines this stewardship of God's grace as the revelation of the mystery and asserts that he was given insight into this mystery of Christ, which was not known to Old

Testament saints but has now been revealed to the apostles and New Testament prophets by the Spirit. In Ephesians 3:6, he defines this mystery of Christ as Gentile church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Then, in Ephesians 3:7-8, Paul asserts that he became a servant of the gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given to him by the exercise of God's power to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ and to enlighten everyone about God's plan concealed from the saints in living in past dispensations. Thus, the implication is that Paul enlightened the recipients of this letter regarding God's secret plan to have Jewish and Gentile believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him with the Jewish church age believers as a result of their obedience to the gospel. In Ephesians 3:10, Paul asserts that the purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaced wisdom of God would be disclosed during the church age to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms, which is a reference to Satan and his fellow evil spirits. Then, in Ephesians 3:11, he asserts that this was according to the eternal purpose that the Father accomplished by means of the Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Therefore, in Ephesians 3:3, the noun *apokalypsis* (ἀποκάλυψις), which means "revelation" refers to Paul's stewardship, which we also noted, he defines as the mystery of Christ, which was communicated through the gospel by the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ by the agency of the Holy Spirit. The content of this revelation is that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. It was a mystery in the sense that it was a secret plan not known to Old Testaments but now communicated during the church age through the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ. The purpose of this enlightenment we also noted was to disclose to Satan and his kingdom in the heavenly realms through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God.

There has been much conjecture as to when Paul received this revelation. It could refer to Paul's Damascus road experience at his conversion (Acts. 9:3-8; 22:6-11; 26:12-18),or the teaching of Ananias in Damascus (Acts 9:10-19), or the vision in Jerusalem Paul received (Acts 22:17) or lastly, his training by God in Arabia (Gal.1:12,17-18). However, none of these accounts reveals or suggests that Paul received this revelation that Jewish and Gentile Christians are now fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus.

Now, in Ephesians 3:3, the prepositional phrase *kata apokalypsin* (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν), "**as revelation**" not only modifies to the *hoti* epexegetical clause *egnōristhē moi to mystērion* (ἐγνωρίσθη μοι τὸ μυστήριον), "**the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself**" but also corresponds to it. Specifically, the former corresponds to the latter in that both speak of Paul receiving revelation from the Holy Spirit. In other words, they are equivalent to each other in that they both refer to the same thing. Namely, this divine secret or mystery was made known to him by the Spirit is "equivalent" to receiving revelation from the Holy Spirit.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:9, the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον) here in Ephesians 3:3, the word means "mystery, divine secret" since the word pertains to the content of that which has not been known before but which has been revealed to an in-group or restricted constituency.[46] It pertains to a secret whose concerned party is a deity alone and those to whom he chooses to share the information; especially concerning the method and history of God's redemption or other supernatural information.[47]

In Ephesians 1:9 and 3:3, the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**mystery**" speaks of a truth which was not known to Old Testament saints but has now been revealed by the Father through the Spirit during the church age to the apostles who communicated it to the church.

In Ephesians 1:9, this word refers to the divine secret or mystery of the Father's will for church age believers.

Ephesians 1:3 The God, namely the Father of the Lord ruling over us, who is Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise. Namely, because He is the one who has blessed each and every one of us by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. 4 For He chose each and every one of us for His own purpose because of Him alone before creation in order that each and every one of us would be holy as well as uncensurable in His judgment. 5 He did this by predestinating each and every one of us for the purpose of adoption as sons because of His love through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will. 6 This was for the purpose of praising His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on each and every one of us because of the one who is divinely loved. 7 Because of whom, each one of us are experiencing that which is the redemption through His blood, namely the forgiveness of our transgressions according to His infinite grace. 8 This He provided in abundance for the benefit of each and every one of us because of the exercise of a wisdom, which is absolute and divine in nature resulting in the manifestation of an insight, which is absolute and divine in nature. 9 He did this

[46] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 344). United Bible Societies
[47] Logos Bible Software Bible Sense Lexicon

by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of each and every one of us according to His pleasure, which He planned beforehand because of our faith in and union and identification with Himself. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 1:9, the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**mystery**" speaks of a truth which was not known to Old Testament saints but has now been revealed by the Father through the Spirit during the church age to the apostles who communicated it to the church. This mystery is identified by the word's genitive adjunct which is *tou thelēmatos autou* (τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ), "**of His will**." This mystery of the Father's will is identified in Ephesians 1:3-4 as the Father electing church age believers by predestinating them for the purpose of adoption as sons for His purpose because of His love through Jesus Christ. Thus, it was according to His will to elect church age believers by predestinating them for the purpose of adoption as sons for His purpose alone because of His love through Jesus Christ.

This mystery is developed further in Ephesians 3:5-6 in that it asserts that the Gentile believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus with Jewish Christians. Both groups compose those who have been elected by the Father which was accomplished by predestinating them for the purpose of adoption as sons for Himself alone because of His love through their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ. Therefore, the development of this mystery in Ephesians 3:5-6 is that these verses are identifying that not only Jewish Christians are elected and predestinated and in union with Christ and identified with Him but also Gentile Christians. This development was necessary since the promise of the Holy Spirit was originally given to His apostles and disciples who were all Jewish since this promise was given to the Jewish people under the New Covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:27) and the recipients of the Ephesian epistle were Gentile Christians.

So therefore, in Ephesians 3:3, the referent the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**mystery**" is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Ephesians 3:3 expands or explains in greater detail or provides more information about the Father's will for the church age believer in Ephesians 1:9. Namely, that it also involves Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Therefore, in each instance, the word has the same referent because the Father's will for the church age believer, which was not known to the Old Testament prophets, is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of

Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

Some commentators argue that this comparative clause alludes to Colossians 1:25-27. However, this very unlikely since Tychicus not only delivered Ephesians to the Christian community in the Roman province of Asia but also Colossians (Col.4:7). He also delivered what we know as "Philemon" to Philemon since it can be inferred that Philemon lived in Colossae because the Onesimus mentioned in Philemon 10 is Philemon's slave is the same Onesimus who appears in Colossians 4:9.

Now, therefore, in Ephesians 3:3, the statement *kata apokalypsin egnōristhē moi to mystērion* (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν ἐγνωρίσθη μοι τὸ μυστήριον), "**Namely that, the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself as revelation**" means that the divine secret or mystery that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him was made known for the benefit of Paul as revelation.

In Ephesians 3:3, the aorist tense of this verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) is a constative aorist, which is describing in summary fashion the action of Paul receiving this divine secret or mystery that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him being made known for the benefit of Paul.

There is nothing in Scripture which would indicate that this is a consummative aorist which is used to stress the cessation of an act, which would thus indicate that Paul received this revelation at the moment of justification or at some other point of time after his conversion. The Scriptures also do not indicate if he received this revelation in stages over a period of time. Therefore, it is better to take the aorist tense of this verb as a constative aorist which takes no interest in the internal workings of the action of the verb. It simply describes in summary fashion without focusing on the beginning or end of the action.

The passive voice of the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) indicates that this mystery or divine secret about Jewish and Gentile church age believers receives the action of being made known to Paul by revelation from the Holy Spirit.

The comparative clause *proegrapsa en oligō* (προέγραψα ἐν ὀλίγῳ), "**as I wrote beforehand in a concise manner**" which follows this hoti epexegetical clause refers to Paul writing about this mystery concerning Jewish and Gentile church age believers in Ephesians 1:3-14 and 2:11-22.

The adverb *kathōs* (καθώς) functions as a marker of comparison which means that it is marking a comparison between the *hoti* (ὅτι) epexegetical clause *hoti kata apokalypsin egnōristhē moi to mystērion* (ὅτι κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν ἐγνωρίσθη μοι τὸ

μυστήριον), "**Namely that, the mystery was made known for the benefit of myself as revelation**" (Author's translation) and the comparative clause *proegrapsa en oligō* (προέγραψα ἐν ὀλίγῳ), "**as I wrote beforehand in a concise manner**" (Author's translation), which follows it. The latter refers to the contents of Ephesians 1:9, which speaks of mystery of the Father's will for church age believers, which is explained in greater detail in Ephesians 3:2-13. Therefore, this adverb *kathōs* (καθώς) is marking a comparison between the contents of Ephesians 3:2-13 with the contents of Ephesians 1:3-14 and 2:11-22.

In this comparative clause, the verb *prographō* (προγράφω) means "to write beforehand or previously, to write in advance or in anticipation of" and is modified by the prepositional phrase *en oligō* (προέγραψα ἐν ὀλίγῳ), which identifies Paul as writing about this divine secret or mystery in a brief manner in Ephesians 1:9.

The aorist tense of the verb *prographō* (προγράφω) is used of Paul writing in Ephesians 1:3-14 and 2:11-22 about this mystery not known to Old Testament prophets that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

This author not only believes that this comparative clause in Ephesians 3:3 refers to Paul's teaching in Ephesians 1:3-10 but also to his teaching in Ephesians 2:11-22. This is indicated by the fact that these verses develop the idea of these Gentile Christians being elected by being predestinated in eternity past to adoption as son of the Father, which is taught in Ephesians 1:3-14. Ephesians 2:11-22 teaches that Gentile church age believers are united with Jewish Gentile believers because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him accomplished through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. Thus, the election and predestinated of church age believers to adoption as sons of the Father taught by Paul in Ephesians1:3-14 also involves Jewish and Gentile church age believers being united together to form the new humanity led by Jesus Christ which will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits in order to rule over the works of God's hands during Jesus Christ's millennial reign.

Thus, the comparative clause *proegrapsa en oligō* (προέγραψα ἐν ὀλίγῳ) is emphasizing that Paul wrote about this mystery or divine secret about Jewish and Gentile church age believers briefly in Ephesians 1:3-14 and 2:11-22 before writing about it in detail in Ephesians 3:2-13.

Ephesians 3:4 is composed of the participial clause *dynasthe anaginōskontes noēsai tēn synesin mou* (δύνασθε ἀναγινώσκοντες νοῆσαι τὴν σύνεσίν μου), "**that is, by each one of you making it your habit of hearing read publicly, all of you will for your own benefit become able to comprehend my insight**" and is modified by two prepositional phrases. The first is *pros ho* (πρὸς ὃ), "**Concerning which**" and the second is *en tō mystēriō tou Christou* (ἐν τῷ μυστηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ),

"**into this incomparable mystery, which is produced by your unique union and identification with Christ**." These two prepositional phrases serve as bookends to this participial clause with the first placed in the emphatic position in the clause and the second completing the clause.

In the participial clause, the nominative masculine plural present active participle conjugation of the verb *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) pertains to having a particular piece of literature read publicly or aloud to people and thus involves verbalization.

The referent of the masculine plural form of this verb is the Gentile Christian community living in the various cities and towns throughout the Roman province of Asia. This is indicated by the fact that Paul identifies the recipients of this epistle in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile Christians and this is a circular letter written.

Therefore, this verb in Ephesians 3:4 refers to the contents of Ephesians being read publicly to each member of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia who were the recipients of this epistle by their lictors and pastor-teachers. In other words, it describes these Gentiel Christians hearing read publicly the contents of this epistle, which explains in detail this mystery doctrine of the church age.

This word *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) functions as a nominative in simple apposition which means that it describes the recipients of this epistle hearing the contents of this epistle read to them publicly by their lictors and pastors in the public worship service and which contents explains in detail this mystery doctrine for the church age.

The present tense of this verb is a customary present, which is used to describe these Gentile Christians as "making it their habit of" hearing read publicly in the public worship service this mystery doctrine.

This verb *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) also functions as a participle of means which indicates the means by which the action of a finite verb is accomplished. This type of participle defines the action of its controlling verb and makes more explicit what the author intended to convey with the verb. This type of participle usually follows the main verb. In this context, the finite verb is the second person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι), "**you will be able**" whose thought is completed by the aorist active infinitive conjugation of the verb *noeō* (νοέω), "**to understand**." Also, in this context, the verb *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) follows the main verb, which is the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι), "**you will be able**." Therefore, the participle conjugation of the verb *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) is describing the means by which the recipients of this letter will be able to comprehend Paul's insight into this mystery of Christ. Namely, by making it their habit of hearing read publicly the contents of this letter by their lictors and pastors in the public worship service, which explains in detail this mystery doctrine for the church age.

Some interpret the participle conjugation of this verb *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) as a temporal participle, which in relation to its controlling verb, answers the question, "when?" Therefore, this type of participle would be expressing the idea of the recipients of this letter will be able to comprehend Paul's insight into this mystery of Christ "while" hearing read publicly the contents of this letter read in the public worship service. Though a participle might have a temporal force, one must determine if a more specific semantic value is intended by the writer before interpreting the participle as being temporal. This is the case here where *anaginōskō* (ἀναγινώσκω) has a more specific semantic value, namely means.

The second person plural aorist middle indicative conjugation of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) pertains to possessing the capacity to understand a particular subject. The referent of the second person plural of this verb is of course the recipients of this epistle who were members of the Gentile Christian community living in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia. The middle voice of this verb is an indirect middle, which means that the subject acts for himself or herself. Therefore, this would express the idea that it would be "for the benefit of" the recipients of this epistle to be able to comprehend Paul's insight into the mystery of Christ.

The aorist active infinitive conjugation of the verb *noeō* (νοέω), "**to understand**" pertains to understanding, or comprehending on the basis of careful thought and consideration and speaks of grasping the meaning of a particular subject intellectually.

It functions as complementary infinitive which means that it is completing the thought of the second person plural present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *dunamai* (δύναμαι) because it identifies for the reader what they will be able to do by reading the contents of this epistle.

The aorist tense of this verb *noeō* (νοέω) is an ingressive aorist, which emphasizes the entrance into a particular state or condition. Therefore, this indicates that the recipients of this epistle will be able to "enter into the state of" comprehending Paul's insight into the mystery of Christ by making it their habit of hearing the contents of this epistle read to them publicly by their lictors and pastors.

The noun *sunesis* (σύνεσις), "**insight**" pertains to possessing the ability to understand the meaning and importance of something. As was the case in Colossians 1:9, 2:2 and 2 Timothy 2:7, the noun *sunesis* (σύνεσις) here in Ephesians 3:4 pertains to the result of apprehending the inner nature of things or of seeing intuitively. It pertains to the quality of being able to grasp and comprehend what is obscure, skill in discerning, and the power to see what is not evident to the average mind.

The nominative first person singular form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) means "my" and its referent is of course Paul. The articular construction of the noun *sunesis* (σύνεσις) is employed with this personal pronoun in order to denote

possession indicating that this insight or discernment is the possession of the apostle Paul.

Now, in the first prepositional phrase *pros ho* (πρὸς ὃ), "**concerning which**," the referent of the accusative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**the mystery**," which appears in Ephesians 3:3. This mystery refers to revelation Paul received from the Holy Spirit and was not known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel. The content of this revelation is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:3, this verse expands or explains in greater detail or provides more information about the Father's will for the church age believer in Ephesians 1:9. Namely, that it also involves Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Therefore, in each instance, the word has the same referent because the Father's will for the church age believer, which was not known to the Old Testament prophets, is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

The accusative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the object is the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which marks this mystery doctrine of the church age as being the connection between what he wrote about it in the first two chapters and what he is going to write about in Ephesians 3:5-13.

The second prepositional in Ephesians 3:4, which completes this verse contains the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον) means "mystery, secret, divine secret" since it pertains to revelation that was not known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel but has been given to the apostles and New Testament prophets by the Holy Spirit. As was the case in Ephesians 3:3, here in Ephesians 3:4 the referent of this word is the revelation that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel.

The articular construction of this word is monadic, which means that this mystery is "unique" or "one of a kind" because the content of this mystery is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at

justification and union and identification. Thus, this mystery is unique because never before in history were Gentile believers on equal footing with Jewish believers.

The noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which marks the content of what Paul possessed insight into, namely, this unique mystery or secret, which is produced by union and identification with Christ, which is unique to those Jewish and Gentile sinners who have been declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" contains the figure of metonymy which means that the one and only Christ is put for the church age believer's union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. This interpretation is indicated by the contents of Ephesians 3:5-13 reveal the content of this mystery, namely that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him. Gentile Christians were entered into a relationship with God the Father and with His covenant people Israel by being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, through the baptism of the Spirit, they were placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. Through the baptism of the Spirit, they were united with Jewish Christians. Consequently, they benefit from the four unconditional covenants that God established with His covenant people, namely the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. They received the gift of the Spirit and the forgiveness of sins because of benefiting from the New covenant, which promises these two benefits.

The articular construction of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" is monadic emphasizing that Jewish and Gentile church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ as being unique in history. This is indicated by the fact that unlike the church age, Gentile believers in previous dispensations have never been on equal footing with Jewish believers in the sense that Gentiles have never given the privilege of entering into a covenant relationship with God as Jewish believers. At the moment of justification, Gentile church age believers have been entered into a covenant relationship with God because through the baptism of the Spirit, not only have they been united with Christ and identified with Him but they have also been united with Jewish church age believers as well (cf. Rom. 11:16-21; Eph. 2:11-22).

The articular construction of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) functions as a genitive of production, which takes place when the genitive substantive "produces" the noun to which it stands related, which in our context is the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**mystery**." Therefore, this construction expresses the idea that this mystery or secret doctrine that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow

heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise with each other is "produced by" their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

Notice, in Ephesians 3:4 that Paul speaks of this mystery being read publicly to the recipients of this epistle who we noted were Gentile Christians living in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia. The public reading of Scripture is commanded by Paul since he instructed Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13 to be occupied with the public reading of Scripture. The public reading of Scripture is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:27 in that Paul commanded the Thessalonian Christian community to have the contents of First Thessalonians read to each person in their community.

Now, some expositors argue that the content of the mystery of Christ here in Ephesians 3:4 is the same as in Colossians 1:26, 27, 2:2 and 4:3. However, this is not the case. In fact, the content of the mystery of Christ here in Ephesians 3:4 refers to one of several doctrines which are described by Paul in his writings as a "mystery," i.e., not known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel but revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and New Testament prophets. Namely, that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

In the New Testament, the church is never actually called a mystery but we know it is a mystery because its major elements are specifically designated as mysteries. For example, the first major element is the body concept of Jewish and Gentile believers united into one body to form one "new man" or "new humanity." This is described as a mystery in Ephesians 3:1-12. The second major element is that the church is the Bride of Jesus Christ which is taught in Ephesians 5:22-32. The third element is the rapture or resurrection of the church which is described as a mystery as well in First Corinthians 15:51-52. Lastly, the fourth and final major element is the concept of Jesus Christ indwelling each and every church age believer which is taught here in Colossians 1:24-27 and also in 2:10-19; 3:4 and 11.

Ephesians 3:5 is composed of the following: (1) relative pronoun clause *ho heterais geneais ouk egnōristhē tois huiois tōn anthrōpōn* (ὃ ἑτέραις γενεαῖς οὐκ ἐγνωρίσθη τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων), "**This mystery was by no means made known to members of the human race in previous generations**." (Author's translation) (2) comparative clause *hōs nyn apekalyphthē tois hagiois °apostolois autou kai prophētais en pneumati* (ὡς νῦν ἀπεκαλύφθη τοῖς ἁγίοις °ἀποστόλοις αὐτοῦ καὶ προφήταις ἐν πνεύματι), "**as it has now been revealed through the personal agency of His holy apostles as well as prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit**." (Author's translation)

The referent of the nominative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**the mystery**," which appears in Ephesians 3:4, which is indicated by the fact that they agree in gender (neuter) and number (singular). As we also noted in our study of this verse, the latter means "mystery, secret, divine secret" since it pertains to revelation that was not known to the Old Testament prophets of Israel but has been given to the apostles and New Testament prophets by the Holy Spirit. As was the case in Ephesians 3:3, here in Ephesians 3:4 the referent of this word is the revelation that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him. In Ephesians 3:4, we also noted Paul asserts that this mystery is "produced by" these Jewish and Gentile church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him. Therefore, the referent of the nominative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) here in Ephesians 3:5 is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**the mystery**," which Paul asserts is produced by the church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ.

In our study of Ephesians 3:3-4, we noted that this verse expands or explains in greater detail or provides more information about the Father's will for the church age believer in Ephesians 1:9. Namely, that it also involves Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Therefore, in each instance, the word has the same referent because the Father's will for the church age believer, which was not known to the Old Testament prophets, is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

Ephesians 3:1-13 teaches that it was a mystery that the Gentiles through faith in Christ would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel. The mystery is *not* that the Gentiles would be saved since this was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isa. 11:10; 60:3). Rather, the mystery concerning the Gentiles is that they would become fellow heirs with Jewish believers, fellow members with Jewish believers in the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the covenant promises to Israel.

The content of this mystery is three-fold: (1) The Gentile believers are fellow heirs with Jewish believers in the sense that they share in the spiritual riches God gave them because of His covenant with Abraham (Gal. 3:26-28). (2) Gentile

believers in Christ are fellow members of the body of Christ with Jewish believers. There is one body, the body of Christ (Eph. 4:4), which has no racial distinctions (1 Cor. 12:13) and has the Lord Jesus Christ as its head (Eph. 5:23). Each individual member of the body of Christ shares in the ministry (Eph. 4:15-16). (3) Gentile believers in Christ are fellow partakers of the four unconditional covenants of promise to Israel. The four great unconditional covenants to Israel will be fulfilled: (1) Abrahamic deals with the race of Israel (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:16; 22:15-18). (2) Palestinian is the promise of land to Israel (Gen. 13:15; Num. 34:1-12). (3) Davidic deals with the aristocracy of Israel (2 Sam. 7:8-17) (4) New deals with the future restoration of Israel during the millennium (Jer. 31:31-34).

This mystery about Jewish and Gentile church age believers is not only alluded to in Ephesians 1:3-14 and Ephesians 3:2-13 but is also alluded to in Ephesians 2:11-22 because the latter develops the idea of these Gentile Christians being elected by being predestinated in eternity past to adoption as son of the Father, which is taught in Ephesians 1:3-14. Ephesians 2:11-22 teaches that Gentile church age believers are united with Jewish Gentile believers because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him accomplished through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. Thus, the election and predestination of church age believers to adoption as sons of the Father taught by Paul in Ephesians1:3-14 also involves Jewish and Gentile church age believers being united together to form the new humanity who along with Jesus Christ dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits as rulers over God's creation in order to rule over the works of God's hands during Jesus Christ's millennial reign.

Now, in Ephesians 3:5, the dative feminine plural form of the noun *genea* (γενεά), "**generations**" refers to generations of human beings extending from Adam up to the church age. In other words, the referent of this word is the dispensations prior to the church age. This noun *genea* (γενεά) is modified by the dative feminine plural form of the adjective *heteros* (ἕτερος), "**previous**" which refers to the dispensations that came before the church age.

These dispensations, which preceded the church age, would include the dispensation of the Gentiles and Israel. The dispensation of the Gentiles begins with the Edenic period, which can be divided into four periods: (1) Edenic: Adam to the Fall (Gen. 1:26-3:6). (2) Ante-Diluvian: Fall of Adam to the Flood (Gen. 3-9). (3) Post-Diluvian: Noah Leaving Ark to Call of Abraham (Gen. 9-12). (4) Patriarchal: Call of Abraham to Giving of Law on Sinai (Gen. 12-Ex. 19). The dispensation of Israel is broken into six periods: (1) Theocratic Kingdom: Exodus to Samuel (B.C. 1441-B.C. 1020) (2) United Kingdom: Saul to Rehoboam (B.C. 1020-926 B.C.) (3) Northern Kingdom: Jeroboam to Hosea (B.C. 926-B.C. 721). Lastly, the last dispensation before the church age is the dispensation of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ or in other words, His First Advent, which of course began with the

birth of Christ and culminated in His death, resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 2:2, the articular dative masculine plural form of the noun *huios* (υἱός) here in Ephesians 3:5 does not mean "the sons" but rather "the offspring" since the word pertains to the offspring of human beings without reference to the gender. It refers to the offspring of the human race who lived during the dispensations prior to the advent of the church age.

The articular genitive masculine plural form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is used in a generic sense for the human race. It functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which means that the word stands in apposition to the articular dative masculine plural form of the noun *huios* (υἱός), which indicates that it is identifying what race these offspring belong to, namely the human race as distinguished from the angelic race.

Therefore, this expression *huioi tōn anthrōpōn* (υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων) literally means "the sons of men or human beings" and is a Semitic idiom designating members of the human race (Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31; 144:12; Ezek. 2:1, 3, 6, 8; Mk. 3:28).

Now, the reader must understand that this expression does not refer to unregenerate humanity but rather regenerate humanity because this mystery doctrine can only be understood by those who have received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ since the Spirit inspired this revelation and gives illumination with regards to its application and significance (cf. 1 Cor. 2; Eph. 1:17-18). Therefore, in context the referent of this expression is church age believers who have received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit when they were declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ and were consequently placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit, which they received at justification.

The third person singular aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) pertains to causing information to become known to others and is emphatically negated by the emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὔ), which expresses an absolute, direct, full negation.

The passive voice of the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is expressed here in Ephesians 3:5, namely, the prepositional phrase *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by the Spirit**." Therefore, this is a divine passive. This indicates that this mystery doctrine never received the action of being made known to members of the human race who lived in the dispensations prior to the church age through the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit as it has now been made known during the church age.

Now, in the comparative clause which completes Ephesians 3:5, we have the conjunction comparative particle *hōs* (ὡς), "**as**," which is used to mark a comparison between members of the human race living in the dispensations prior to the church age and those living during the church age.

The adverb of time *nun* (νῦν) "**now**" indicates that Paul composing in writing this epistle and the dispensation of the church age take place simultaneously.

The verb *apokalyptō* (ἀποκαλύπτω) pertains to something becoming known to the public and specifically information that was previously unknown to people.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 2:20, the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) here in Ephesians 3:5 is employed as designation for the temporary spiritual gift assigned to the twelve men Jesus Christ sovereignly chose and delegated authority to exercise over the church. Here it refers to the exercise or function of the spiritual gift of apostle. This word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the apostles are put for their communication of the gospel to the members of the church.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:20, the noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης) here in Ephesians 3:5 refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet, which is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed (See 1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; 14:22; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11). This word also contains the figure of metonymy, which means that these New Testament prophets are put for their communication of the gospel to the members of the body of Christ prior to justification and which communication resulted in their justification as a result of them exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:20, the articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) here in Ephesians 3:5 does not signify that the Granville Sharp rule is in effect, which would signal that the prophets and apostles are one in the same.

Therefore, as was the case in Ephesians 2:20, the presence of the article before the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) here in Ephesians 3:5 does not indicate that the Granville Sharp rule is in effect. If it was in effect, this would indicate that the nouns *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) and *prophētēs* (προφήτης) are one in the same. However, as Wallace points out, this rule does not apply to plural nouns but only singular nouns since both these nouns are in the plural. Rather, the articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) is simply used by Paul to tie both the temporary spiritual gifts of apostles and prophets together as being the recipients of the doctrine that was a mystery or secret to the Old Testament prophets and asserts that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him. Specifically, the article simply binds these two temporary spiritual gifts together signifying that the exercise of both of these

discontinued communication spiritual gifts constitutes the recipients of this mystery or secret doctrine and agencies which communicated this mystery doctrine to the members of the church. Therefore, this author interprets the articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) as simply joining both the temporary spiritual gifts of apostle and prophet together identifying them as the recipients of this mystery doctrine. Specifically, the article simply binds them together signifying that the exercise of both of these discontinued communication spiritual gifts constitutes the recipients of this mystery or secret doctrine that Gentile believers are by no means second class citizens in relation to Jewish believers. It also binds them together signifying that the exercise of both of these discontinued communication spiritual gifts constitutes the personal agencies, which the Holy Spirit employed to communicate this mystery doctrine to the members of the body of Christ.

The articular construction of the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) also indicates that both nouns, *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος), "apostles" and *prophētēs* (προφήτης), "prophets" are modified by the articular dative masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος).

The articular dative masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος) means "holy" since the word pertains to someone who is dedicated to God or in other words, it pertains to someone who is set apart to serve and worship God exclusively. Therefore, this word describes the apostles and New Testament prophets as dedicated to God and His purposes in the sense that they have been set apart from the rest of the human race in order to serve and worship Him.

The referent of the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) is the articular genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός). This is indicated by the fact that the latter which appears in Ephesians 3:4, agrees with the former in gender (masculine) and number (singular) as well as case (genitive). The intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) emphasizes Jesus Christ's identity and is the demonstrative force intensified.

The articular construction of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος) is also employed with the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) in order to denote possession or ownership indicating that the apostles and New Testament prophets are the "possession" of Jesus Christ.

Both the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος), "apostles" and *prophētēs* (προφήτης), "prophets" function as a dative of agency. Therefore, both these nouns identify the apostles and New Testament prophets as the personal agencies employed by the Holy Spirit and sent by the Son to reveal the mystery doctrine of the church age that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

The referent of the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is of course the Holy Spirit, who is the third member of the Trinity in the sense that He proceeds from both the Son as well as the Father. This word also contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence.

The dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means, which means it marks this word as the means by which the action of the *apokalyptō* (ἀποκαλύπτω) is accomplished. Therefore, this prepositional phrase indicates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is "the means by which" members of the body of Christ received the revelation of the mystery or secret doctrine that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

The passive voice of this verb *apokalyptō* (ἀποκαλύπτω) means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is expressed in Ephesians 3:5 by the prepositional phrase *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι), "**by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit**." Therefore, the passive of this verb indicates that this mystery doctrine received the action of being revealed to members of the church through the apostles and New Testament prophets by the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 1:26 echoes the contents of Ephesians 3:5.

Colossians 1:24 I am presently rejoicing because of my sufferings on behalf of each and every one of you. In fact, I am supplementing that which remains of the one and only Christ's intense sufferings by means of my physical body on behalf of His body which is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the church. 25 Of which I myself became a servant because of the stewardship which is from God (the Father) which was given to me on behalf of each and every one of you in order to fulfill the task of communicating the message originating from God (the Father). 26 Specifically, the mystery which has been concealed from past ages, in other words from past generations but now has been revealed to His saints. (Author's translation)

The contents of Ephesians 3:5 helps to explain the content of Paul's intercessory prayer in Ephesians 1:15-23.

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my

prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. 19 Also, what constitutes being His incomparable, great power on behalf of each one of us who believe which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. 20 This He caused to enter into the state of being exerted on behalf of the incomparable Christ. Specifically, by causing Him to be raised out from the dead ones. Then, by causing Him to be seated at His right hand in the heavenlies 21 above each and every sovereign ruler, authority, power exercised, dominion as well as each and every designated rank, by no means only during this age but in fact also during the one certain to come. 22 In other words, He caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be placed in subjection under His feet. Correspondingly, He gave Him as a gift as head over each and every animate and inanimate object for the benefit of the church, 23 which uniquely is His body, specifically, which is being brought to completion by the one who is bringing each and every animate and inanimate object to completion for the benefit of each and every member. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:5 helps to explain the contents of this intercessory prayer because Paul's intercessory prayer on behalf of these Gentile church age believers in Ephesians 1:15-23 was a mystery or secret doctrine not known to Old Testament prophets but rather revealed to the apostles like himself and New Testament prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. Thus, Paul interceded to the Father for these Gentile church age believers that the Holy Spirit who gave him this mystery or secret doctrine would give them enlightenment with regards to this revelation.

Not only does the contents of Ephesians 3:5 help to explain the contents of Paul's intercessory prayer in Ephesians 1:15-23 but it also helps to explain the reference to the teaching of the apostles and prophets as the foundation of the church in Ephesians 2:20.

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of remembering that formerly each of you who belong to the Gentile race with respect to the human body, specifically, those who receive the designation "uncircumcision" by the those who receive the designation "circumcision" with respect to the human body performed by

human hands, 12 each one of you used to be characterized as without a relationship with Christ. Each one of you used to be alienated from the nation of Israel's citizenship. Specifically, each of you used to be strangers to the most important promise, which is the product of the covenants. Each of you used to not possess a confident expectation of blessing. Consequently, each one of you used to be without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system. 13 However, because of your faith in and your union and identification with Christ Jesus each and every one of you as a corporate unit who formerly were far away have now been brought near by means of the blood belonging to this same Christ. 14 For He Himself personifies our peace. Namely, by causing both groups to be one. Specifically, by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two and the two with God). 15 In other words, by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws in order that He might cause the two to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Thus, He caused peace to be established (between the two and the two with God). 16 In other words, in order that He would reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross. Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. 17 Correspondingly, He as a result came proclaiming peace for the benefit of each and every one of you, namely, those who were far off likewise peace to those were near. 18 Consequently, through the personal intermediate agency of Himself each and every one of us as a corporate unit, namely, both groups are experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father. 19 Indeed therefore, each and every one of you as corporate unit are no longer foreigners (to the covenants of promise), that is, foreign citizens. But rather each and every one of you as a corporate unit are fellow citizens with the saints, that is, members of God's household 20 because each and every one of you as a corporate unit have been built upon the foundation, which is the communication of the gospel to each one of you by the apostles as well as prophets. Simultaneously, He Himself, namely, Christ Jesus is the cornerstone. 21 On the basis of its being continually fitted inextricably together by means of justification by faith and union and identification with Him, the whole building is growing into a holy temple by appropriating by faith your union and identification with the Lord. 22 In other words, by appropriating by faith your union and identification with Him, all of you

without exception are being built together into God's dwelling place by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

The contents of Ephesians 3:5 help to explain Paul's reference to the teaching of the apostles and prophets as the foundation of the church in Ephesians 2:20 because this mystery or secret doctrine that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him was given to the apostles and New Testament prophets by the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit in order to communicate to the church.

Ephesians 3:6 is composed of the infinitival appositional clause *einai ta ethnē synklēronoma kai syssōma kai symmetocha tēs epangelias* (εἶναι τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), "**Namely, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise**." (Author's translation) It is modified by two prepositional phrases. The first is *en Christō Iēsou* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), "**because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus**." (Author's translation). The second is *dia tou euangeliou* (σ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου), "**by means of the proclamation of the gospel**." (Author's translation)

The infinitive conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) functions as an appositional infinitive, which takes place when the substantival infinitive stands in apposition to a noun, pronoun or substantival adjective or some other substantive and typically refers to a specific example that falls within the broad category of named by the head noun. This type of infinitive defines the noun or adjective whereas the epexegetical infinitive explains it. The epexegetical infinitive cannot typically substitute for its antecedent while an appositional infinitive or phrase can.

In context, the infinitive conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) stands in apposition to the nominative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**this**" which appears in Ephesians 3:5. The referent of the latter is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**the mystery**," which appears in Ephesians 3:3-4, which is indicated by the fact that they agree in gender (neuter) and number (singular). Therefore, the infinitive conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) in Ephesians 3:6 introduces a clause which defines the content of this mystery. Namely, that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with Jewish church age believers because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

So therefore, this mystery or divine secret not known to Old Testament prophets not only refers to the doctrine that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers but also it refers to the reason why this is the case,

namely, because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:11 and 3:1, the noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος), "**the Gentiles**" here in Ephesians 3:6 means "the Gentiles" since the word pertains to persons from an ethnic group or nation not allied with and trusting in the God of Israel who is Jesus Christ and is used in a collective sense for these people. Thus, this word is used of those members of the human race who are not of Jewish racial descent and thus not members of the covenant people of God, Israel.

The adjective *sygklēronomos* (συγκληρονόμος), "**fellow heir**" is used to describe Gentile church age believers as "joint heirs" of God with Jewish church age believers. This came about because they both have been declared justified by the Father because of the merits of their faith, Jesus Christ and simultaneously, placed in union with Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This was the result of accepting by faith the proclamation of the gospel whose subject is Jesus Christ and His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This word is making the assertion that these Gentile church age believers are "joint heirs" with Jewish church age believers.

Being a fellow or joint heir with Jesus Christ means that Gentile and Jewish church age believers possess a share in the spiritual and temporal blessings, which the Father bestowed on His Son, Jesus Christ as a result of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. These events in the life of our Lord provided salvation or deliverance for unregenerate humanity from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, spiritual and physical death, the consequences of personal sins, and enslavement to the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system. Jewish and Gentile church age believers appropriated this great deliverance when the Father declared them justified because of the merits of the object of their faith, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Father placed them in union with Christ and identified them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit.

Being a joint or fellow heir is related to the church age believer's inheritance. The reader will recall that in Ephesians 1:13-14 Paul asserts that the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit is the down payment of the church age believer's inheritance.

The apostle Paul not only speaks of the church age believer's inheritance in Ephesians but also in Colossians.

Colossians 3:23 Whenever any of you, at any time, should do something, each of you from your entire being, for your own benefit, must continue making it your habit of working hard as for your one and only true Lord, indeed, never for people 24 The reason for this command is that each of you know without a

doubt that each of you will certainly receive for your own benefit your reward, which is your inheritance. Each of you continue making it your habit of serving the Lord, who is the Christ. (Author's translation)

Paul mentions this inheritance in Colossians 1:12.

Colossians 1:3 We continue making it our habit of giving thanks to God namely the Father of our Lord, who is Jesus, who is the Christ when we make it our habit of occupying ourselves with praying on behalf of each and every one of you as a corporate unit. 4 We do this because we heard about your faith in Christ, who is Jesus and in addition your love which you continue to regularly demonstrate for the benefit of each and every one of the saints. 5 All of you do this because of the confident expectation which is, as an eternal spiritual truth reserved in the heavens for all of you. All of you heard this by means of the teaching, which is the truth, namely the proclamation of the gospel 6 which all of you continue to appropriate for the benefit of all of you. Just as in fact throughout the entire world, it continues to produce fruit as well as spread so also it continues to produce fruit as well as spread among all of you from the day all of you obeyed. Consequently, all of you acquired an objective experiential knowledge of the grace originating from God by means of the truth. 7 Just as all of you learned the truth from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant who is faithfully serving the Christ on behalf of each and every one of us. 8 The one who also revealed to us your divine-love by means of the Spirit's power. 9 For this reason also, from the day we ourselves heard about all of you, we never permit ourselves to cease making it our habit of occupying ourselves with praying on behalf of each and every one of you. Specifically, we make it our habit of occupying ourselves with making urgent requests that (God) would cause all of you to be filled with that which is knowing His will experientially by means of a wisdom which is absolute resulting in a discernment which is spiritual. 10 The purpose would be all of you living your lives in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be fully pleasing to Him. This would result in all of you bearing fruit by means of each and every kind of action which is divine good in quality and character and in addition increasing in knowing experientially God the Father. 11 This is because of all of you are empowered by means of a power which is absolute, because of a power which is sovereign, namely, His glory. The purpose of which is to perfectly embody perseverance as well as patience with joy. 12 All the while, all of you making it your habit of giving thanks to the Father who has qualified each and every one of you with regards to sharing in the saints' inheritance residing in that which is characterized by light. (Author's translation)

Every church age believer has the opportunity to receive their eternal inheritance if they fulfill the condition of being faithful till death or the rapture whichever comes

first and thus executes the Father's will for their life. Both the Old and New Testament's speak of an inheritance, which could be forfeited due to unfaithfulness. As we have been noting, Paul teaches in Colossians 3:23-25 that if the Colossians are faithful, they will receive the inheritance which clearly implies if they are not faithful, they will not receive this inheritance.

The inheritance in the Bible: (1) Related to God's plan for the believer after conversion. (2) Added blessings to the Saved (i.e., Rewards on top of salvation). (3) Possession. (4) Is meritorious ownership of the kingdom (i.e., Millennium and eternal state) (5) Conditioned on faithful obedience to the will of God. (6) Can be forfeited through habitual disobedience to the will of God. (7) Two Types of inheritance (God and the possession of land in the Millennium) (Every believer receives God as their inheritance).

Although the believer's salvation *cannot* be merited but is received when a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9), the believer's inheritance on the other hand is meritorious meaning they have to fulfill the condition of being faithfully obedient to the will of God till physical death or the rapture (i.e., resurrection of the church). Because the church age believer can forfeit their eternal inheritance through unfaithfulness to the Lord, there are many warnings regarding being unfaithful (Heb. 10:35-39). The believer is promised that if they fulfill the condition of being faithful, they will be given the privilege to reign with Christ (Rom. 8:16-18; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-1; Eph. 5:5-10; Heb. 12:12-17).

God's plan for blessing the believer may be compared to an escrow contract. An escrow is a deed, bond or other agreement by which one person conveys some form of property to another person. Rather than being conveyed directly, however, the property is deposited with a third party, to be delivered when the intended recipient fulfills certain conditions set forth in the terms of the escrow agreement. Just as an escrow agreement has three parties, so also Ephesians 1:3 mentions three parties: (1) God the Father is the Grantor, He's the Giver. (2) Jesus Christ acts as a depository or escrow officer. (3) The believer is the grantee or the receiver. Every person who has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation is the grantee of blessings, which stagger the imagination.

However, God in His infinite wisdom requires that capacity must precede the conveyance of these greater blessings. God designed His plan of God to produce capacity, which makes the distribution of blessings meaningful, enjoyable, and glorifying God. The first thing that God ever did for believers is the means of glorifying Him. The first thing that God the Father ever did as the Grantor is deposit in escrow greater blessings both time and eternity for every believer without exception. These greater blessings are based upon God's grace policy, which says that God does all the work. God gave the believer a system so that the deposit could be conveyed without compromising His integrity.

The believer who fulfills the condition of the escrow by faithfully executing God's plan for their life in time will receive the conveyance of their escrow blessings for time and in eternity. The believer who does *not* fulfill the conditions of the escrow in time and does not reach spiritual maturity will *not* receive the conveyance of their escrow blessings for both time and eternity. The believer who does not fulfill the conditions of the escrow will have these greater blessings remain on deposit in heaven as a memorial to the justice of God. The only reason a believer's escrow blessings are not delivered to them is that they fail to fulfill the conditions of the escrow agreement. The only condition is that the believer execute God's plan for their life to become like Christ. The unfaithful believer's escrow blessings belong to them irrevocably, but they will remain undistributed, on deposit forever as a memorial to lost opportunity and as a monument to the eternal bounty of God's grace.

So while the believer cannot lose their salvation, they can lose the conveyance of escrow blessings for time and eternity. A treasury of blessings has the believer's name on it and they are irrevocable, "**imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away**" (1 Pet. 1:4). The location of the deposit is "**in the heavenlies**" and the date of the deposit is "**before the foundation of the world**" (Eph. 1:3-6).

The term escrow blessings is an analogy based upon a bible doctrine. It describes what God the Father in eternity past did as the grantor when He deposited greater blessings for both time and eternity for every believer with the Lord Jesus Christ, the depository and escrow officer. The release of these blessings takes place when the believer fulfills the conditions of the escrow contract by being faithfully obedient to the will of God to death. God the Father as the grantor has placed Himself under the legal obligation by an act of His sovereign will to provide fantastic blessings both temporal and eternal for the believer who fulfills the conditions of the escrow.

These escrow blessings or in other words our eternal inheritance is mentioned in other places in the Scriptures (Col. 1:9-12; 3:23-25; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

So, the inheritance mentioned in Colossians 1:12 and 3:24 is a reference to the rewards that will be given to a believer at the Bema Seat for being a faithful steward with the time, talent, treasure and truth that God bestowed upon them as trusts.

The apostle Paul not only mentions the church age believer's inheritance in Ephesians 1:14 but also in Ephesians 1:18 when he presents the first of two intercessory prayers on behalf of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia.

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to

make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His glorious, rich inheritance residing in the person of the saints. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 3:6, the adjective *syssōmos* (σύσσωμος), "**fellow members of the body**" is also used to describe Gentile church age believers as being fellow or co-members of the body of Christ with Jewish church age believers. This also came about because they both have been declared justified by the Father because of the merits of their faith, Jesus Christ and simultaneously, placed in union with Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This too was the result of accepting by faith the proclamation of the gospel whose subject is Jesus Christ and His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This word also is making the assertion that these Gentile church age believers are "fellow members of the body" of Christ with Jewish church age believers.

The body of Christ metaphor is employed by Paul in Ephesians 1:23.

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. 19 Also, what constitutes being His incomparable, great power on behalf of each one of us who believe which is equivalent to the

exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. 20 This He caused to enter into the state of being exerted on behalf of the incomparable Christ. Specifically, by causing Him to be raised out from the dead ones. Then, by causing Him to be seated at His right hand in the heavenlies 21 above each and every sovereign ruler, authority, power exercised, dominion as well as each and every designated rank, by no means only during this age but in fact also during the one certain to come. 22 In other words, He caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be placed in subjection under His feet. Correspondingly, He gave Him as a gift as head over each and every animate and inanimate object for the benefit of the church, 23 which uniquely is His body, specifically, which is being brought to completion by the one who is bringing each and every animate and inanimate object to completion for the benefit of each and every member. (Author's translation)

The body of Christ metaphor for the church is not only employed by apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:23 but is also used by him in Colossians 1:18 and 24.

Colossians 1:18 Furthermore, He Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being the head over His body, namely His church who, as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being the founder that is the firstborn from the dead ones. The divine purpose was accomplished so that He alone became the Preeminent One among each and every person with no exceptions. (Author's translation)

The head and body metaphor is one of eight metaphors used in the New Testament to describe the relationship between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) The last Adam and the New Creation (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 5:17a). (2) The Great Shepherd and the Sheep (Heb. 13:20). (3) The True Vine and the Branches (John 15:5a). (4) The Chief Cornerstone and the Stones in the building (Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:5-6). (5) The Great High Priest and members of the Royal Priesthood (Heb. 4:14a; 1 Pet. 2:9a). (6) The Groom and the Bride. (Our wedding occurs at the Second Advent) (Rev. 19:7). (7) The King of Kings and the Royal Family of God (Rev. 19:14-16).

Now, in Ephesians 3:6, the adjective *symmetochos* (συμμέτοχος), "**fellow partakers**" is used also to describe these Gentile church age believers in relation to Jewish church age believers. What these Gentile church age believers are partakers of with Jewish church age believers is identified by the expression *tēs epangelias en Christō Iēsou* (συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), "**fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus**." **(NET)** Therefore, this adjective describes these Gentile church age believers as fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in Christ Jesus and union and identification with Him. This word is making the assertion that these Gentile church age believers are Gentile church age believers as "fellow partakers"

of the Messianic promise because of justification by faith in Christ Jesus and union and identification with Him.

Now, these three adjectives, namely, *sygklēronomos* (συγκληρονόμος), "**fellow heirs**," *syssōmos* (σύσσωμος), "**fellow members of the body**" and *symmetochos* (συμμέτοχος), "**fellow partakers**" which appear in Ephesians 3:6 contain the figure alliteration because of the repetition of consonants used in these words. Here we have the repetition of *sun* prefix in these three words. The purpose of this figure is emphasis. Specifically, to emphasize that Gentile church age believers are not second class citizens in relation to Jewish church age believers but rather equal partners.

As was the case in case in 2:12, the noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία), "**the promise**" here in Ephesians 3:6 refers to the Messianic promise of a Savior. This is indicated by the articular construction of this word, which is anaphoric, which means that it is pointing back to the previous use of this word in Ephesians 2:12 indicating that it retains the same meaning and referent here in Ephesians 3:6.

In our study of Ephesians 2:12, the noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία), "**the most important promise**" refers to God entering into a promise with the nation of Israel to provide them a Savior who will deliver them from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to sin and Satan, personal sins and spiritual and physical death. This promise appears of a Savior appears in the Mosaic, Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants.

The articular construction of this word is "par excellence" which is used to point out a substantive that is the extreme of a certain category. Here it indicates that this promise is the most important of all the covenant promises God communicated to Israel and which promise is that of a Savior. It is the most important promise for unregenerate Jew because they are under God's wrath and they can never benefit from the other covenant promises without first appropriating by faith the promise of a Savior by exercising faith in Jesus, the Christ.

We also noted in our study of Ephesians 2:12 that the noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία) functions as a genitive of product, which is expressing the idea that this promise of the Messiah to deliver Israel is "the product" of these five covenants, which God established with the nation of Israel. In other words, this promise of a Savior is "the product" of the contents of these covenants.

In Ephesians 3:6, the articular construction of this word *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία), "**the promise**" also indicates that this promise is the most important of all the covenant promises God communicated to Israel and which promise is that of a Savior.

The prepositional phrase *en Christō Iēsou* (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), "**because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus**" (Author's translation) is modifying this infinitival appositional clause *einai ta ethnē*

synklēronoma kai syssōma kai symmetocha tēs epangelias (εἶναι τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), "**Namely, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise**." (Author's translation) It presents "the reason why" Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:9, 12, 2:6, 7, 10, and 13, the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" here in Ephesians 3:6 contains the figure of metonymy. This means that the Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification.

The proper noun *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**Jesus**" and refers to the human nature of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth and simply clarifies who is Christ here, namely Jesus of Nazareth since there were many in the first century who made the claim.

The noun *Christos* (Χριστός) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), "**because of**" functions as a marker of cause or reason, which indicates that the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification is "the reason why" Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow partakers of the Messianic promise or promise of a Savior.

Lastly, the prepositional phrase *dia tou euangeliou* (σ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου), "**by means of the proclamation of the gospel**" (Author's translation) is also modifying this infinitival appositional clause *einai ta ethnē synklēronoma kai syssōma kai symmetocha tēs epangelias* (εἶναι τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας), "**Namely, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise**." (Author's translation) However, it presents "the means by which" Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:13, the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) here in Ephesians 3:6 contains the figure of metonymy meaning that the gospel is put for the communication or proclamation of the gospel message to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. This noun pertains to communicating the good news to the unbeliever that Christ died and rose from the dead for them and that through faith in Him they could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins and avoid experiencing the wrath of God.

The articular construction of this word is anaphoric, which means that it is pointing back to the previous use of this word in Ephesians 1:13 indicating that it retains the same meaning and referent here in Ephesians 3:6. It also indicates that

the Christian gospel is the most important of gospels since the Roman civil authorities like the emperor published their gospels.

In Ephesians 3:6, the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) is the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), which functions as a marker of means. This indicates that the proclamation of the Christian gospel is "the means by which" Jewish and Gentile believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him. The proclamation of the gospel is "the means by which" Jewish and Gentile believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because they were justified by the Father through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and placed in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit at justification as a result of responding in faith to the proclamation of the gospel. In other words, they could never be justified by faith in Jesus Christ and placed in union and identified with Him unless they heard the proclamation of the gospel.

This union between Jewish and Gentile church age believers that Paul described in Ephesians 2:11-22 and now here in Ephesians 3:1-6 does not mean that the church is the "new" Israel or that the church does not have any relationship to the nation of Israel. There is discontinuity with regards to the relationship between Israel and the church, but there is also continuity. This is indicated by several factors.

First of all, Paul taught in Romans 2:28-29 and 3:21-31 that a true Jew is one who is not only a biological descendant of Jacob whose name was changed by God to "Israel," but also they have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Paul teaches in Romans 9:1-5 that the nation of Israel was given the covenants which is a reference to the Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic and New covenants. In Romans 11:17, Paul also teaches that Gentile believers, who he describes as a "wild olive tree," are engrafted into regenerate Israel who he describes an "olive tree." Consequently, regenerate Gentiles benefit from the promises of the four unconditional covenants God established with Israel, namely the Abrahamic, Palestinian (land), Davidic and New covenants.

The Abrahamic covenant is the "rich root" in Romans 11:17. The apostle to the Gentiles also taught in Galatians 3:26-28, Ephesians 2:11-22 and Colossians 3:11 that the church is composed of both regenerate Jew and Gentiles. Paul also teaches in Romans 11:5 that regenerate Jews living during the church age compose the remnant of Israel. Thus, the church and Israel are connected by this remnant of regenerate Jews living during the church age and by the fact that regenerate Gentiles have been engrafted into regenerate Israel and during the church age. Jewish church age believers.

However, they are distinguished from each other because of race. In fact, in support of this, the Lord Jesus taught His apostles in Matthew 19:28 that they would be judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This implies that they have authority over Israel. So we know that the apostles' teaching was the foundation of the church as we noted in our study of Ephesians 2:20 and here the Lord is saying in Matthew 19:28 that they would have authority over Israel implying that though they are a part of the church, they are also a part of the nation of Israel.

Now some like Hoehner argue that the land promises to Israel would not extend to the church. However, if the church is the bride of Christ and Ephesians 5:22-33 asserts that she is, then if Jesus Christ, the King of Israel inherits the land promised by God in the Palestinian or land covenant, which is related to the Abrahamic covenant, wouldn't the bride of Christ inherit this land as well?

Since the Gentile church age believer's union with Jesus Christ establishes their union with Jewish church age believers, we can infer that Gentile church age believers will also inherit the land God promised to Jewish believers under the Palestinian or land covenant. A comparison of Romans 4:13 with Genesis 13:14-17 would also indicate that Gentile church age believers would inherit the land promised to Abraham since they assert that Abraham and his spiritual descendants will inherit the land the Lord promised to Abraham and his spiritual descendants.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:13, the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) here in Ephesians 3:6 contains the figure of metonymy meaning that the gospel is put for the communication or proclamation of the gospel message to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. This noun pertains to communicating the good news to the unbeliever that Christ died and rose from the dead for them and that through faith in Him they could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins and avoid experiencing the wrath of God.

Ephesians 3:7 concludes Paul's description of the content of the mystery, which began in Ephesians 3:1. It is composed of the relative pronoun clause *hou egenēthēn diakonos* (οὗ ἐγενήθην διάκονος), "**I assumed the position and responsibility of serving this gospel**" (Author's translation). It is modified by two prepositional phrases. The first is *kata tēn dōrean tēs charitos tou theou* (κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), "**according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me**" (Author's translation). The second is *kata tēn energeian tēs dynameōs autou* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ), "**according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power**" (Author's translation).

Now, the referent of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον), "**the gospel**" which appears in Ephesians 3:6. The noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον) means "the proclamation of the gospel" since the word contains the figure of metonymy meaning that the gospel is

put for the communication of the gospel message to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. This noun pertains to communicating the good news to the unbeliever that Christ died and rose from the dead for them and that through faith in Him they could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins and avoid experiencing the wrath of God. Therefore, this is the referent and antecedent of the genitive neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) here in Ephesians 3:7.

The verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) pertains to entering into a particular position with its accompanying responsibilities. In other words, the word pertains to assuming a particular position and responsibility. The referent of the first person singular form of this verb is of course the apostle Paul.

The noun *diakonos* (διάκονος), "**a servant**" here in Ephesians 3:7 identifies the position and responsibility Paul assumed at justification. The latter is used to describe the apostle Paul as someone who serves the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is used to describe Paul's service as an apostle who faithfully communicated the gospel of Jesus Christ. It also describes him as someone who serves the gospel on behalf of Jesus Christ and His church. It is used in a spiritual sense of Paul's function as a communicator of the gospel to describe the relationship between Paul and the Lord Jesus Christ. This servanthood is manifested by Paul communicating to the non-Christian community and Christian community the gospel.

Therefore, this relative pronoun clause in Ephesians 3:7 expresses the idea that Paul entered into the state of assuming the position of being" a servant of the gospel "with its accompanying responsibilities." He entered into this position and responsibilities which are associated with it, the moment the Father imputed His Son's righteousness to Him when he exercised in His Son for eternal salvation and was declared justified by the Father. Simultaneously, this resulted in Paul receiving the gift of apostleship and the command to publicly proclaim the gospel to every creature on earth.

The passive voice of the verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) indicates that Paul as the subject received the action of being entered into the position and responsibility of serving the gospel because of the gift of God's grace and the exercise of His omnipotence. This again took place at the moment of justification when Paul was not only declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ but he also simultaneously received the gift of apostleship. Therefore, this is another "divine-passive" employed by Paul in this epistle.

In Colossians 1:23, Paul employs this same term *diakonos* (διάκονος), "**a servant**," to describe himself in relation to the gospel.

Colossians 1:23 Of course, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument each one of you continues to persevere according to the standards of the Christian faith so that each one of you is established, and thus solid

individuals. In other words, so that each one of you is not moved away from the confident expectation (of blessing) produced by obedience to the gospel which each one of you has obeyed. This gospel was publicly proclaimed throughout all creation which is under the heavens, of which I myself, Paul became a servant. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul concludes his remarks in Colossians 1:23 by asserting that he had become a servant of the gospel. Paul was one of the most prominent individuals in the church to publicly proclaim the gospel throughout the Roman Empire. When he says that he became a servant of the gospel, he is referring to his conversion experience which resulted in him receiving the gift of apostleship and the command to publicly proclaim the gospel to every creature on earth. This servanthood is manifested by Paul communicating to the non-Christian community and Christian community the gospel. By stating he was a servant of the gospel, he is stating he has a stewardship related to the gospel and for which he will have to give an account to the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat. At the same time, he is reminding these faithful Christians in Colossae that they have the same stewardship as well.

Now, in Ephesians 3:7, the first prepositional phrase modifies this relative pronoun clause is *kata tēn dōrean tēs charitos tou theou* (κατὰ τὴν δωρεὰν τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ), "**according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to me**" (Author's translation). It expresses the idea that Paul becoming a servant of the gospel at the moment of justification was "according to" or "corresponding to" or is "in agreement with" the gift, which originates from God the Father's grace policy towards justified sinners.

The noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**gift**" is used of the non-meritorious blessing that Paul received at the moment of justification, namely, the gift of apostleship which was given to Paul at the moment of justification by Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11), who was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ to do so (Eph. 4:7).

The articular construction of this noun is monadic which indicates that this particular gift is in a class by itself in that it was given exclusively to the apostle Paul and his fellow communicators of the gospel, which would include his fellow apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors. Therefore, the articular construction of this word indicates that this gift of being a servant of the gospel is unique to those men in the body of Christ who are communicators of the gospel whether they are apostles, prophets, evangelists or pastors.

For the eighth time in this epistle, the apostle Paul employs the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" (cf. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:2). In each instance, the word refers to God the Father's grace policy towards unregenerate sinners who He declares justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ, and which grace policy manifests His attribute of love.

The articular construction of this word *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" is also monadic, which indicates the "uniqueness" of this grace. It emphasizes that this grace is "unique" to God the Father in that it is His policy towards sinners who exercise faith in His Son, Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, in every instance in which the word has appeared in this epistle up to this point in the Ephesian letter, the Father is this word's referent (1:1, 2, 3, 17, 2:4, 8, 10, 16, 19 and 22).

The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile church age believers worshipped was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity in the first century A.D. which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

The noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that it identifies this gift, which is identified as being a servant of the gospel, as an unmerited blessing given to Paul, which originates from God the Father.

The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of source, which expresses the idea that this grace or unmerited blessing in the form of becoming a servant of the gospel that was bestowed upon Paul at justification "originates from" God the Father.

The verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) means "to bestow as a gift" since the word pertains in this context to giving someone something which is of great value and as a gift. It speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity.

The passive voice of this verb indicates that Paul as the subject received of being given the gift originated from the Father's grace policy, which was in the form of being a servant of the gospel, according to the exercise of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of justification.

The aorist tense of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is a consummative or culminative aorist which emphasizes the cessation of the act of Paul received gift of being a servant of the gospel in accordance with the exertion of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of his justification.

The participle conjugation of this verb is in the genitive case and functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that the participle conjugation of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is identifying or describing the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**the gift**" as being given to Paul at justification.

The relative pronoun clause is modified by the second prepositional phrase *kata tēn energeian tēs dynameōs autou* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ), "**according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power**" (Author's translation). It expresses the idea that Paul receiving the gift of being a servant of the

gospel at the moment of justification was "according to" or "corresponding to" or is "in agreement with" the activity produced by the exercise of the Father's divine omnipotence.

In this second prepositional phrase, the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια) refers to the Father's activity on behalf of the apostle Paul the moment He imputed His Son's righteousness to him and declared him justified. Therefore, this word speaks of the "activity" on behalf of Paul at justification, which was produced by the Father's omnipotence. In context, this activity was that of the Father entering Paul into the state of serving the gospel the moment he declared him justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Lord Jesus Christ authorized the Holy Spirit to bestow Paul with the spiritual gift of apostleship, thus giving him the gift of communicating the gospel.

The articular construction of this word is monadic which means that this particular activity of the Father giving Paul the spiritual gift of apostleship is the moment He declared him justified through faith in His Son is "unique" to the Father and in particular His divine omnipotence.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the Father's omnipotence is put for the exercise of His omnipotence. Specifically, it refers to the omnipotence of God the Father which He exercised on behalf of the apostle Paul at his justification by giving him the gift of being a servant of the gospel, i.e., the spiritual gift of apostleship.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) functions as a genitive of production, which indicates that the activity which Paul was the beneficiary of at the moment of his justification, which resulted in him receiving the gift of being a servant of the gospel, was "produced by" the exercise of the Father's omnipotence.

Now, Paul's statement here in Ephesians 3:7 is very similar to his assertion in Ephesians 3:2. The difference between the two is that in Ephesians 3:2, he describes his relationship to the gospel as a stewardship whereas in Ephesians 3:7, he describes this relationship as a service. Thus, here in Ephesians 3:7, Paul is restating his special and unique relationship to the gospel. However, in both verses, he asserts that the grace of God is responsible for both his stewardship and his service on behalf of the gospel. This repetition of God's grace serves as an *inclusio* and thus serve to bracket Ephesians 3:2-7. This also serves to emphasizes the fact that the content of the mystery that the Gentile church age believer that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him, which Paul received, was based upon God's grace policy. In other words, he didn't earn or deserve this revelation from God.

Ephesians 3:8 is composed of the following: (1) relative pronoun clause: *Emoi tō elachistoterō pantōn hagiōn edothē hē charis hautē* (Ἐμοὶ τῷ ἐλαχιστοτέρῳ πάντων

ἁγίων ἐδόθη ἡ χάρις αὕτη), "**To me, the less than least of all the saints, this grace was given**." (2) infinitival purpose clause: *tois ethnesin euangelisasthai to anexichniaston ploutos tou Christou* (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εὐαγγελίσασθαι τὸ ἀνεξιχνίαστον πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**in order to proclaim for my benefit to the Gentiles the unfathomable wealth brought about by this justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ**."

In the declarative statement, the dative first person singular form of the possessive personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ), "**to me**" refers of course to the apostle Paul is fronted in the verse. Thus, it is in the emphatic position in order to emphasize with the readers that Paul is less than least of all the saints. The purpose of this emphasis is to accentuate the grace of God in his life. It expresses the apostle's deep humility and gratitude in light of God's incomparable grace policy towards him in bestowing the great unmerited blessings to him at the moment of justification to be a servant and steward and apostle to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles. Specifically, he expresses deep humility and gratitude that God would bestow him the great honor and privilege and unmerited blessing to proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the good news that they are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

The articular dative masculine singular form of the adjective *elachistos* (ἐλάχιστος), "**the less than least**" serves to compare Paul to the rest of the members of the body of Christ. It describes himself as "the less than least" of all those in the Christian community.

The genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**saints**" describes all the members of the body of Christ who have been set apart through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification in order to order serve God exclusively. It is modified by the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), which pertains to "the totality" of church age believers or members of the body of Christ who are the future bride of Christ. The adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος) functions as a genitive of comparison, which serves to compare Paul with the rest of the members of the body of Christ, i.e., the church.

The articular nominative feminine singular form of the noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" speaks of a particular unmerited blessing that flowed to the apostle Paul from the function of the Father's attribute of love. Specifically, it refers to the contents of Ephesians 3:7, which asserts that Paul assumed the position and responsibility of serving the gospel according to the gift originating from the one and only God's grace, which was given to him according to the activity produced by the exercise of His power. Thus, it refers to the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel by communicating the mystery that Gentiles church age believers are fellow

heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

The referent of the genitive feminine singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" appears in Ephesians 3:7 and is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the *charis* (χάρις) because they agree in gender (feminine), number (singular) and case (genitive). In Ephesians 3:7, the referent of the latter is the gift of Paul serving the gospel by communicating the mystery that Gentiles church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

Thus, the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" in Ephesians 3:8 links this verse with Ephesians 3:7 and in fact, in a broader sense, it links it to the contents of Ephesians 3:2-7. It also indicates that Ephesians 3:8 is a relative pronoun clause with the dative first person singular form of the possessive personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ), "**to me**," the articular dative masculine singular form of the adjective *elachistos* (ἐλάχιστος), "**the less than least**," the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**saints**" and the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**all**" fronted in order to emphasize the grace of God in Paul's life.

This word *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" is in the predicate position to indicate an attributive function, which means that it is singling out the Father's grace policy which He employs in relation to sinners and sinners He justifies through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

As was the case in Ephesians 3:7, the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) here in Ephesians 3:8 means "to bestow as a gift" since the word pertains in this context to giving someone something which is of great value and as a gift. It speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is the unmerited blessing of Paul serving the gospel by communicating the mystery that Gentiles church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

The passive voice of this verb indicates that Paul as the subject received the action of being given the unmerited blessing, which originated from the Father's grace policy, which was in the form of being a servant of the gospel, according to the exercise of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of justification.

The aorist tense of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is a consummative or culminative aorist which emphasizes the cessation of the act of Paul receiving the unmerited

blessing of being a servant of the gospel in accordance with the exertion of the Father's omnipotence at the moment of his justification.

This description of Paul here in Ephesians 3:8 is further indication that the Ephesian epistle is not a pseudonymous writing. A. Skevington Wood writes "Is it conceivable that an admirer of Paul, writing in his name to enhance his reputation in the late-first-century church, would ascribe such a self-demoting confession to him?"[48]

In 1 Timothy 1:12-13 and 1 Corinthians 15:9-10, Paul identifies the reason why he describes himself in Ephesians 3:8 as the less than least of all the saints, i.e., members of the body of Christ, the church.

1 Corinthians 15:1 Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, 15:2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 15:3 For I passed on to you as of first importance what I also received—that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, 15:4 and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, 15:5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 15:6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 15:7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 15:8 Last of all, as though to one born at the wrong time, he appeared to me also. 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me has not been in vain. In fact, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God with me. 15:11 Whether then it was I or they, this is the way we preach and this is the way you believed. (NET)

First Timothy 1:12 I continually possess gratitude to the One who empowered me, namely Christ, who is Jesus, our Lord because He considered me for Himself as faithful by appointing me for Himself for the purpose of service. 13 Even though I was characterized as being a slanderer as well as a persecutor and in addition, an insolent violent person. But in direct contrast to this, I obtained grace because being in a state of rejection, I acted due to unbelief. (Author's translation)

Now, the infinitival purpose clause in Ephesians 3:8 present the purpose for which God the Father gave to him at justification the unmerited blessing of proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with

[48] *The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1, 2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon)*; page 47; Zondervan Corporation; Grand Rapids, MI 1978.

Him that the Father gave Paul the unmerited blessing of being a servant of the gospel at the moment of justification.

The noun *ethnos* (ἔθνος), "**the Gentiles**" refers to those members of the human race who are not of Jewish racial descent and thus not members of the covenant people of God, Israel.

The verb *euangelizō* (εὐαγγελίζω) refers to Paul proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth produced by their justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with Him that the Father gave Paul the unmerited blessing of being a servant of the gospel at the moment of justification.

The reader must understand that when Paul speaks of proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles, he is not referring to communicating the gospel to them as unbelievers but rather as people who are already children of God because his statement in Ephesians 3:8 is directly to his statements in Ephesians 3:2-7. In fact, in Ephesians 3:7, we noted in great detail that Paul served the gospel by communicating the mystery that Gentiles church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

Now, in Ephesians 3:8, the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), "**wealth**" which appears here in the infinitival purpose clause here in Ephesians 3:8 also appeared in Ephesians 1:7, 18 and 2:7. In Ephesians 1:7, the word refers to the infinite or unmeasurable unmerited spiritual benefits that were received by the church age believer as a result of their justification and union and identification with Jesus Christ. In Ephesians 1:18, the word is again used in a figurative sense to refer to a spiritual and material abundance of material and spiritual possessions and spiritual resources possessed by God the Father. In other words, it is used figuratively of the spiritual and material prosperity of the Father. In Ephesians 2;7, this word is used again in a figurative sense by Paul to refer to a spiritual and material abundance of material and spiritual possessions and spiritual resources possessed by God the Father. In other words, it is used figuratively of the spiritual and material prosperity of the Father.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:7, the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), "**wealth**" here in Ephesians 3:8 refers to the infinite or unmeasurable unmerited spiritual benefits that Paul received as a result of the Father declaring him justified based upon the merits of object his faith, Jesus Christ as well as his union and identification with Him. This word is modified by the articular accusative neuter singular form of the adjective *anexichniastos* (ἀνεξιχνίαστος), "**unfathomable**" emphasizes the unfathomable nature of the infinite or unmeasurable unmerited spiritual benefits that Paul received as a result of the Father declaring him justified based upon the merits of object his faith, Jesus Christ as well as his union and identification with Him.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" contains the figure of metonymy. This means that the Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at their justification. Specifically, it means that the Christ is put for Paul's faith in Him at justification as well as his union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at his justification. This word functions as a genitive of production, which expresses the idea that this unfathomable wealth, which Paul was proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community was "produced by" or "brought about by" their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. In other words, this unfathomable wealth is "the product" of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

The middle voice of this verb *euangelizō* (εὐαγγελίζω) is an indirect or benefactive middle which expresses the idea that it was "for Paul's own benefit" that he entered into the state of proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with Him. It would be for Paul's benefit or advantage that he proclaim to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with Him because it would result in rewards at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which immediately follows the rapture of the church, which is imminent (Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Now, this unfathomable wealth that Paul mentions here in Ephesians 3:8 is directly to the fact that the church age believer, both Jew and Gentile is a joint heir with Christ and has received an inheritance at the moment of justification because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 3:6, being a fellow or joint heir with Jesus Christ means that Gentile and Jewish church age believers possess a share in the spiritual and temporal blessings, which the Father bestowed on His Son, Jesus Christ as a result of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. These events in the life of our Lord provided salvation or deliverance for unregenerate humanity from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, spiritual and physical death, the consequences of personal sins, and enslavement to the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system. Jewish and Gentile church age believers appropriated this great deliverance when the Father declared them justified because of the merits of the object of their faith, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Father placed them in union with Christ and identified them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit.

Being a joint or fellow heir is related to the church age believer's inheritance. The reader will recall that in Ephesians 1:13-14 Paul asserts that the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit is the down payment of the church age believer's inheritance. The apostle Paul not only mentions the church age believer's inheritance in Ephesians 1:14 but also in Ephesians 1:18 when he presents the first of two intercessory prayers on behalf of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia. In Colossians 3:23-24, the apostle Paul not only speaks of the church age believer's inheritance in Ephesians but also in Colossians. Paul mentions this inheritance in Colossians 1:12.

Every church age believer has the opportunity to receive their eternal inheritance if they fulfill the condition of being faithful till death or the rapture whichever comes first and thus executes the Father's will for their life. Both the Old and New Testament's speak of an inheritance, which could be forfeited due to unfaithfulness. As we have been noting, Paul teaches in Colossians 3:23-25 that if the Colossians are faithful, they will receive the inheritance which clearly implies if they are not faithful, they will not receive this inheritance.

The inheritance in the Bible: (1) Related to God's plan for the believer after conversion. (2) Added blessings to the Saved (i.e., Rewards on top of salvation). (3) Possession. (4) Is meritorious ownership of the kingdom (i.e., Millennium and eternal state) (5) Conditioned on faithful obedience to the will of God. (6) Can be forfeited through habitual disobedience to the will of God. (7) Two Types of inheritance (God and the possession of land in the Millennium) (Every believer receives God as their inheritance).

Although the believer's salvation *cannot* be merited but is received when a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9), the believer's inheritance on the other hand is meritorious meaning they have to fulfill the condition of being faithfully obedient to the will of God till physical death or the rapture (i.e., resurrection of the church). Because the church age believer can forfeit their eternal inheritance through unfaithfulness to the Lord, there are many warnings regarding being unfaithful (Heb. 10:35-39). The believer is promised that if they fulfill the condition of being faithful, they will be given the privilege to reign with Christ (Rom. 8:16-18; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-1; Eph. 5:5-10; Heb. 12:12-17).

God's plan for blessing the believer may be compared to an escrow contract. An escrow is a deed, bond or other agreement by which one person conveys some form of property to another person. Rather than being conveyed directly, however, the property is deposited with a third party, to be delivered when the intended recipient fulfills certain conditions set forth in the terms of the escrow agreement. Just as an escrow agreement has three parties, so also Ephesians 1:3 mentions three parties: (1) God the Father is the Grantor, He's the Giver. (2) Jesus Christ acts as a depository or escrow officer. (3) The believer is the grantee or the receiver. Every person who

has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation is the grantee of blessings, which stagger the imagination.

However, God in His infinite wisdom requires that capacity must precede the conveyance of these greater blessings. God designed His plan of God to produce capacity, which makes the distribution of blessings meaningful, enjoyable, and glorifying God. The first thing that God ever did for believers is the means of glorifying Him. The first thing that God the Father ever did as the Grantor is deposit in escrow greater blessings both time and eternity for every believer without exception. These greater blessings are based upon God's grace policy, which says that God does all the work. God gave the believer a system so that the deposit could be conveyed without compromising His integrity.

The believer who fulfills the condition of the escrow by faithfully executing God's plan for their life in time will receive the conveyance of their escrow blessings for time and in eternity. The believer who does *not* fulfill the conditions of the escrow in time and does not reach spiritual maturity will *not* receive the conveyance of their escrow blessings for both time and eternity. The believer who does not fulfill the conditions of the escrow will have these greater blessings remain on deposit in heaven as a memorial to the justice of God. The only reason a believer's escrow blessings are not delivered to them is that they fail to fulfill the conditions of the escrow agreement. The only condition is that the believer execute God's plan for their life to become like Christ. The unfaithful believer's escrow blessings belong to them irrevocably, but they will remain undistributed, on deposit forever as a memorial to lost opportunity and as a monument to the eternal bounty of God's grace.

So while the believer cannot lose their salvation, they can lose the conveyance of escrow blessings for time and eternity. A treasury of blessings has the believer's name on it and they are irrevocable, "**imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away**" (1 Pet. 1:4). The location of the deposit is "**in the heavenlies**" and the date of the deposit is "**before the foundation of the world**" (Eph. 1:3-6).

The term escrow blessings is an analogy based upon a bible doctrine. It describes what God the Father in eternity past did as the grantor when He deposited greater blessings for both time and eternity for every believer with the Lord Jesus Christ, the depository and escrow officer. The release of these blessings takes place when the believer fulfills the conditions of the escrow contract by being faithfully obedient to the will of God to death. God the Father as the grantor has placed Himself under the legal obligation by an act of His sovereign will to provide fantastic blessings both temporal and eternal for the believer who fulfills the conditions of the escrow.

These escrow blessings or in other words our eternal inheritance is mentioned in other places in the Scriptures (Col. 1:9-12; 3:23-25; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

So, the inheritance mentioned in Colossians 1:12 and 3:24 is a reference to the rewards that will be given to a believer at the Bema Seat for being a faithful steward with the time, talent, treasure and truth that God bestowed upon them as trusts.

Ephesians 3:9 is composed of an infinitival purpose clause, which explains specifically the purpose for which the Father bestowed upon Paul the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel as an apostle to the Gentiles. It asserts that the Father gave Paul this gift in order to enlighten everyone in the Gentile Christian community as to what constitutes this unique dispensation, which was a mystery, which has been hidden from previous ages because of the Father's will, who caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be created. This infinitival purpose clause is epexegetical because it explains specifically what Paul means by the infinitival purpose clause he employs in Ephesians 3:8. The latter asserts that to Paul, the less than least of all the saints, the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel was given in order to proclaim to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ.

Now, this author believes that the conjunction *kai* (καί) introduces this infinitival purpose clause is epexegetical and not adjunctive. However, many expositors believe that this second infinitival purpose clause here in Ephesians 3:9 is adjunctive which means that it presents a purpose, which is in addition to the previous purpose for which the Father gave to Paul the unmerited blessing of the responsibility and privilege to serve the gospel, which is in addition to the one presented in Ephesians 3:8. Thus, the purpose mentioned in Ephesians 3:9 would be the second one that Paul lists with regards to the Father bestowing upon him the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel as an apostle to the Gentiles.

However, this author is convinced that this second infinitival purpose clause is epexegetical in that it is explaining specifically the previous infinitival purpose clause in Ephesians 3:8. Thus, this author is of the conviction that the second infinitival purpose clause in Ephesians 3:9 explains specifically what Paul means when he asserts in Ephesians 3:8 that to him the less than least of all the saints this unmerited blessing of serving the gospel by communicating to the Gentile Christian community this mystery in order to proclaim to them the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ.

This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the unfathomable wealth now possessed by Gentile church age believers, which was brought about by their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him, was a mystery or secret known only by the Father, which thus required that they receive enlightenment from Paul with regards to it. The assertion in Ephesians 3:8 that Paul proclaimed to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought

about by their justification and union and identification with Jesus Christ is ambiguous and begins to be defined and needs clarification. In other words, these Gentile church age believers needed to be enlightened as to what specifically gave them this unfathomable wealth produced by their justification and union and identification with Christ. It is identified by the content of the incomparable mystery, which Paul speaks about in Ephesians 3:4, which was produced by their union and identification with Christ. In Ephesians 3:5, Paul asserts that this mystery was by no means made known to members of the human race in dispensations prior to the church age as it has now been revealed through the personal agency of the Lord's holy apostles and prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. Then, in Ephesians 3:6, he identifies the content of this mystery, namely that, that Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body likewise fellow partakers of the promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

So therefore, when Paul asserts in Ephesians 3:8 that he received the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel in order to proclaim to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ, he means that the purpose of this gift was to enlighten this community that they are now fellow heirs with Jewish church age believers as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of their obedience to the proclamation of the gospel. Thus, Ephesians 3:9 is explaining the previous purpose clause because it identifies what Paul proclaimed to the Gentile Christian community, namely, enlightenment with regards to this mystery, whose content has already been revealed in Ephesians 3:6.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:18, the verb *phōtizō* (φωτίζω) here in Ephesians 3:9 is used in a figurative sense of the apostle Paul through the ministry of the Holy Spirit providing the Gentile Christian community spiritual understanding or discernment concerning the mystery or secret that they now possessed unfathomable wealth brought about by their justification and union and identification with Christ. Specifically, this verb is used in a figurative sense of Paul through the ministry of the Holy Spirit providing the Gentile Christian community spiritual understanding or discernment concerning the mystery or secret. This enlightenment would be in the form of communicating the content of this mystery or divine secret, which is presented by Paul in Ephesians 3:6, which asserts that they are now fellow heirs with Jewish church age believers as well as fellow members of the body of Christ with them likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with them because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ. This has

resulted in these Gentile church age believers now possessing unfathomable wealth. In other words, it refers to the Gentile Christian community receiving spiritual understanding from the Holy Spirit with regards to this mystery or divine secret from the Holy Spirit through Paul communicating this mystery to them through the contents of the Ephesian epistle.

The referent of the accusative masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) is the Gentile Christian community. It expresses the idea that the Father gave Paul the unmerited blessing of enlightening "each and every one of the members of" the Gentile Christian community regarding the mystery or divine secret. The referent has to be the Gentile Christian community because the content of this mystery, which was revealed in Ephesians 3:6, would have no meaning for the rest of unregenerate humanity who do not have the Spirit to comprehend and apply it. The unregenerate members of the human race must first exercise faith in Jesus Christ in order to receive the gift of the Spirit to understand this revelation, which was a mystery to those who lived during the dispensations prior to the church.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:18 and 19, the nominative masculine singular form of the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις) here in Ephesians 3:9 introduces a categorical or qualitative question. The referent of this interrogative pronoun is identified by the expression *hē oikonomia tou mystēriou* (ἡ οἰκονομία τοῦ μυστηρίου), "**God's secret plan**." **(NET)** This interrogative pronoun is expressing the idea that each and every member of the Gentile Christian community received from Paul enlightenment "as to what constitutes" or "what is the content of" this mystery or divine secret, which reveals that the Father has provided them incomparable wealth.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:10, this word *oikonomia* (οἰκονομία) here in Ephesians 3:9 means "dispensation, administration, plan" since in this verse the word pertains to "a distinguishable economy in the outworking of God's purpose." The referent of this word is the Father's plan for Gentile church age believers. Specifically, it is the outworking of God the Father's purpose during the church age to have both Jewish and Gentile church age believers as fellow heirs with each other as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

As was the case in Ephesians 3:3 and 4, here in Ephesians 3:9 the referent of this word *mustērion* (μυστήριον) is the revelation that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. The noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον) functions here as a genitive of

apposition or epexegetical genitive, which means that it describes the outworking of the Father's plan Gentile church age believers as a mystery or divine secret.

Like the infinitive conjugation of the verb *euangelizō* (εὐαγγελίζω) in Ephesians 3:8, the infinitive conjugation of the verb *phōtizō* (φωτίζω) functions as an infinitive of purpose. This indicates that it was "for the purpose of" enlightening the Gentile Christian community with regards to the mystery or divine secret they are now fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with Jewish church age believers because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ.

The active voice of this verb *phōtizō* (φωτίζω) is causative, which means that Paul as the subject is not directly involved in the act of enlightening the Gentile Christian community regarding this mystery but the source behind it. He was the ultimate source behind it or the cause behind it because he was the human instrument the Holy Spirit employed to enlighten the Gentile Christian community with regards to this mystery or secret.

The verb *apokruptō* (ἀποκρύπτω) is used in relation to the content of this mystery or divine secret and that it was kept secret or hidden from the human and angelic races during the dispensations prior to the church age. The Father caused the content of this mystery or secret, which is identified in Ephesians 3:6, to remain unknown to the human and angelic races during the dispensations prior to the church age.

The passive voice of the verb *apokruptō* (ἀποκρύπτω) indicates that the outworking of the Father's purpose for Gentile church age believers receives the action of being hidden or concealed from the human and angelic races in the dispensations prior to the church age because it was the will of the Father to conceal it from them. The participle conjugation of this verb functions as a genitive of simple apposition, which means it defines this mystery or divine secret as something that has been concealed from the human and angelic races during the dispensations prior to the church age because it was not the Father's will for it to be revealed until the church age.

The noun *aiōn* (αἰών), "**the ages**" refers to the period of time beginning with the creation of the time, matter, space continuum and continuing throughout human history up to the church age. The articular construction of this word is generic which distinguishes these dispensations prior to the church age from the church age and future dispensations such as the seventieth week of Daniel and millennial reign of Jesus Christ. This noun *aiōn* (αἰών) is also object of the preposition *apo* (ἀπό), which functions as a marker of separation indicating that human beings and angels who lived during the ages prior to the beginning of the church age were kept "from" or "barred from" knowing the Father's plan for Gentile church age believers.

The articular dative masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) contains the figure of metonymy which means that God the Father is put for His will. This

interpretation is indicated by the fact that in Ephesians 3:8 and 9 Paul discusses the Father's will for his life and His will with regards to the Gentile Christian community. In these verses, he asserts that the Father chose him to communicate His purpose to the Gentile Christian community to have them be fellow heirs with Jewish church age believers as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus. Therefore, since Paul in these verses discusses the will of the Father for both himself and the Gentile Christian community, the will of the Father is being alluded to when Paul employs this noun *theos* (θεός) here in Ephesians 3:9.

The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) indicates that the referent of this word is well-known to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who were Gentile church age believers. Therefore, it expresses the idea that the will of the Father to have them be fellow heirs with Jewish church age believers as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus is well-known to them. This interpretation is supported by the fact that this doctrine or revelation was taught by Paul throughout the Roman empire including the Roman province of Asia which served as his base of operations for three years according to Acts 18-20. Thus, the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who were Gentile church age believers, who lived in the Roman province of Asia, would be quite familiar with the Father's plan for them as Gentile church age believers.

The noun *theos* (θεός) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν) functions as a marker of cause, which indicates that the Father's secret plan for Gentile church age believers was concealed from those who lived during the dispensations prior to the church age "because of the Father's will."

The adjective *pas* (πᾶς) occurs as a second time in Ephesians 3:9 where it pertains to the totality of inanimate and animate objects that are contained in the first, second and third heavens and the earth or in other words, that are contained in creation, which would include all marine life, bird life, terrestrial life, human beings and angels. The adjective is used in a distributive sense meaning "each and every thing" was created by God the Father. However, John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16 teach that His Son, Jesus Christ was the personal agency which the Father employed to create each and every animate and inanimate object in the time, matter, space continuum.

The adjective *pas* (πᾶς) refers to the totality of animate and inanimate objects that are contained in the first, second and third heavens and the earth: (1) Stars, satellites, and planets that compose the stellar universe. (2) Earth's sun and moon. (3) Vegetation on the earth (4) Marine life (5) Bird life (6) Terrestrial life. (7) Human beings (8) Angels. This adjective would include the orderly arrangement of the heavens and the earth and all things in their complex order and composition as

created by God, created in perfect order and subject to the laws God established to govern its operation (Matt. 13:35; John 21:25; Acts 17:24).

The verb *ktizo* (κτίζω) refers to the Father creating out of nothing each and every animate and inanimate object located in the first, second and third heavens through the personal agency of His Son, Jesus Christ, which is indicated by the contents of Colossians 1:16 and John 1:3 and other passages.

The articular participle conjugation of this verb functions as a dative of simple apposition, which means that it is simply identifying the Father as the creator of each and every animate and inanimate object located in the time, matter, space continuum.

As was the case with the verb *phōtizō* (φωτίζω) here in Ephesians 3:9, the active voice of this verb *ktizo* (κτίζω) is also causative, which means that God the Father as the subject was not directly involved in the act of creating each and every animate and inanimate object located in the time, matter, space continuum but that He was the ultimate source or cause behind this taking place. It indicates that He was not the direct agent behind but the source behind it and His Son was the direct agent that the Father employed to do this.

Now, many expositors have questioned as to why Paul describes the Father as the creator of all things. This author believes that the answer lies in the apostle's use of the verb *ktizo* (κτίζω) earlier in the epistle, which is employed by him in Ephesians 2:10 and 15. It appears that by speaking of the Father's creative activity in relation to the church here in Ephesians 3:9 and employing this verb to do so, Paul is linking the other references to the Father's creative activity in relation to the church in Ephesians 2:10 and 15.

So therefore, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:10 describes the church composed of both Jewish and Gentile church age believers as being the Father's creative workmanship who have been created by means of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ in order to produce actions, which are divine good. Thus, when Paul speaks of the Father's creative activity in Ephesians 3:9 in relation to the church being composed of Jewish and Gentile church age believers who are joint heirs with each other as well as fellow members of the body of Christ together and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ, he is linking this creative activity with the creative activity in relation to the church in Ephesians 2:10.

So therefore, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 2:15 asserts the Lord Jesus Christ nullified by means of His human nature the Mosaic Law in order that He might cause both Jewish and Gentile church age believers to be created into one new humanity. This was accomplished again by means of faith in Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Thus, the Lord created between the two races. Thus, when Paul speaks of the Father's creative activity in Ephesians 3:9 in relation to the church being composed of Jewish

and Gentile church age believers who are joint heirs with each other as well as fellow members of the body of Christ together and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ, he is linking this creative activity with the creative activity in relation to the church in Ephesians 2:15.

Thus, we can see that Ephesians 3:9 is linked together with Ephesians 2:10 and 15 because all three verses speak of the creative activity of the Father and Son in relation to the church. Consequently, a comparison of these verses reveals the following about the church in relation to the creative activity of the Father and the Son: (1) The church is the creative workmanship of the Father, which has been created by means of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ in order to produce good works (2:10). (2) The Lord Jesus Christ nullified the Law by means of His human nature in order that He might cause both Jewish and Gentile church age believers to be created into one new humanity by means of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ through the baptism of the Spirit at justification and thus caused there to be peace between the two communities (2:15). (3) The Father used Paul to enlighten the Gentile Christian community as to what constitutes the outworking of the Father's purpose for church age, which was a mystery to Old Testament saints because of God's will (3:9). The content of this mystery is that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ (3:6).

Notice the command denominator is that both the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities became the Father's creative workmanship and the new humanity and fellow heirs with each other and fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers with each other as a result of being declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, they were placed in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

Therefore, Paul links the creative of the Father in Ephesians 3:9 with His creativity in Ephesians 2:10 and the creative of His Son in Ephesians 2:15 because he wants the recipients of the Ephesian epistle who were Gentile church age believers that all three creative actions were for the benefit of them in that they are now a new humanity. The implication is that they are extremely important in the Father's determination to have the church rule over His creation and dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits who currently reign over the earth temporarily. This is exactly why he makes the following assertion in Ephesians 3:10.

Ephesians 3:10 The purpose of this enlightenment is that through the church the multifaceted wisdom of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms. (NET)

So therefore, here in Ephesians 3:9, Paul defines proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth produced by their justification by faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ as providing them enlightenment with regards to the Father's secret plan for them as Gentile church age believers. The content of this mystery or divine secret is revealed in Ephesians 3:6 and reveals that the will of the Father during the church age was to have Gentile church age believers be fellow heirs with Jewish church age believers as well as fellow members of the body of Christ with them likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with them because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus.

This is not the first time in the Ephesian epistle that Paul speaks of providing Gentile church age believers enlightment since in Ephesians 1:15-19, he informs the recipients of this epistle, who were Gentile church age believers, that he interceded in prayer to the Father for them. He prayed that the eyes of their heart would be enlightened in order that each and every one of them would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. Also, this enlightment would be in relation to what constitutes being the Father's incomparable, great power on behalf of each one of these Gentile church age believers, which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome.

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. 19 Also, what constitutes being His incomparable,

great power on behalf of each one of us who believe which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:10 is composed of a *hina* (ἵνα) result clause, which presents the result of or the consequence of the Father giving Paul his ministry to proclaim to the Gentile Christian community His unfathomable wealth and specifically to enlighten them as to what constitutes this unique mystery dispensation. Namely, this clause asserts that it resulted in the Father's multifaceted wisdom being made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom through the members of the church who are composed of Jewish and Gentile church age believers. Together, they compose the new humanity which will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which results in the destruction of the tribulation armies, the demise of Antichrist and the false prophet and the imprisonment of Satan and his fellow evil spirits for a thousand years. Then, the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride, the church will reign over the earth for a thousand years during the Lord's millennial reign.

This author interprets the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα) and the subjunctive mood of the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) as forming a result clause, which indicates the accomplishment of the action of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι). This author also interprets the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) as being modified by the verbs *euangelizō* (εὐαγγελίζω), which appear in Ephesians 3:8 and *phōtizō* (φωτίζω), which appears in Ephesians 3:9.

This author interprets both of these verbs as functioning as an infinitive of purpose, which indicate the purpose or goal of the action or state of its controlling verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι). This type of infinitive answers the question as to "why" Paul was given the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel, which he defines in verses 8 and 9. It looks ahead to the anticipated and intended result of being given this stewardship. In the former, this stewardship was for the purpose of proclaiming the unfathomable wealth of God to the Gentile Christian community. In the latter, Paul defines his assertion in verse 8 as enlightening the Gentile Christian community as to what constitutes this unique dispensation, which is a mystery, which has been hidden from those living in the dispensation prior to the church age. Therefore, this would indicate that it was "for the purpose of" proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth produced by their justification by faith in Jesus Christ and union and identification with Him that the Father gave Paul the unmerited blessing of being a servant of the gospel. It would also indicate that it was specifically "for the purpose of" enlightening the Gentile Christian community with regards to the mystery or divine secret that they are now fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic

promise with Jewish church age believers because of their justification by faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ.

Therefore, this *hina* (ἵνα) clause in Ephesians 3:10 indicates "the result of" or "the consequence of" the Father bestowing upon Paul his ministry to proclaim to the Gentile Christian community His unfathomable wealth and specifically, to enlighten them as to what constitutes this unique mystery dispensation. Namely, it "resulted in" the Father's multifaceted wisdom being made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom through the members of the church, who constitute the new humanity which will dispossess and Satan and the members of his kingdom as rulers over planet earth.

This interpretation is supported by the fact the purpose of the Father giving Paul his ministry was for the benefit of the Gentile Christian community and not Satan and the members of his kingdom. In fact, Paul asserts that it would be "through the church" that the multifaceted wisdom of God would be made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom. In other words, Paul's ministry was to benefit the Gentile Christian community, which in turn would reveal to Satan's kingdom the multifaceted wisdom of God as they experienced unity with the Jewish Christian community through the practice of the command to love one another. This unity was established at the moment of justification through the baptism of the Spirit and would be perfected at the rapture when the members of the body of Christ receive their resurrection bodies. This unity would ultimately manifest to Satan's kingdom that both communities constitute one new humanity, which would displace them eventually as rulers of planet earth. In fact, in Ephesians 1:3-23, Paul speaks of the church ruling with Jesus Christ during His millennial reign.

Ephesians 1:3 The God, namely the Father of the Lord ruling over us, who is Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise. Namely, because He is the one who has blessed each and every one of us by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. 4 For He chose each and every one of us for His own purpose because of Him alone before creation in order that each and every one of us would be holy as well as uncensurable in His judgment. 5 He did this by predestinating each and every one of us for the purpose of adoption as sons because of His love through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will. 6 This was for the purpose of praising His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on each and every one of us because of the one who is divinely loved. 7 Because of whom, each one of us are experiencing that which is the redemption through His blood, namely the forgiveness of our transgressions according to His infinite grace. 8 This He provided in abundance for the benefit of each and every one of us because of the exercise of a wisdom, which is absolute and divine in nature resulting in the manifestation of an insight, which is absolute and divine in nature. 9 He did this

by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of each and every one of us according to His pleasure, which He planned beforehand because of our faith in and union and identification with Himself. 10 This was for the dispensation which brings to completion the various periods of history. Namely, to unite for the benefit of Himself each and every animate and inanimate object in the sphere of the sovereign authority of the person of the one and only Christ. Specifically, to unite for the benefit of Himself those things in the heavens as well as those things on the earth in the sphere of the sovereign authority of Himself. 11 Because of whom, each and every one of us has been claimed as a possession because of having been predestinated according to the predetermined plan. Namely, the one who is causing each and every animate and inanimate object to function according to His purpose, that is, His sovereign will 12 in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people. Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ for the purpose of praising His glory. 13 Correspondingly, because of whom, each and every one of you were sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation. Specifically, because each one of you believed in Him. 14 The Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until He redeems His possession for the praise of His glory. (Author's translation)

Notice that Paul in Ephesians 1:7-8 asserts that the members of the body of Christ are experiencing the forgiveness of their sins according to the Father's infinite grace, which he provided for them because of the exercise of His wisdom resulting in the manifestation of His insight. Notice that as in Ephesians 1:8, the wisdom of God is mentioned in Ephesians 3:10 in relation to the church. In Ephesians 1:9-10, Paul then asserts that the Father did this by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of the church and this was for the dispensation which brings to completion the various periods of history, namely the millennial reign of Christ!

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason, after I myself heard about the faith among each and every one of you in the one and only Lord Jesus as well as you are practicing divine-love, which is on behalf of each and every one of the saints, 16 I never permit myself to cease regularly expressing thanks to the one and only God because of each and every one of you. I do this while disciplining myself to make it my practice of remembering each and every one of you during my prayers. 17 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that God, that is, the glorious Father of the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit, who is Jesus Christ, would cause each and every one

of you to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. 18 Namely, that the eyes of your heart are enlightened in order that each and every one of you would possess the conviction of what constitutes being the confident expectation of blessing produced by His effectual call, what constitutes His inheritance, which is characterized by glorious wealth, residing in the person of the saints. 19 Also, what constitutes being His incomparable, great power on behalf of each one of us who believe which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. 20 This He caused to enter into the state of being exerted on behalf of the incomparable Christ. Specifically, by causing Him to be raised out from the dead ones. Then, by causing Him to be seated at His right hand in the heavenlies 21 above each and every sovereign ruler, authority, power exercised, dominion as well as each and every designated rank, by no means only during this age but in fact also during the one certain to come. 22 In other words, He caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be placed in subjection under His feet. Correspondingly, He gave Him as a gift as head over each and every animate and inanimate object for the benefit of the church, 23 which uniquely are members of His body, specifically, which is being brought to completion by the one who is bringing each and every animate and inanimate object to completion for the benefit of each and every member. (Author's translation)

Notice, in this intercessory prayer, Paul asserts that the Father's omnipotence raised His Son from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies above each and every sovereign ruler, authority, power exercised, dominion as well as each and every designated rank, by no means only during this age but in fact also during the one certain to come. These sovereign rulers and authorities are a refence to Satan and the members of His government. Then, the apostle Paul asserts that the Father also caused each and every animate and inanimate object to be placed in subjection under His Son's feet. Correspondingly, He gave His Son as a gift as head over each and every animate and inanimate object "for the benefit of the church, which are uniquely members of His Son's body!"

Therefore, in Ephesians 3:10, the *hina* (ἵνα) clause must indicate "the result of" or "the consequence of" rather than "the intention of" of the Father bestowing upon Paul the unmerited blessing of serving the gospel because this stewardship was intended to benefit the Gentile Christian community rather than Satan's kingdom. This clause is actually presenting the actual outcome or result of Paul receiving this ministry. Thus, it is asserting that the multifaceted wisdom of God was made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom through the members of the church. The latter as we have noted is composed of Jewish and Gentile church age believers who

constitute the new humanity, which will dispossess Satan and the members of his kingdom as rulers over the earth at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

The church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand is extremely important because it is related to the Father's purpose in restoring the human race to rulership over the earth. By seating His Son, Jesus Christ and His bride the church at His right hand and placing every animate and inanimate object under their authority, the Father restored humanity to its original position, namely rulership over the earth. This restoration of humanity to rulership over the earth is prophesied about in Daniel 7:14. Also, the title deed to the earth that is mentioned in Revelation 5 is related to the rulership of the earth. In this chapter, this title deed to the earth was sealed with seven seals, which no one moral rational creature in creation was able to open except Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:26-30, Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2:7-8 teach that mankind was designed to rule over the works of God's creation. Adam was created and designed in the image and likeness of God in order that he might exercise sovereign authority over all creation.

So Adam was created and designed in the image and likeness of God in order that he might exercise sovereign authority over all creation (Psalm 8). However, the rulership of the creation was lost by Adam and the Woman in the Garden of Eden when they disobeyed the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3). Satan usurped the rulership of the first Adam over the earth when he deceived the woman into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and getting Adam to do so as well. However, the Last Adam, the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ has regained that rulership over the earth with His obedience to the Father's will in going to the cross in order to suffer the wrath of God as a substitute for all of sinful humanity (Rom. 5:12-21; Hebrews 2:6-9).

That Satan is the temporary authority over the earth is indicated in that 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that he is the "**god of this world**." The Lord Jesus Christ's death on the cross gained the rulership of the earth back for mankind according to Philippians 2:5-11 and Hebrews 2:9.

In Hebrews 2:6-8a, we have the record of God's purpose for mankind decreed whereas in Hebrews 2:8, we have this purpose delayed due to the Fall and in Hebrews 2:9, 14 and 17 we have this purpose accomplished through the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 8 teaches that all things are not in subjection to the members of human race. However, verse 9 does asserts that Jesus was crowned with glory and honor as a result of His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross.

Now, the church is the bride of Christ according to Ephesians 5:32. So therefore, a comparison of Ephesians 5:32 with Ephesians 2:6, and Colossians 3:1-4 implies

that the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride, the church will restore humanity to its rightful place as rulers of the earth. In other words, the mystery of the Father's will is tied to the millennial reign of Christ because it reveals that the church will be the bride of His Son and together the two will restore humanity to rulership over the earth. The church's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand is the means by which the Father is providing a bride for His Son and restoring the human race to rulership over the earth. Therefore, Paul is communicating to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who we noted were Gentile Christians living in the various cities and towns throughout the Roman province of Asia, that they and Jewish Christians like himself have victory over Satan and his armies. The first reason for this is that they are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. The second reason is that Jesus Christ and His bride, the church will dispossess Satan and his armies at His Second Advent, which will establish the millennial reign of Christ. During which time, the church will reign with Him.

Now, as was the case when the word appeared in Ephesians 1:8 and 17, the noun *sophia* (σοφία) here in Ephesians 3:10 refers to the wisdom of God. However, in Ephesians 3:10, it is speaking specifically of God's wisdom as manifested through the baptism of the Spirit which united Jewish and Gentile church age believers with His Son, Jesus Christ and identified them with His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand.

The noun *sophia* (σοφία) is modified by the noun *theos* (θεός), which refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, in every instance in which the word has appeared in this epistle up to this point in the Ephesian letter, the Father is this word's referent (1:1, 2, 3, 17, 2:4, 8, 10, 16, 19, 22, 3:2, 7, 9).

As was the case in Ephesians 3:9, this word *theos* (θεός) here in Ephesians 3:10 contains the figure of metonymy which means that God the Father is put for the manifestation of His will. This is supported by the fact that the church as composed of both Jewish and Gentile believers manifests the will of the Father in eternity past according to Ephesians 3:9. This interpretation is supported by the articular construction of this word, which is anaphoric, which means that it is pointing back to the previous use of this word in Ephesians 3:9 indicating that it retains the same meaning and referent here in Ephesians 3:10.

The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of production, which means that it produces the noun to which it stands related, which is *sophia* (σοφία). Therefore, this construction indicates that this wisdom is "produced by" the manifestation of the will of God (the Father)."

The wisdom of God is a transcendent wisdom because it is based upon His omniscience and is His unique ability to devise a perfect plan to accomplish His goal to glorify Himself. The word speaks of the function or exercise of God's ability to perfectly execute His plan of salvation and as a result glorify Himself. The Father's wisdom is transcendent because it is beyond both angelic and human comprehension.

The wisdom of God was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father which provided eternal salvation for all of sinful humanity. The wisdom of God is also expressed through the gospel of Jesus Christ, which presents God's provision of eternal salvation for the entire human race through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is revealed by the Spirit's teaching in the New Testament. The church age believer receives divine wisdom by exercising faith in the Spirit inspired teaching of the New Testament, which is divine revelation.

In 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, the apostle Paul condemns the wisdom of the cosmic system, teaching that the wisdom of God as revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ is superior and has made foolish the wisdom of the cosmic system. In 1 Corinthians 1:17-31, Paul attacks the self-confidence of the Greeks, who boast of their human wisdom, which is cosmic viewpoint (1 Co. 1:29; cf. 1 Co. 3:21). He rejects human wisdom and boasts in the wisdom he received from the Lord through the Spirit. In Colossians 2:3, Paul teaches that God's wisdom resides in the mind and thinking of Christ, which appears in the written Word of God.

In Colossians 3:16, he teaches that the believer acquires the wisdom of God by letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in his soul, which gives him the capacity to glorify God in whatever circumstance or relationship in life. James 3:17 describes wisdom as being pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

In Ephesians 1:8, Paul asserts that the Father provide His grace in abundance for the benefit of the church because of the exercise of His wisdom, which resulted in the manifestation of His insight. Then, in Ephesians 1:17, the apostle asserts that he made it his habit of occupying himself in prayer and asked that the Father would cause each member of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia, who were the recipients of this epistle, to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the one and only Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself. In this passage, the wisdom of God is a transcendent wisdom because it is based upon His omniscience and is His unique ability to devise a perfect plan to accomplish His goal to glorify Himself. The word speaks of the function or exercise of God's ability to perfectly execute His plan of salvation and as a result glorify Himself. The Father's wisdom is transcendent because it is beyond both angelic and human comprehension.

The wisdom of God was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father which provided eternal salvation for all of sinful humanity. The wisdom of God is also expressed through the gospel of Jesus Christ, which presents God's provision of eternal salvation for the entire human race through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is revealed by the Spirit's teaching in the New Testament. The church age believer receives divine wisdom by exercising faith in the Spirit inspired teaching of the New Testament, which is divine revelation. Now, we see that in Ephesians 3:1-12, the apostle Paul teaches that the multi-faceted wisdom of God is being made known through the church to the "**rulers**" and "**authorities**," which are a reference to Satan and the members of His kingdom.

The noun *sophia* (σοφία) is modified by the adjective *polypoikilos* (πολυποίκιλος), which appears only here in the Greek New Testament and describes God the Father's wisdom as being multifaceted or having many facets or aspects. In context, it is used in relation to the content of the incomparable mystery, which is produced by the church age believer's union and identification with Christ (Eph. 3:4). That this mystery is incomparable is indicated by the articular construction of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), which appears in Ephesians 3:4 and is monadic, which means that this mystery is "unique" or "one of a kind" because the content of this mystery is that that Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. Thus, this mystery is unique because never before in history were Gentile believers on equal footing with Jewish believers.

The content of this incomparable mystery or the mystery doctrine asserts that that the members of the Gentile Christian community are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messiah promise with the members of the Jewish Christian community because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:6).

Therefore, when Paul speaks of God's wisdom here in Ephesians 3:10, it is inextricably tied to the content of this incomparable mystery, which is produced by the church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ. Thus, when Paul employs the adjective *polypoikilos* (πολυποίκιλος), "**multifaceted**," he is using it to describe this mystery doctrine for the church age as manifesting the wisdom of God the Father and according to Ephesians 3:10, it manifests the will of the Father. Thus, Paul describes this mystery as "multifaceted" because it is another manifestation of the complexity of the Father's plan for the human race and another change in the manner in which He deals with the human race. Specifically, this mystery is "multifaceted" because it is a manifestation of one of many progressions in which the Father deals with the human race and His plan for it.

When God created Adam and Eve, He made them the rulers of the earth (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). He placed them in a garden and gave them one prohibition, namely they were never to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan entered the picture and deceived Eve and she disobeyed the Lord God by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam was not deceived and ate as well from the tree, knowing full well, he was not to eat the fruit from this tree. From this moment, Satan became the temporary god of the earth (2 Cor. 4:4) and the human race was under his authority (1 John 5:19). Also, from this moment on, God dealt with these two and the descendants, the human race according to His grace policy towards the human race. Lastly, from this point on, the Father began to carry out His plan to restore the human race over the works of His hands.

When the human race became corrupted during the antediluvian period, God determined to judge unrepentant, unregenerate members of the human race with a world-wide flood. However, He turned to Noah to continue his plan to restore the human race as rulers over the earth. After the flood, the unregenerate members of the human race under the leadership of Nimrod rebelled against God by building the tower of Babel. The Lord promptly dealt with this rebellion by confusing their language so that they could not communicate with each other through language. This resulted in the human race doing what the Lord wanted them to do in the first place, namely, to populate the earth. Then, began to manifest His plan to restore humanity as rulers over the earth and remove Satan and the members of his kingdom by calling Abraham who was followed by his son, Isaac and grandson, Jacob whose twelve sons became the progenitors of the nation of Israel. The Father used Joseph the son of Jacob to rescue his family from a world-wide famine since this Messiah and future ruler of the earth would descend from this family. Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and ended up in Egypt and became the prime minister over Egypt. He delivered his family from this famine. For over four hundred years, the family of Jacob lived in Egypt according to prophecy the Lord gave Abraham in Genesis 15. They were eventually enslaved by the Egyptians. God then turned to Moses to lead the nation out of the bondage of slavery to Pharaoh and Egypt. Joshua followed Moses and led the nation as it dispossessed the unrepentant, unregenerate inhabitants of the land of Canaan.

Next, God raised up Samuel to prepare the nation for the kings that would reign over her. Saul was the first who God removed because of his unrepentant, sinful behavior and replaced him with a man after his own heart, David. The latter received the promise that a descendant of his would reign forever over the nation as king. Solomon followed and like Saul went into apostasy which led to the divided period of the kingdom of Israel. The northern and southern kingdoms were disciplined by God for their unrepentant, sinful behavior. God used the Assyrian empire as His instrument to judge the former and used the Babylonian empire as His instrument to

discipline the latter. The northern kingdom never returned to the land of Canaan but only the southern kingdom returned to the land of promise under the leadership of the prophets Haggai, Zechariah and Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah and Jehozadak, the high priest. These rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem but Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Next, the Father sent His Son into the world to become a human being to destroy the works of the devil, redeem and reconcile all of sinful humanity to Himself and propitiate His holiness through His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand. These events in the life of Christ was the first step in restoring the human race as rulers over the earth and thus dispossessing Satan and the members of His kingdom. The next step began on the day of Pentecost in June of 33 A.D. when seated at the Father's right hand, His Son, Jesus Christ sent the Spirit in fulfillment of not only Old Testament promises but also His own personal promise to do so (Ezek. 36:37; John 7:37-39; Acts 1:8). The sending of the Spirit resulted in the baptism of the Spirit, which first took place among the disciples of Jesus who were of course, Jewish (Acts 2). This was the beginning of the church age, which was not known to Old Testament saints. Then, remarkably in the view of these regenerate Jewish believers of Jesus, Gentiles who trusted in Jesus of Nazareth as Savior also experienced the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 10).

The baptism of the Spirit placed these Jewish and Gentile church age believers in union with last Adam, Jesus Christ and identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It also resulted in Gentile and Jewish church age believers being fellow heirs with each other, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise. The church age ends with the rapture which is the resurrection of the church (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:50-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 John 3:1-3).

The rapture triggers the appearance of Antichrist according to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 who begins the seventieth week of Daniel by making a treaty with the nation of Israel. The seventieth week concludes with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ who returns to earth with elect angels, Old Testament saints in resurrection bodies, tribulational martyrs in resurrection bodies and His bride, the church. The purpose of which return is to not only destroy the Antichrist, the false prophet and the tribulation armies but also to imprison Satan and his fellow evil spirits for a thousand years, and which thousand years will mark the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Finally, the Father's plan to restore mankind as the rulers over the works of His hands will be completed.

Thus, we can understand why Paul in Ephesians 3:10 describes the Father's wisdom in making Gentile and Jewish church age believers as fellow heirs with each other, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise as "multifaceted." It is such because it is a manifestation of the Father's

plan to restore the human race as rulers of planet earth, which has many facets and has progressed throughout human history in a variety of ways.

Now, in Ephesians 3:10, the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) means "to disclose, to make something known to others, to cause a particular thing to be known to others" since the word pertains to causing information to become known to others. Specifically, this word speaks of the act of the Father revealing His wisdom and sovereign will, which are related to His plan to restore the human race as rulers of planet earth. The recipients of this revelation are identified by the nouns *archē* (ἀρχή), "**sovereign rulers**" and *exousia* (ἐξουσία), "**governmental authorities**."

As was the case in Ephesians 1:21, the noun *archē* (ἀρχή) here in Ephesians 3:10, means "sovereign ruler" since it pertains to any human or angelic being besides God who act in a sovereign ruling or commanding capacity. It refers to any human or angelic governmental rulers who possess sovereignty over nations in the human and angelic realms. However, unlike Ephesians 1:21, the word here in Ephesians 3:10 is in the plural. The articular construction of this word is generic which serves to distinguishes these sovereign governmental authorities in Satan's kingdom from other evil spirits in his kingdom.

Also, as was the case in Ephesians 1:21, the noun *exousia* (ἐξουσία) here in Ephesians 3:10 means "governmental authority" since the word pertains to a person's authority to rule. However, unlike Ephesians 1:21, the word here in Ephesians 3:10 is also in the plural. It is used in relation to the authority to rule of both human and angelic governmental rulers who are subordinate to the *archē* (ἀρχή), "**sovereign rulers**." The articular construction of this word is also generic which not only serves to distinguish these governmental authorities in Satan's kingdom from those who are sovereign rulers in his kingdom but also to distinguish these governmental authorities in Satan's kingdom from other evil spirits in his kingdom.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:3 and 20, the articular dative neuter plural form of the adjective *epouranios* (ἐπουράνιος) here in Ephesians 3:10 refers to the first, second and third heavens. This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions here as a marker of location, which means that the word's object is marking the first, second and third heavens as the location in which these sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in Satan's government reside or exercise authority.

The nouns *archē* (ἀρχή), "**sovereign rulers**" and *exousia* (ἐξουσία), "**governmental authorities**" are evil spirits who belong to Satan's kingdom rather than elect angels of God. This is indicated by the fact that in Ephesians 2:2, the apostle Paul employs these two words in order to describe Satan. The noun *archē* (ἀρχή) describes him as the "**the sovereign ruler**" of the cosmic world system while the noun *exousia* (ἐξουσία) describes him as "**the governmental ruler**" of this cosmic world system. The noun *archōn* (ἄρχων) expresses the idea that Satan

possesses sovereign authority delegated to him by God over all of unregenerate humanity and the resources of planet earth as a result of the fall of Adam and Eve. The noun *exousia* (ἐξουσία) is used in relation to Satan's sovereign governmental authority over all of unregenerate humanity and the resources of planet earth. Furthermore, this interpretation is also indicated by the fact that the Father makes known to them His multifaceted wisdom "indirectly" through the church rather than directly or in other words, direct communication with them. This manifestation of His multifaceted wisdom through the church was a mystery and hidden from those living in previous dispensations including both elect and non-elect angels.

Why would God want to conceal from His own elect angels this mystery when they serve him by waging war against Satan and his fellow evil spirits (cf. Dan. 10; Rev. 12:7-9)? He wouldn't conceal from His angels. However, it is common sense that He would conceal this information about His will for the church because His kingdom is waging war against Satan's kingdom at the present time. In fact, ever since the fall of Adam and Eve this war has been raging in the cosmos.

In Ephesians 6:10-19, Paul asserts that Satan's kingdom wages war against the church. In fact, as was the case in Ephesians 3:10, both the nouns *archē* (ἀρχή) and *exousia* (ἐξουσία) are by the apostle in Ephesians 6:12 to describe those evil spirits in Satan's military who possess authority delegated to them by Satan. The words also appear in the same order as they do in Ephesians 3:10. As is the case in Ephesians 3:10, the noun *archōn* (ἄρχων) in Ephesians 6:12 refers to the highest rank of angels in the Satanic order of battle and hold positions of authority ("thrones") in the Satanic kingdom and are subordinate to only Satan himself. As was the case in Ephesians 3:10, the noun *exousia* (ἐξουσία) in Ephesians 6:12 refers to the rank of fallen angels who have been given by Satan "dominions" and are subordinate only to the *arche*, "rulers" and Satan himself.

So therefore, for these two reasons, these "**sovereign rulers**" and "**governmental authorities**" in Ephesians 3:10 must belong to Satan's kingdom rather than the elect angels of God.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:22, the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *ekklēsia* (ἐκκλησία) here in Ephesians 3:10 means "the church" and refers to the totality of Christian congregations or Christian assemblies throughout the Roman Empire and in heaven when Paul wrote this epistle in the first century A.D. In other words, the word refers to the totality of Christians who lived during the church age.

This word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the church is put for the races which compose the church. In other words, this figure indicates that the church is put for Jewish and Gentile believers, which compose the church and form the new humanity, which will dispossess Satan and the members of his kingdom at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the content of the mystery, which Paul proclaimed to the Gentile Christian community gave them enlightenment concerning this mystery, reveals that Satan and the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities under his authority will be dispossessed by the church, which is under the authority of Jesus Christ. The content of this mystery is that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus.

This word *ekklēsia* (ἐκκλησία) is the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), which functions as a marker of agency, which indicates that Jewish and Gentile Christian communities, which compose the church, are the agency which the Father employs to make known His multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of His will to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities belonging to Satan's government.

In Ephesians 3:10, the verb *gnōrizō* (γνωρίζω) is modified by the adverb of time *nun* (νῦν), which indicates that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the Father's will through the church being made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities belonging to Satan's kingdom takes place simultaneously with the dispensation of the church age. It also stands in marked contrast with the prepositional phrase *apo tōn aiōnōn* (ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων), "**from previous ages**," which appears in Ephesians 3:9. The latter refers to the period of time beginning with the creation of the time, matter, space continuum and continuing throughout human history up to the church age. Therefore, the prepositional phrase *apo tōn aiōnōn* (ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων), "**from previous ages**" and the adverb of time *nun* (νῦν), "**now**" present a contrast between the church age dispensation and the dispensations, which took place before it.

Ephesians 3:11 is composed of the prepositional phrase *kata prothesin tōn aiōnōn* (κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων), "**the eternal predetermined plan**," which modifies the result clause in Ephesians 3:10. The latter asserts that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the will of God (the Father) was made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church. This prepositional phrase is modified by the relative pronoun clause *hēn epoiēsen en tō Christō Iēsou tō kyriō hēmōn* (ἣν ἐποίησεν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν), "**which He caused to be accomplished by means of our faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ, who is Jesus, who is the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of us as a corporate unit**."

In this verse, the noun *prothesis* (πρόθεσις), "**predetermined plan**" pertains to that which is planned or purposed in advance. Thus, as was the case in Ephesians

1:11, the word here in Ephesians 3:11 refers to the "predetermined plan" of God the Father.

We also noted that this word is modified by the articular genitive masculine plural form of the noun *aiōn* (αἰών), "**eternal**" which speaks of an exceedingly long or indefinite period of time from an assumed beginning up to the present. Literally, the word means "ages" and speaks of the period prior to the Father created through His Son, Jesus Christ the time, matter, space continuum. Thus, it pertains to eternity past.

This word is in the genitive case and can be interpreted in a variety of ways. First, it can be interpreted as functioning as a genitive of source, which takes place when the genitive substantive is the source from which the head noun derives or depends. Therefore, this interpretation would indicate that the Father's plan "originates from" before the ages began. Secondly, it can also be interpreted as an objective genitive, which takes place when the genitive substantive receives the action implicit in the head noun. Therefore, this would indicate that the ages receive the action of the Father devising a plan before the ages began. However, this author believes that the noun *aiōn* (αἰών) functions as an attributive genitive, which functions like an adjective but more emphatically expressing the eternal quality of the predetermined plan of the Father because it is actually a Hebraism in which the genitive functions as an adjective and is thus equivalent to the noun *aiōnios* (αἰώνιος), "eternal."

The noun *prothesis* (πρόθεσις) is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which functions as a marker of correspondence to a particular standard or policy. As we also noted earlier, this prepositional phrase is modifying the result clause in Ephesians 3:10, which asserts that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of will of God (the Father) was made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *kata prothesin tōn aiōnōn* (κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων), "**the eternal predetermined plan**" in Ephesians 3:11 indicates that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of will of God (the Father) was made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church "according to" or "in conformity with" the Father's "eternal predetermined plan."

The referent of the accusative feminine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**which**" is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *prothesis* (πρόθεσις), "**predetermined plan**." This is indicated by the fact that they agree in case (accusative), gender (feminine), and number (singular).

The third person singular aorist active indicative conjugation of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is expressing the idea that the Father "caused" His eternal predetermined plan "to be accomplished" in the sense that He caused it to be carried out fully by means of the church age believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 20, 2:5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 20, 3:1, 4, 6, and 8 the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**the one and only Christ**" here in Ephesians 3:11 emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God delivered the believer from the sin nature, personal sins, the devil and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and eternal condemnation through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths and resurrection.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:9, 12, 2:6, 7, 10, 13, 3:6 and 3:8, the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" here in Ephesians 3:11 contains the figure of metonymy. This means that the Lord Jesus Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at his justification.

The articular construction of this word also indicates that Jesus of Nazareth is the only one deserving of this name or title since there were many individuals in the first century A.D. who claimed to be the Christ or were proclaimed to be the Christ. Thus, this construction speaks of the incomparability of Christ.

The dative masculine singular form of the proper noun *Iēsous* (Ἰησοῦς), "**who is Jesus**" and refers to the human nature of the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. It functions as a dative of simple apposition which means that it clarifies who is Christ here, namely Jesus of Nazareth since there were many in the first century who made the claim.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:2, 3, 15, 17 and 2:21, the referent of the dative masculine singular form of the noun *kurios* (κύριος) is Jesus Christ. The word means "Lord" and indicates the following about Jesus Christ: (1) His equality with the Father and the Spirit. (2) His joint-rulership with the Father over the entire cosmos. (3) His highest ranking position as Chief Administrator in the divine government. (4) His absolute sovereign authority as Ruler over all creation and every creature. (5) His victory over the sin nature and Satan and His kingdom.

In His deity, Jesus Christ is "**Lord**" (See Luke 20:42). However, in His human nature He received this title as a result of His obedience to the Father's will, which called for Him to suffer a spiritual and physical death on the cross as a substitute for every member of the human race-past, present and future (See Philippians 2:5-11).

The noun *kurios* (κύριος) emphasizes the victory that Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Christ, accomplished for the believer through His spiritual and physical deaths and resurrection. His spiritual death solved the problem of personal sins, which are produced by the sin nature through the function of human volition. His physical death solved the problem of the sin nature, which resides in the genetic structure of the human body. His resurrection guarantees the believer that he or she will receive a resurrection body at the rapture of the church, which will be immortal and minus the sin nature.

The articular construction of the noun *kurios* (κύριος) is monadic indicating that there were many lords or masters in the world. However, in reality there was only one lord or master worthy of the namely, the God-man, Jesus Christ. The article is saying that in reality, there is only one lord or master, Jesus Christ.

The noun *kurios* (κύριος) also functions as a dative of simple apposition which means that it clarifies who Jesus Christ is, namely He is the Lord ruling over each and every member of the body of Christ.

The genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ), "**each and every one of us as a corporate unit**" not only refers to Paul and the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but also the word is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. It functions as a genitive of subordination, which indicates that Paul and each and every one of the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit or are "subordinated to" the one and only Lord, who is Jesus Christ.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**Christ**" is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions here as a marker of means. Therefore, this indicates that the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification is "the means by which" the Father accomplished His eternal predetermined plan. It was not Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father which accomplished this plan but these events in our Lord's life were the basis for this predetermined plan, which was accomplished through the justification of the church age believer. Remember, this predetermined plan is related to the mystery, which asserts that Gentile and Jewish church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise. This union between Jewish and Gentile church age believers was brought about by their faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The aorist tense of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is a consummative aorist, emphasizes the cessation of the act of the Father accomplishing His eternal predetermined plan by means of the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at justification.

The active voice of this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is a causative active, which indicates that God the Father is the ultimate cause of accomplishing His eternal predetermined plan but was not directly involved in it. A comparison of Scripture with Scripture indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ caused the Father's eternal predetermined plan to be accomplished by means of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand. The work of His Son during His First Advent was the basis for Gentile church age believers being fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messianic promise with Jewish

church age believers. This manifested the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the Father's will. Also, at the moment of justification, the Holy Spirit placed the church age believer in union with Jesus Christ and identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Now, the noun *prothesis* (πρόθεσις), "**predetermined plan**" here in Ephesians 3:11 is a related to the election and predestination of the church age believer in eternity past by God the Father, which was according to this predetermined plan. This is indicated by a comparison of the contents of Ephesians 3:10 with the contents of the Ephesians 3:11. The former asserts that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the will of God the Father was made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom through the members of the church. The latter asserts that the Father caused His predetermined plan to be accomplished by means of the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ, who is Jesus, who is the one and only Lord ruling over each and every one of member of the church. Notice the connection or relationship between the multifaceted wisdom brought about by the manifestation of the will of the Father, which was made known to Satan and the members of his kingdom and this eternal predetermined plan, which was accomplished by means of the church age believer's faith in the Father's Son at justification and union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit. This relationship or connection exists because of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which links these two assertions together. It indicates that the assertion in Ephesians 3:10 is in conformity with the contents of Ephesians 3:11. In other words, this preposition indicates that the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of will of God (the Father) was made known to the sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church "according to" or "in conformity with" the Father's "eternal predetermined plan" for the church age believer, which involved the election of the church age believer in eternity past, and which election was accomplished by the Father when He predestinated them to adoption as His sons.

Ephesians 3:12 is composed of the following: (1) Prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**On the basis of our faith in and union and identification with Him**" (Author's translation) (2) Declarative statement: *echomen tēn parrēsian kai prosagōgēn* (ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν), "**each and every one of us are experiencing boldness, namely access**" (Author's translation) (3) Prepositional phrase: *en pepoithēsei* (ἐν πεποιθήσει), "**with confidence**" (Author's translation) (4) Prepositional phrase (due to the use of the figure of ellipsis): *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα), "**to the presence of the Father**" (Author's translation) (5) Prepositional phrase *dia tēs pisteōs autou* (διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ), "**by means of His faithfulness**" (Author's translation)

Therefore, the reader can see that the Ephesians 3:12 is built upon the declarative statement *echomen tēn parrēsian kai prosagōgēn* (ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν), "**each and every one of us are experiencing boldness, namely access**." It is modified by four prepositional phrases and one of which is implied due to the figure of ellipsis.

The prepositional phrase *en pepoithēsei* (ἐν πεποιθήσει), "**with confidence**" is actually modifying *prosagōgēn* (ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν), "**access**" and is completing the latter's thought. Together, they are defining the articular expression *tēn parrēsian* (τὴν παρρησίαν), "**boldness**." The prepositional phrase *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα), "**to the presence of the Father**" is omitted but implied due to Paul's use of the figure of ellipsis. It is completing the thought of the declarative statement *echomen tēn parrēsian kai prosagōgēn* (ἔχομεν τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν), "**each and every one of us are experiencing boldness, namely access**" as are the prepositional phrases *en pepoithēsei* (ἐν πεποιθήσει), "**with confidence**" and *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα), "**to the presence of the Father**."

Lastly, the prepositional phrases *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**On the basis of our faith in and union and identification with Him**" and *dia tēs pisteōs autou* (διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ), "**by means of His faithfulness**" are also modifying the declarative statement. They also serve as bookends for this declarative statement and the prepositional phrases, which modify it. The former is fronted for emphasis and the latter completes the verse. The former expresses the reason for the declarative statement and the prepositional phrases that modify it. The latter expresses the means for them. Together, they serve to emphasize that the new humanity composed of both Jewish and Gentile Christian communities owes its very existence to the Lord Jesus Christ because His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father serves as the basis for its very existence.

Now, the referent of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**Him**," which appears in the first prepositional phrase which appears in the verse, is the Lord Jesus Christ and contains the figure of metonymy. This means that the Lord Jesus Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at his justification.

This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of cause or reason. Therefore, this indicates that the church age believer's faith in Him at justification as well as their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit at his justification is "the reason why" they are experiencing boldness, namely, access with confidence to the presence of the Father.

In the declarative statement, the noun *parrēsia* (παρρησία), "**boldness**" is used in relation to access to the Father and describes the church age believer's access to

the Father as being characterized by openness with Him, which stems from freedom to speak freely with a lack of fear in His presence.

Now, the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή), which appears in this declarative statement in Ephesians 3:12, means, "access" and not simply "entrance" since the former accurately reflects the meaning of the word because it denotes not only entrance into the presence of the Father but also the continuing availability of that access to the presence of the Father. This words also appears in Ephesians 2:18 and in Romans 5:2. It means, "to lead someone into the presence of another" with the assistance of another and with the implication that the person doing the receiving is of higher status.

In each instance, the word denotes "access to the presence" of the Father. In these passages, the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) is used in relation to God the Father, thus the word denotes the sinner being led into the presence of the Father through the intermediary agency of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with the Father.

John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (NASB95)

Now, in Ephesians 3:12, the expression *tēn parrēsian kai prosagōgēn* (τὴν παρρησίαν καὶ προσαγωγὴν) contains an object-complement double accusative construction. Both words are in the accusative case with the noun *parrēsia* (παρρησία) functioning as the object and the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) functioning as its complement. This is indicated by the fact that in such constructions the articular noun function as the object whereas the anarthrous noun functions as the complement.

The noun *parrēsia* (παρρησία) functions as the object in object-complement construction because it is articular and the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) functions as the complement in object-complement construction because it is anarthrous. However, contrary to normal usage, the complement is definite and the object is qualitative. This is indicated by the fact that the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) is speaking of access to the presence of the Father whereas the noun *parrēsia* (παρρησία) is qualitative because it describes the quality of this access, namely, it is characterized by boldness on the part of the church age believer. Wallace writes "There is a very close relationship between boldness and access, one being the internal attitude which corresponds to the external reality."[49]

The noun *pepoithēsis* (πεποίθησις), "**confidence**" describes the church age believer's relationship to the Father as being characterized by intimacy which is marked by freedom from uncertainty, diffidence or embarrassment. It describes the

[49] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 286). Zondervan.

manner in which the church age believer is certain of their relationship to the Father as His child.

This word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of manner, which expresses the idea that this access to the presence of the Father, which is characterized by boldness, is also characterized by confidence.

Now, this prepositional phrase *en pepoithēsei* (ἐν πεποιθήσει), "**with confidence**" serves to modify and complete the thought begun by the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή), "**access**." Thus, together, they serve to identify what the noun *parrēsia* (παρρησία), "**boldness**" is related to.

Therefore, this object-complement double accusative construction expresses the idea that because of the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit, they are experiencing "boldness, namely access with confidence" to the presence of the Father.

The verb *echō* (ἔχω) means "to experience" a state or condition indicating because of the church age believer's faith in Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him Jewish and Gentile church age believers are "experiencing" boldness, yes access with confidence to the presence of the Father.

The first person plural of this verb is an inclusive "we" or literary plural which is used to include both the author and his audience. Paul was of course a Jewish Christians and the recipients of this letter were Gentile Christians according to Ephesians 2:11. Therefore, when Paul employs the first person plural because he is referring to both himself and the recipients of the Ephesian epistle with himself representing the Jewish Christian community.

The present tense of this verb *echō* (ἔχω) is a customary present or stative present which would indicate that because of the church age believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit, they "exist in the state of" experiencing boldness, namely access with confidence to the presence of the Father.

The present tense can also be interpreted as a gnomic present which would indicate that because of the church age believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at justification and their union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit, they are "as a general timeless truth" or "as an eternal spiritual truth or axiom" experiencing boldness, namely access with confidence to the presence of the Father.

The referent of the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), which appears in the last prepositional phrase in Ephesians 3:12, is also the Lord Jesus Christ and emphasizes His identity and is the demonstrative force intensified.

Unlike, Ephesians 1:15 and 2:8, the noun *pistis* (πίστις) in this last prepositional phrase in Ephesians 3:12 is not a reference to the church age believer's faith in Jesus

Christ, which resulted in the Father imputing or crediting His Son's righteousness and declaring them justified based upon the merits of His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. Rather, it means "faithfulness" since it is used in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ and pertains to the state of being someone in whom complete confidence can be placed. Therefore, it expresses the idea that the Lord Jesus Christ is someone a sinner can place complete confidence in to provide them bold access to the Father because the Father has accepted His crucifixion, death, burial as the propitiation of their sins. His resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father demonstrated that the Father had accepted His Son's substitutionary sacrifice as the payment for their sins since it satisfied His holiness, which demanded that sin and sinners experience His righteous indignation in the eternal lake of fire.

Most expositors and translators interpret the noun *pistis* (πίστις) as functioning as an objective genitive, which takes place when the genitive substantive receives the action implicit in the head noun. Therefore, this would indicate that Jesus Christ receives the action of being trusted by the church age believer, which resulted in the Father declaring them justified.

However, more and more expositors and translations like the NET Bible translate the word as a subjective genitive, which takes place when the genitive substantive functions semantically as the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun. Therefore, this would indicate that Jesus Christ is the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun *pistis* (πίστις) indicating that it was His faithfulness which was the means by which the church age believer experiences boldness, namely access with confidence to the presence of the Father.

However, this author believes that the articular construction of this noun *pistis* (πίστις) is employed with the genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) in order to denote possession.[50] This use of the intensive personal pronoun appears frequently in the Greek New Testament. Thus, this construction emphasizes this faithfulness is "the possession of" the Lord Jesus Christ.

That the noun *pistis* (πίστις) is not an objective genitive and does not refer to the church age believer's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ which resulted in the Father declaring them justified is indicated by the fact that Paul uses two other prepositional phrases in this verse, which imply justifying faith. The prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the Lord Jesus Christ is put for faith in Him at justification and the church age believer's union and identification with Him through the baptism of the Spirit. The prepositional phrase *en pepoithēsei* (ἐν πεποιθήσει), "**with confidence**" implies justifying faith because

[50] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 239). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

access to the Father which is characterized by confidence in His presence presupposes justifying faith.

The genitive feminine singular form of the noun *pistis* (πίστις) is the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), which expresses "the means by which" the recipients of the Ephesian letter were presently experiencing access to the presence of the Father, which is characterized by boldness and confidence.

Therefore, the prepositional phrase *dia tēs pisteōs autou* (διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ) expresses the idea that the church age believer experiences boldness, namely access with confidence to the presence of the Father "by means of the Lord Jesus Christ's faithfulness."

As also noted, Paul employs the figure of ellipsis in Ephesians 3:12 because he is deliberately omitting the prepositional phrase *pros ton patera* (πρὸς τὸν πατέρα), "**to the presence of the Father**," though it is implied from the context and the contents of Ephesians 2:18. The latter asserts that through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ Himself each and every one of church age believer are experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father. In fact, like Ephesians 3:12, Ephesians 2:18 contains the noun *prosagōgē* (προσαγωγή) and the verb *echō* (ἔχω).

Now, in Ephesians 3:12, the prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "**On the basis of our faith in and union and identification with Him**" which begins the verse and the prepositional phrase *dia tēs pisteōs autou* (διὰ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ), "**by means of His faithfulness**," which ends the verse speak of the mediatorship of the Lord Jesus Christ, which of course is related to the doctrine of reconciliation.

The apostle Paul teaches in Colossians 1:22 that Jesus Christ is the mediator between a holy God and sinful humanity since these verses teach that He is both God and man and that His death on the cross reconciled all of sinful humanity to a holy God.

Colossians 1:22 He has now in fact reconciled each and every one of you by means of His body composed of human flesh by means of His death. The purpose of which is to present each and every one of you as holy, uncensurable and unaccusable in His presence. (Author's translation)

In First Timothy 2:5, Paul teaches that Jesus Christ is the one and only intermediary between God and humanity.

First Timothy 2:1 Therefore, based upon my previous statements, I first of all urgently request specific detailed requests, reverential prayers, intercessory prayers, thanksgivings be regularly offered up on behalf of each and every member of the human race, 2 on behalf of kings as well as each and every one of those individuals who are in authority in order that we may continue to live a peaceful and tranquil life with absolute godliness as well as dignity. 3 This is, as an eternal spiritual truth noble as well as pleasingly acceptable in the

judgment of God the Father, our Savior 4 who, as an eternal spiritual truth desires each and every member of the human race to be saved as well as to enter into knowing experientially the truth. 5 For you see there does exist, as an eternal spiritual truth only one God. Also, there does exist, as an eternal spiritual truth only one intermediary between God the Father and the human race, a human being, namely Christ, who is Jesus 6 who gave Himself as a ransom on behalf of each and every one as a substitute, the testimony at His appointed time. (Author's translation)

In 2 Corinthians 5:18, the apostle Paul also alludes to the mediatorship of Jesus Christ who reconciled all of sinful humanity to God through His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.

2 Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ controls us, since we have concluded this, that Christ died for all; therefore all have died. 15 And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised. 16 So then from now on we acknowledge no one from an outward human point of view. Even though we have known Christ from such a human point of view, now we do not know him in that way any longer. 17 So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away—look, what is new has come! 18 And all these things are from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 19 In other words, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting people's trespasses against them, and he has given us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making His plea through us. We plead with you on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God!" 21 God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we would become the righteousness of God. (NET)

The contents of Ephesians 3:12 echo the contents of Ephesians 2:18.

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of remembering that formerly each of you who belong to the Gentile race with respect to the human body, specifically, those who receive the designation "uncircumcision" by the those who receive the designation "circumcision" with respect to the human body performed by human hands, 12 each one of you used to be characterized as without a relationship with Christ. Each one of you used to be alienated from the nation of Israel's citizenship. Specifically, each of you used to be strangers to the most important promise, which is the product of the covenants. Each of you used to not possess a confident expectation of blessing. Consequently, each one of you used to be without a relationship with God in the sphere of the cosmic world system. 13 However, because of your faith in and your union and identification with Christ Jesus each and every one of you as a corporate unit who formerly

were far away have now been brought near by means of the blood belonging to this same Christ. 14 For He Himself personifies our peace. Namely, by causing both groups to be one. Specifically, by destroying the wall, which served as the barrier, that is, that which caused hostility (between the two and the two with God). 15 In other words, by nullifying by means of His human nature the law composed of the commandments consisting of a written code of laws in order that He might cause the two to be created into one new humanity by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. Thus, He caused peace to be established (between the two and the two with God). 16 In other words, in order that He would reconcile both groups into one body to God (the Father) through His cross. Consequently, He put to death the hostility (between the two and the two with God) by means of faith in Himself at justification and union and identification with Himself through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. 17 Correspondingly, He as a result came proclaiming peace for the benefit of each and every one of you, namely, those who were far off likewise peace to those were near. 18 Consequently, through the personal intermediate agency of Himself each and every one of us as a corporate unit, namely, both groups are experiencing access by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit to the presence of the Father. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 3:13 contains the apodosis of a first class conditional statement and presents a strong inference from the protasis of this first class condition, which appears in Ephesians 3:2-12. Paul doesn't complete this first class condition until Ephesians 3:13 in order to present an autobiographical digression, which appears in Ephesians 3:3-12. Therefore, Ephesians 3:2-12 constitutes a protasis of a first class condition that indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The protasis is not only contained in Ephesians 3:2 but also in Ephesians 3:3-12 with the latter explaining in greater detail the contents of the former. In other words, in Ephesians 3:3-12 explains in detail what Paul means by the expression "**the stewardship of God's grace**," which appears in Ephesians 3:2. It asserts this stewardship was given to him for the benefit of the recipients of this epistle who are Gentile church age believers. The apodosis is not introduced until Ephesians 3:13, which leaves the protasis dangling. Thus, we have the figure of anacoluthon being used by Paul because the apodosis is not introduced explicitly until Ephesians 3:13 with the inferential use of the conjunction *dio* (διό).

The first class condition is a tool of persuasion in that the writer uses it to persuade his audience to come to his conclusion in the apodosis. The idea behind the first class condition is not "since" but rather, "if-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that, then..." Here in Ephesians 3:2-12, the protasis of this first class conditional statement is designed to persuade the recipients of this epistle, who

we noted were Gentile Christians, to follow a particular course of action, which in our context is compliance with the request in the apodosis to not become discouraged by Paul's Roman imprisonment. The idea of the protasis is "if and let assume that it is true for the sake argument that all of you as a corporate unit without exception have heard about the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for the benefit of each and every one of you as a corporate unit."

This is a responsive first class condition indicating that the recipients of this letter, whom Ephesians 2:11 identifies as Gentile church age believers, would all agree with the protasis because they were all the beneficiaries of Paul's ministry. He communicated to them the mystery doctrine that Jewish and Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise because of their faith in Christ Jesus at justification and union and identification with Him as a result of their obedience to the gospel. In fact, Paul affirms in Ephesians 3:3-12 that this stewardship of God's grace, which was given to him for the benefit of these Gentile church age believers was communicated to these Gentile church age believers by himself through the Holy Spirit.

The apodosis is in Ephesians 3:13 is in the form of a request, namely, "I myself urgently request at the present time that each and every one of you as a corporate unit not be discouraged because of my adversities on behalf of all of you without exception, which are unique in character making possible for each and every one of you to receive glory."

Therefore, this request is a strong inference from the protasis in Ephesians 3:2-12, which reveals that the Father gave Paul a stewardship at the moment of justification, which was for the benefit of the Gentile Christian community. This stewardship was concerning an incomparable mystery, which was the product of their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This mystery was a doctrine not known to Old Testament has been now revealed by the Spirit to the apostles and prophets through the Spirit. This doctrine asserts that the Gentile church age believers are fellow heirs as well as fellow members of the body of Christ likewise fellow partakers of the Messian promise with Jewish church age believers because of justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus. This stewardship required that Paul proclaim to the Gentile Christian community the unfathomable wealth brought about by this justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ. The purpose of this stewardship was to cause everyone in this community to be enlightened as to what constitutes this unique dispensation, which is a mystery, which has been hidden from previous ages because of God's will. By fulfilling his service and stewardship, the multifaceted wisdom produced by the manifestation of the will of God (the Father) was made known to the Satanic

sovereign rulers and governmental authorities in the heavenlies through the members of the church.

Therefore, we can understand why the apostle Paul in Ephesians 3:13 requests that the Gentile Christian community to whom he was writing to, not be discouraged because of his underserved suffering, i.e., his Roman imprisonment because it was actually for their own glory in the end. It will result in their glory in the sense that the new humanity composed of Jewish and Gentile church age believers will reign with Jesus Christ during the millennium when they are in a perfected state, namely in a resurrection body and decorated with rewards for faithful service in life. At the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, this new humanity, composed of Jewish and Gentile church age believers whose head is the Lord Jesus Christ, will dispossess Satan and the members of his kingdom as rulers of the earth. They will also be honored by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church if they remain faithful to Him until their death or the rapture, whichever comes first. They will also be honored by Him and the inhabitants of the earth during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

These adversities that Paul was experiencing because of his ministry were the direct result of Satan and his kingdom persecuting him through unregenerate humanity. They persecuted him because his ministry meant the end of Satan's reign over the earth because through his ministry Gentiles were believing in Jesus Christ as their Savior and were simultaneously placed in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Simultaneously, they were united with Jewish church age believers in order to form this new humanity whose head is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul was also persecuted because the Gentile members of this new humanity were growing spiritually as a result of him communicating the various mystery doctrines, which are for the benefit of this new humanity, i.e., the church. Ultimately, if these individual members of the body of Christ remain faithful and execute the Father's plan to become like Jesus Christ, they will receive rewards from Him at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church, which immediately follows the rapture or resurrection of the church. These constitute "the overcomers" the apostle John speaks of in Revelation 2-3 who will be assigned to positions of authority in Jesus Christ's millennial government (Rev. 2:26).

Therefore, if Paul was not faithful in his ministry to the Gentile Christian community, none of this could ever take place because he was the instrument the Father, Son and Holy Spirit employed to communicate this good news to the Gentile Christian community. His faithfulness made it possible for this community to receive honor from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat and during His millennial reign.

Now, in Ephesians 3:13, the plural form of the noun *thlipsis* (θλῖψις), "**adversities**" is used in a general sense in relation to the intense outward pressure

caused by people or circumstances. In this context, it is used to describe Paul's Roman imprisonment which was unjust and the result of persecution by unregenerate Jews in Jerusalem who falsely accused him of brining a Gentile into the Jewish section of Herod's temple (Acts 21-28). Thus, it was in reality, underserved suffering for blessing.

The referent of the genitive first person singular form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ) is of course Paul and is employed with the articular construction of the noun *thlipsis* (θλῖψις) to denote possession expressing the idea that these adversities as "the possession of" Paul. The noun *thlipsis* (θλῖψις) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which indicates the reason why the recipients of this epistle must not be discouraged, namely because of his adversities, which constituted unjust and thus undeserved suffering for blessing.

The traditional view of the church is that this epistle was written while Paul was under house arrest in Rome awaiting his appeal before Caesar. This view went unchallenged for eighteen centuries. However, in modern times, there are those who dissent. Two locales have been put forth by scholars, namely Ephesus and Caesarea.

The burden of proof rests with an Ephesus and Caesarea origin since church tradition holds to Paul writing Ephesians, Philemon and Colossians while under house arrest in Rome. A critical factor in a Roman origin of this epistle is that Luke is with Paul during his imprisonment (see Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24). This is supported by Acts since it makes clear Paul's Ephesian ministry does not occur in the "we" section of Acts. The traditional view that Paul was in Rome when he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, is still by far the best view because of the obvious connection between Colossians and Ephesians. This is indicated by the fact that Tychicus is named the courier of both letters (cf. Col. 4:7-8; Eph. 6:21-22), thus both letters were written at the same place and time, namely during his first Roman imprisonment, which took place from approximately 60-62 A.D.

Paul had two Roman imprisonments: (1) A.D. 60-62: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon (2) A.D. 68: 2 Timothy, Hebrews. The apostle Paul wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon during his first Roman imprisonment while he was awaiting his appeal before Caesar and he was actually permitted to have his own rented quarters in Rome with a Roman soldier guarding him (See Acts 28).

Harold Hoehner writes "The afflictions (ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν) mentioned here do not refer to his whole ministry but rather to his imprisonment[51] in Rome on behalf of them (ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν). No doubt, at this time he was waiting for the Jews to bring accusations against him before Caesar. In fact, after his arrest and trial in Jerusalem some Jews attempted to take his life after which he was delivered to Caesarea (Acts

[51] Thompson, "Ephesians iii.13 and 2 Timothy ii.10 in the Light of Colossians i.24," 188.

23:12–35). There, after a trial and a request by some of the Jewish leaders to have him returned to Jerusalem to be retried, Paul appealed to Caesar (24:1–25:11) and that was when he was sent to Rome (chaps. 27–28). The main contention of the Jews against Paul was that he taught people to overthrow the law of Moses and brought Gentiles into the Jerusalem temple (21:28 [cf. 24:18]; 24:5–6; 25:7–8). In this way Paul was suffering tribulations because of his ministry among Gentiles, including the Ephesians. Paul's willingness to suffer on their behalf is confirmed in a letter written in this same time period of Roman imprisonment where he states that he was willing to be poured out as a drink offering for the faith of the recipients (Phil 2:17). In this spirit Paul cautions Ephesian believers not to lose heart."[52]

In Ephesians 3:13, following this prepositional phrase we have the genitive second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), which refers to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle who were members of the Gentile Christian community living in the Roman province of Asia. The word means "each and every one of you" because it is not only referring to the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. This word is the object of the preposition *hyper* (ὑπέρ), which functions as a marker of benefaction or advantage and is thus expressing the idea that Paul's suffering unjustly and undeservedly Roman imprisonment was actually "for the benefit of" each member of the Gentile Christian community. The qualitative relative pronoun clause *hētis estin doxa hymōn* (ἥτις ἐστὶν δόξα ὑμῶν), "**which are in unique in character making possible for each and every one of you to receive honor**," which follows and modifies it, identifies why his imprisonment benefits them.

We also noted that the indefinite relative pronoun, *hostis* (ὅστις), "**which are unique in character**" emphasizes the unique character of Paul's adversities because they are the result of being persecuted by his fellow unregenerate Jewish countrymen. His unjust and thus undeserved suffering was unique in character because it was not as a result of his own criminal behavior but rather as a result of fulfilling his ministry to the Gentiles. It was the result of proclaiming the mystery doctrine to the Gentile Christian community that they were on equal footing with the Jewish Christian community and that together formed the new humanity, which will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits as rulers of planet earth. This proclamation resulted in Paul experiencing persecution at the hands of unregenerate human beings who were deceived by Satan and the members of his kingdom for the purpose of hindering him from fulfilling this ministry.

The noun *doxa* (δόξα) refers to the honor, recognition and esteem the members of the Gentile Christian community will receive from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat evaluation of the church, which immediately, follows the rapture of the

[52] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 469). Baker Academic.

church and will experience during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. This word speaks of the honor, recognition, and esteem the members of this community will receive from the Lord at the Bema Seat because they executed the Father's plan for the church age believer, which is to become like Jesus Christ in thought, word and action. As a result, they will receive rewards for being faithful stewards of the time, talent, treasure and truth He gave them as trusts. Paul's suffering, which was the result of proclaiming to the Gentile Christian community that they were fellow heirs and fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise, resulted in the spiritual growth of the individual members of this community. If this growth continues, these church age believers will be rewarded at the Bema Seat by the Lord Jesus Christ with the result that they will possess positions of authority in His millennial government.

Therefore, if it were not for Paul fulfilling his ministry in proclaiming this mystery doctrine to the Gentile Christian community, this recognition from the Lord at the Bema Seat and thus receiving a position in His millennial government could never take place. In other words, Paul's ministry, which was attacked by Satan and his kingdom, made it possible for these Gentile church age believers to not only be saved from the wrath of God in the lake of fire, enslavement to the sin nature, the devil and his cosmic, spiritual and physical death, personal sins and condemnation from the Law, but also to become members of the new humanity, who will reign with Jesus Christ during the millennium.

Andrew Lincoln writes "As Caragounis (*Mysterion*, 112 n. 61) says, 'The meaning of "glory" has puzzled all interpreters.' Even J. A. Robinson (80–81) contented himself with asserting that this verse contains 'a logic which we can hardly analyze.… It is the language of the heart.' Mitton (129) is unusual among modern commentators in that he believes the second clause in v 13 refers not just to the apostle's sufferings, but to the whole of the first clause, so that 'for the readers to find courage rather than discouragement from the thought of Paul's ordeals, courage to be willing to share them … this is their glory … something of which they can be truly proud.' Meyer (174) had long ago dismissed such an explanation as too general and commonplace. The writer's thought is indeed likely to be more profound than that Paul set an example which should stimulate others. It is certainly more natural to take the relative clause to refer to that which immediately precedes Paul's sufferings. In this case, does 'your glory' mean 'for your honor or prestige'? Meyer (173) offered the interpretation that Paul's suffering for the readers redounded to their honor. But if the apostolic sufferings are held to be the cause for their prestige or glorying, one would expect the use of καύχημα rather than δόξα express this, as in Phil 1:26. Could it be then that 'your glory' simply means 'for your benefit'?

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n. note

Abbott (92), following Chrysostom, espouses this line of thought; Paul's sufferings on his mission have all been in order that Gentile Christians might obtain the great blessings of salvation. It appears much more likely, however, that we should take our clue for the meaning of δόξα from the fact that when in Paul, as here, suffering and glory are juxtaposed, it is eschatological glory which is in view, the glorification of believers. (On this topic, cf. C. M. Smith, "Suffering and Glory: Studies in Paul's Use of the Motif in the Light of Its Early Jewish Background," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Sheffield, 1988.) In its appearances so far in Ephesians glory has been related to God rather than believers (cf. 1:6, 12, 14, 17, 18), but it is used in association with believers in Col 1:27 and 3:4, and in those cases also it denotes eschatological glory. In Paul's thought one of the relationships between suffering and glory is that the former is a precondition of the latter (cf. 2 Cor 4:17; Rom 8:17, 18). But the one who suffers is the one who is later glorified, while here in Eph 3:13 the one who suffers is Paul but those who are glorified are believers. Such a relationship, whereby apostolic suffering mediates salvation to others, is present in Paul's thought but expressed in different terms in 2 Cor 1:6 ("if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation") and 2 Cor 4:12 ("so death is at work in us, but life in you"). It is this concept of Paul's afflictions mediating the salvific benefits of Christ's sufferings to believers that is expressed here in Ephesians in terms of his sufferings and their glory. Suffering still must come before glory for the readers, but it is Paul who has fulfilled the condition of suffering for them, ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. If this is the case, then the thought of this verse is similar to Col 1:24 after all, for Paul is seen as the one who contributes to making up the quota of messianic woes, of eschatological tribulation, prior to the consummation of salvation in glory (cf. O'Brien, *Colossians*, 75–81; but cf. also C. M. Smith, "Suffering and Glory," 193–209). It is in this way that Ephesians sees Paul's sufferings as bringing Gentile believers the experience of glory (cf. also Schlier, 166; Gnilka, 180; Caird, 67; Thompson, *ExpTim* 71 [1959–60] 187–89). A similar thought about Paul's ministry can be found in 2 Tim 2:10, "Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory."[53]

Harold Hoehner writes "The word 'glory' was discussed at 1:6 (cf. also 1:12, 14, 17, 18; 3:16, 21) where we concluded that it is the summation of all of one's attributes and thus one's reputation and/or honor. Although the other references to this word in Ephesians refer to God's glory, it can also have reference to human glory (Matt 6:29; 1 Cor 11:7; cf. Gen 45:13; Isa 8:7; 10:12; 17:3, 4) as it does in the present context. Stated in another way, because of the reputation or honor enjoyed by them as new creatures in Christ, Paul suffered in Roman imprisonment. It might seem unusual to take glory in another's suffering. This, however, has a similarity in

ExpTim The Expository Times

[53] Lincoln, A. T. (1990). *Ephesians* (Vol. 42, pp. 191–192). Word, Incorporated.

Christ's death. One does not specifically glory because of Christ's suffering but rather glories because his death made possible the honor of being a new creature in Christ. In the present context, the point is that if Paul had never carried out his ministry of the mystery to the Ephesians, he would not have been in prison and the Ephesians would never have been introduced to Christ. In other words, his imprisonment is tangible evidence that he preached the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles and in particularly to the Ephesians. Hence, his imprisonment is their glory and should not cause them grief."[54]

Frank Thielman writes "What does Paul mean when he tells the Ephesians that his 'sufferings' are their δόξα (*doxa*, glory)? Most commentators understand the term in a noneschatological sense as simply the 'honor' or 'dignity' that belongs to Paul's readers as a result of the way God brought the gospel to them. They have 'glory' because God has provided them with good things at the expense of his own Son and the affliction of his servants (e.g., Chrysostom, *Hom. Eph.*, hom. 7; *NPNF* 13:81; Alford 1857: 104; Ellicott 1859: 66; cf. Eadie 1883: 239; Hoehner 2002: 470), or because they can rejoice in how God powerfully used Paul for their conversion despite his many troubles (Calvin 1965: 165; 1973: 271; Muddiman 2001: 164).

Despite the wide support that this reading of the term has received over the centuries, the connection between δόξα and suffering elsewhere in the Pauline corpus makes it unlikely. Elsewhere in Ephesians, δόξα is usually something that belongs to God (1:12, 14, 17; 3:16, 21) or to his grace (1:6), but a reasonable argument can be made that in 1:18 'the saints' are God's inheritance and that they possess a richness of δόξα (cf. Col. 1:27; see the comments on 1:18 above). Since this description comes directly after Paul's prayer that his readers might understand the 'hope' of their calling, the term δόξα in Eph. 1:18 probably carries an eschatological nuance (cf. Col. 3:4). Here too, then, Paul's suffering for his readers is their glory because his faithful proclamation of the gospel, in spite of the suffering that this faithfulness entails, has led to their salvation (1:13) and to a partial experience of the 'glory' that one day will be theirs in full.

This thought is only a slight variation on the theme in Paul's earlier letters that the suffering of Christians, and of Christian apostles in particular, will eventually give way to glory for those who suffer (2 Cor. 4:16–17; Rom. 8:18; cf. Phil. 3:21). It is a variation because here in Ephesians the one who suffers is not the one who is glorified. Instead, his suffering leads to the glorification of others. This development reappears, fully articulated, in Paul's last letter: 'Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer to the point of imprisonment as a criminal. But the word of God is not imprisoned. Because

[54] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (pp. 469–470). Baker Academic.
Hom. Eph. Chrysostom, *Homilies on Ephesians*
hom. homily
NPNF Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, edited by P. Schaff, 14 vols. (repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952–57)

of this I endure everything for the elect, that they might experience salvation in Christ Jesus with eternal glory [δόξα]' (2 Tim. 2:8–10).[55]"[56]

Constantine Campbell writes "But in what sense are Paul's afflictions for the gentiles *their glory*? While glory is mentioned several times in the epistle (1:6, 12, 14, 17, 18; 3:13, 16, 21; 5:27), only two other instances relate glory directly to believers. In 1:18, Paul prays that believers might know 'the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints.' While the glorious inheritance belongs to God (it is "his"), it is manifested "in" or among the saints (see the commentary on 1:18). Similarly, 3:21 ascribes glory to God 'in the church' (and in Christ Jesus). These two references show that the glory that belongs to God and Christ is displayed and experienced through the church. In 3:13, however, glory is described as belonging to believers themselves: it is 'your glory.'[57] Given the observation above, this reference to believers' glory may refer to the glory of God and Christ as it is reflected in and through the church. It is 'your glory' in the sense that the church manifests the glory of God. On the other hand, 'your glory' could also be understood as referring directly to believers' *own* glory. While this concept is nowhere else attested in Ephesians, Col 3:4 refers to believers appearing with Christ in glory when he appears. This implies that believers will participate in the glory of Christ, thus experiencing glorification themselves—through him.[58] Such an idea may best explain the concise phrase, 'your glory,' since the context does not obviously support the alternative (i.e., God's glory manifested in the church). If this sense is accepted, Paul means that his afflictions help to produce his readers' glorification with Christ.[59] By declaring the mystery of Christ to the gentiles, Paul gives them the opportunity to know the riches of Christ. In so doing, Paul contributes to their future glory in Christ (cf. 2 Tim 2:10).[60] He is God's chosen vehicle for their encounter with Christ. As such, his afflictions for them offers no reason for discouragement, since 'they are your glory.'"[61]

In Ephesians 3:13, the third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) pertains to making some event possible. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is nominative feminine singular form of the qualitative relative pronoun *hostis* (ὅστις), which describes the unique character of Paul's undeserved suffering. The noun *doxa* (δόξα) functions as a predicate nominative, which means that it is making an assertion about the adversities Paul was experiencing. Namely, it made possible the Gentile Christian community being

[55] Cf. Thompson 1960: 188; Lincoln 1990: 192; Best 1998: 332; O'Brien 1999: 250–52. Because this development from the undisputed letters is so natural, it should not figure in arguments about the letter's authorship (so, correctly, Best 1998: 332).
[56] Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 222). Baker Academic.
[57] δόξα ὑμῶν.
[58] Campbell, *Paul and the Hope of Glory*, 108–9.
[59] Campbell, *Paul and the Hope of Glory*, 272.
[60] Thielman, 222.
[61] Campbell, C. R. (2023). *The Letter to the Ephesians* (D. A. Carson, Ed.; pp. 147–148). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

able to experience honor, recognition and esteem from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat evaluation of the church and during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this verb *eimi* (εἰμί) expresses the idea that Paul's adversities, which were the result of being faithful in fulfilling his ministry to the Gentile Christian community, "made it possible for" the Gentile Christian community to be able to experience honor, recognition and esteem from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat evaluation of the church and during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

The genitive second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) appears a second time in Ephesians 3:13 and once again the referent this word is the recipients of the Ephesian epistle and specifically the Gentile Christian community living in the Roman province of Asia. As was the first time the word appears in this verse, it means "each and every one of you" because it is again not only referring to the recipients of this epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The latter emphasizes that Paul adversities made it possible for "each one" of the recipients of this letter to receive honor, recognition and esteem from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat and during His millennial reign.

Most translations and expositors interpret the genitive second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) as functioning as a possessive genitive, which takes place when the substantive in the genitive possesses the thing to which it stands related. Here the word stands related to the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *doxa* (δόξα). Therefore, the former indicates that this glory is the possession of the members of the Gentile Christian community.

However, this author believes that the genitive second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) functions as an objective genitive, which takes place when the genitive substantive receives the action implicit in the head noun, which in our context is the noun *doxa* (δόξα). Therefore, with this type of genitive, the latter can be converted into its verbal form, namely *doxazō* (δοξάζω), which means "to glorify, to honor." Thus, the genitive second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ) receives the action of the verbal idea implicit in the noun *doxa* (δόξα). Therefore, this would indicate that Paul's adversities due to the fulfillment of his ministry to the Gentile Christian community made it possible for each member of this community to receive the action of being glorified in the sense of honored by the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat and during His millennial reign.

Therefore, Ephesians 3:13 is an apodosis of a first class condition which indicates the assumption of truth for the sake of argument and presents a strong inference from the protasis of this first class condition, which appears in Ephesians 3:2-12, and asserts that Paul's stewardship, which originated from the Father's grace policy, was given to him for the benefit of each one of the recipients of this epistle. Paul is making a request of the Gentile Christian community living in the Roman province

of Asia to not be discouraged because of his adversities on behalf of each one of them and in particular his unjust Roman imprisonment. The reason for this request is that these adversities, which are of such unique character, make it possible for the members of this community to receive glory or honor from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church and during His millennial reign.

E. Y. Mullins writes "My tribulations for you are your glory; therefore, be not discouraged on their account. 'Your glory' here might mean that his tribulations would result in their greater glory. More likely, however, he means that the causes which have brought tribulation to him, namely: the fleshly opposition of men, and the hostility of the world, do but bring into greater prominence their own spiritual life to which his ministry was devoted. It spoke the highest things for their spiritual life when its furtherance was secured by his intense sufferings."[62]

Therefore, Paul is revealing here in Ephesians 3:13 that there is a purpose for his suffering undeservedly as a result of being faithful in his ministry to the Gentile Christian community. In fact, it is actually a blessing not only to him but the Gentile Christian community. These Gentile church age believers residing in the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia were being blessed because Paul's teaching and in particular obedience to his teaching would result in them being honored by the Lord Jesus Christ. Their continued faithfulness in obeying Paul's apostolic teaching would result in them receiving rewards from the Lord Jesus Christ for faithful service and growing up spiritually and thus executing the Father's will to become like Him. They would also receive honor during the Lord's millennial reign as a result of this faithfulness because Revelation 2:26 teaches that those who overcome during the church age will receive positions of authority in Christ's millennial government. Paul would never have suffered this imprisonment if it wasn't for the fact that he was faithful in carrying out this ministry to the Gentile Christian community.

Tony Merida writes "Verse 13 speaks of the loving, pastoral heart of Paul. He is the one in prison, yet he appears to want to set the people's minds at ease. He tells his readers/hearers that they should not be overly discouraged by his situation. He reminds them of the big picture. His suffering 'hastens the second coming of Christ, which will lead to their glorification' (Arnold, *Ephesians*, 199). Paul does not want the church to be downhearted, and he wants them to see that his suffering is part of God's grand plan for the end of the age (cf. Col 1:24).

In this we see Paul's amazing care for people and his pastoral skill pointing people to the glory that will be revealed. Suffering will give way to glory, and because of this, believers endure with hope. Keep this in mind, believer. And remind others that the best is yet to come. The King in all His splendor will arrive soon, and

[62] Mullins, E. Y. (1935). *Studies in Ephesians* (p. 83). The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

then this 'momentary light affliction' will seem as nothing in light of the 'eternal weight of glory' (2 Cor 4:17)."[63]

Water Baptism Versus Spirit Baptism

The Bible teaches that water baptism is emphatically not the means by which a person gets saved. The sinner is saved through faith alone in Christ alone (John 3:16-18; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16).

"Baptismal regeneration" is the teaching which contends that a sinner is regenerated by observing water baptism. It is taught by the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, some Pentecostal sects (notably the anti-trinitarian United Pentecostal Church and other "Jesus Only" groups), and pseudo-christian cult groups such as the Mormons. Baptismal regeneration is also the doctrinal stance of many teachers and preachers within the Restoration Movement, sometimes called Campbellism (from its founder, Alexander Campbell), whose members are mainly found in churches called Churches of Christ or Independent Christian Churches.

Proponents of baptismal regeneration argue that water baptism is an essential part of salvation because, in their view, it is in the act or ceremony of water baptism that we are born again.

The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Ephesians 4:5 state dogmatically that there is only one baptism that matters, Spirit baptism. Both passages teach that there is one Spirit, God the Holy Spirit and therefore, only one baptism.

In 1 Corinthians 1:10-17, Paul addresses the problem of divisions in the Corinthian church and he specifically mentions water baptism. Some believers made water baptism an issue, which resulted in divisions among believers in the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:10).

Paul was saying in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 that water baptism was a non-essential and he emphasizes the fact that Christ sent him to preach the gospel and not to baptize with water (1 Corinthians 1:17). The apostle emphasizes the importance of having the same mind, which refers to being unified in their doctrine (1 Corinthians 1:10). The Corinthians were occupied with non-essentials such as tongues and water baptism and not with Bible doctrine, which is the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit was defined by John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, as being a distinctive part of the ministry of Christ. He contrasted the baptism of water with the baptism in the Spirit.

[63] Merida, T. (2014). *Exalting jesus in ephesians* (p. 72). Holman Reference.

Mathew 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (NASB95)

Mark 1:8 "I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (NASB95)

Luke 3:16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." (NASB95)

John 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" (NASB95)

In Romans 6, it is obvious that the context is being placed into Christ and the passage dwells on the believer's identification with Christ, with His death, and with His resurrection. In this passage, the believer is not baptized into water, but into the death of Christ or more accurately identified with Christ in His death.

Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (NASB95)

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you -- not the removal of dirt from

the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience -- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

Notice what Peter says as he states that it is not water that is used in baptism, it is the Spirit who is poured out and regenerates the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior. It is also significant that Jesus never performed water baptism on anyone. If water baptism was essential to salvation, why wasn't the Lord practicing it?

John 4:1 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. 3 When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee." (NIV)

Water baptism was a teaching aid to instruct believers that when they believed in Christ, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Christ identifying them with Christ in His death and resurrection. When the believer was dipped underneath the water, this portrayed the reality that the Holy Spirit identified them with Christ in His death and when they were taken up out of the water, this portrayed that they were identified with Christ in His resurrection.

When the believer was dipped underneath the water, this portrayed that he was now dead to the cosmic system of Satan, the Law and the old sin nature and when he was taken up out of the water, this portrayed the fact that he was now a new creation and was to walk in newness of life. Baptism meant a clean break with the past and the old creation marred by sin and ruled by Satan.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

Characteristics of the baptism of the Spirit: (1) Invisible. (2) Eternal in Nature. (3) Not related to any form of human merit or works. (4) Obtained at the moment the sinner is declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. (5) Performed by God the Holy Spirit and not by men. (6) Not water baptism. (7) Not felt. (8) Not an experience. (9) Not an external activity. (10) Not speaking in tongues. (11) Not emotion. (12) Can't be improved upon.

There is a passage in Matthew 28:19-20 which is used by churches throughout history as documentation to support the observance of the ritual of water baptism. This is the only passage in the Gospels where our Lord mentions water baptism and it is not even a command. So, the question we must ask ourselves is that should we observe this ritual of water baptism as we do the Lord's Table. Did our Lord command it of His disciples?

Matthew 28:16 But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and

the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (NASB95)

"**Go**" is the nominative masculine plural aorist passive participle form of the verb *poreuomai* (πορεύομαι), which means "to depart, to travel, to journey" since it pertains to moving away from a reference point. The word pertains to moving over an area and often with the point of departure or destination specified. It is used of traveling a considerable distance and going from one destination to another. Therefore, the word is used here of the disciples of Jesus Christ traveling from place to place.

"**Make disciples**" is the second person plural aorist active imperative form of the verb *mathēteuō* (μαθητεύω) which means "to cause someone to become a disciple or follower of,[64] to cause one to be a pupil."[65] Therefore, in Matthew 28:19, this verb denotes the disciples of Jesus Christ causing sinners to become their disciples and thus disciples of Jesus Christ. It not only speaks of the Lord's disciples evangelizing unregenerate sinners who would become disciples of Jesus Christ by trusting in Him as Savior but also instructing them with regards to proper Christian conduct after being declared justified through faith in Christ.

In Jesus' day, those who sat under the teaching of a *didaskalos* were called *mathetes*, "disciples." The word was used of students who lived in close fellowship with their teacher, they traveled with him, ate with him, and attended festive occasions with him. The students of a teacher were characterized by complete submission to the authority of the teacher, as well as by a devotion to him which was to surpass devotion to father or mother, and which displayed itself in service to the teacher.

The teaching or learning method was to sit at the feet of the teacher listening to him. It also involved engaging in a question and answer encounter with the teacher as well as observing the actions of the teacher, especially how he conducted himself in regard to the Law or solved problems of conduct through his knowledge of Law and tradition. After the strenuous studies, the student was ordained through the laying on of hands and received the right to be called Rabbi. He then had the responsibility to pass on that which he had learned from his teacher and to make disciples himself.

John the Baptist had his disciples (Matt. 9:14), the Pharisees had theirs (Matt. 22:16), even Paul had his (Acts 9:25), and of course, the Lord had many disciples (Luke 6:17). A New Testament disciple is one who is under biblical instruction. The Lord expected discipleship to involve total commitment if one was going to be able

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[64] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 470). New York: United Bible Societies.

[65] Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 609). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

to fully follow through as a disciple but being a disciple and being a believer are not one and the same. Salvation is a free gift but being a disciple means counting the costs. All believers should be disciples, but not all believers actually follow through as disciples.

Wiersbe writes "The term 'disciples' was the most popular name for the early believers. Being a disciple meant more than being a convert or a church member. *Apprentice* might be an equivalent term. A disciple attached himself to a teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. He learned, not simply by listening, but also by doing. Our Lord called twelve disciples and taught them so that they might be able to teach others (Mark 3:13ff). A disciple, then, is one who has believed on Jesus Christ and expressed this faith by being baptized. He remains in the fellowship of the believers that he might be taught the truths of the faith (Acts 2:41–47). He is then able to go out and win others and teach them. This was the pattern of the New Testament church (2 Tim. 2:1–2). In many respects, we have departed from this pattern. In most churches, the congregation pays the pastor to preach, win the lost, and build up the saved—while the church members function as cheerleaders (if they are enthusiastic) or spectators. The 'converts' are won, baptized, and given the right hand of fellowship, then they join the other spectators. How much faster our churches would grow, and how much stronger and happier our church members would be, if each one were discipling another believer. The only way a local church can 'be fruitful and multiply' (instead of growing by "additions") is with a systematic discipleship program. This is the responsibility of *every* believer, and not just a small group who have been 'called to go.'"[66]

"**Baptizing**" is the nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *baptizomai* (βαπτίζομαι), which means "to employ water in a religious ceremony designed to symbolize purification and initiation on the basis of repentance,[67] to use water in a rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship w. God."[68] Water baptism was a public declaration of the sinner justified through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ regarding their new life in Christ.

Leon Morris writes "Jesus goes on to speak of baptizing these new disciples 'in[69] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'[70] This expression has caused endless controversy among exegetes. There are two separate problems, the

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[66] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, pp. 107–108). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

[67] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 536). New York: United Bible Societies.

[68] Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 164). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

[69] Turner insists that εἰς here has its proper sense and is not to be taken as equivalent to ἐν; it refers to "baptism *into* the name, i.e. a relationship as the goal of baptism" (M, III, p. 255).

[70] C. K. Barrett points out that Eusebius quotes the passage in the form "Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all the Gentiles in my name," which omits the reference to baptism and to the Trinitarian formula. But he points out that no trace of this reading is found in any MS of Matthew or indeed in any writing other than that of Eusebius. He finds it "very difficult to believe that if this (the short reading) is what Matthew wrote, not one copy of his unaltered MS succeeded in escaping revision" (*The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* [London, 1947], p. 103).

institution of baptism as a rite of initiation for disciples, and the use of the Trinitarian formula. On the former question it is pointed out that Jesus did not habitually engage in baptism as John the Baptist, for example, did. Throughout his ministry he did not call on his followers to baptize those who wished to become adherents. From this it is argued that baptism was a rite established by the church, and the command to continue it is viewed as having been read back onto the lips of Jesus. But against this is the fact that baptism was part of church life from the very first. On the Day of Pentecost Peter preached to the crowd in Jerusalem, and when they asked, 'What shall we do, brother men?' he responded without consultation and without hesitation, 'Repent and be baptized' (Acts 2:37–38). We have no knowledge of a time when the church was without baptism or unsure of baptism. It is difficult to explain this apart from a definite command of Jesus."[71]

"**Teaching**" is the nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *didaskō* (διδάσκω), which means, "to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information in a public assembly."

The verb *didaskō* in the Greek New Testament means, "to provide instruction in the Word of God in a local public assembly" (Matthew 4:23; John 18:20; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Colossians 1:28-29; 3:16). In the Gospels, the verb was used of the Lord Jesus Christ "educating, teaching and instructing" His disciples in regard to the kingdom of God. Our Lord was often addressed as the *didaskalos*, "teacher," or Rabbi (Matt. 8:19; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25; John 3:2; 20:16).

The verb *didaskō* is used of the Lord Jesus Christ's teaching ministry in which He was always teaching publicly whether in the Temple in Jerusalem, the synagogues or outside in the open air (Matt. 4:23, 5:2; 9:35; 11:1; 26:55; 28:20; Mark 1:21-22; 2:13; 4:1-2; 6:2, 6, 34; 8:31; 9:31; 10:1; 11:17; 12:35; 14:49; Luke 4:15, 31; 5:3, 17; 6:6; 11:1; 13:10, 22; 19:47; 20:1; 21:37; 23:5; John 6:59; 7:14, 28; 8:2, 20; 18:20; Acts 1:1).

In Matthew 28:20, the verb *didaskō* means "to teach, instruct" and speaks of "providing authoritative instruction" in the Word of God in a formal setting, namely the public worship service. The verb denotes the preservation and communication of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ is commanding His disciples to authoritatively teach the Word of God to those who trust in Him as Savior.

The aorist tense of this verb *poreuomai* is an ingressive aorist which is used to stress the beginning of an action or entrance into a state. Here it emphasizes the disciples of Jesus Christ entering into the activity of traveling from place to place for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

[71] Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 747). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

The participle form of this verb *poreuomai* is an attendant circumstance participle which is used to communicate an action that is coordinate the finite verb. This type of participle is not dependent because it is translated like a verb. However, it is semantically dependent because it cannot exist without the main verb. Therefore, this type of participle "piggy-backs" on the mood of the main verb. It also expresses a prerequisite before the action of the main verb can occur and has something of an ingressive force to it. So here in Matthew 28:19, the participle form of the verb *poreuomai* is coordinate with the second person plural aorist active imperative form of the verb *matheteuo* expressing a prerequisite action before the disciples of Jesus Christ can fulfill the command to make disciples.

The NET Bible has the following note, they write "According to *ExSyn* 645 the first participle (πορευθέντες, *poreuthentes*, "Go") fits the typical structural pattern for the attendant circumstance participle (aorist participle preceding aorist main verb, with the mood of the main verb usually imperative or indicative) and thus picks up the mood (imperative in this case) from the main verb (μαθητεύσατε, *mathēteusate*, "make disciples"). This means that semantically the action of 'going' is commanded, just as 'making disciples' is. As for the two participles that follow the main verb (βαπτίζοντες, *baptizontes*, "baptizing"; and διδάσκοντες, *didaskontes*, "teaching"), these do not fit the normal pattern for attendant circumstance participles, since they are present participles and follow the aorist main verb. However, some interpreters do see them as carrying additional imperative force in context. Others regard them as means, manner, or even result."[72]

Dan Wallace writes "As for the Greek, it is true that the word translated 'go' is a participle. But it is not a present participle, which is the one that would be required if the meaning were 'as you are going.' It is an aorist participle, πορευθέντες (*poreuthentes*). As such, it hardly means 'as you are going' or 'while you are going.' The basic idea would be 'after you have gone,' and as such would presuppose that one would have gone forth before making disciples. But in collocation with certain kinds of verbs this basic meaning is altered. When an aorist participle is followed by an aorist imperative in narrative literature, it almost invariably piggy-backs on the force of the imperative. That is, it is translated like an imperative because the author is trying to communicate a command. A great illustration of this is found in Matt 2.13-14: "'Get up and take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to look for the child to kill him.' Then he got up and took the child and his mother during the night and fled to Egypt." In v. 13, 'Get up and take' is a translation of an aorist participle followed by an aorist imperative. That the reader is to understand that this was a dual command is seen in the fact that Joseph got up *during the night* and *fled* to Egypt. The urgency was not in taking

n n ExSyn Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament.

[72] Biblical Studies Press. (2005). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

Jesus and Mary only; it was in getting up quickly, then taking the child and his mother out of Bethlehem. The construction in which the participle and verb combine so that the participle borrows from the mood of the main verb is known as *attendant circumstance.* With the same participle as is found in Matt 28.19, we see this idea repeated elsewhere in Matthew. Here are all of the passages in Matthew of the aorist participle of *poreuomai* followed by an aorist imperative (each time the translation of the participle is italicized): Matt 2.8: "*Go* and look carefully for the child." Matt 9.13: "*Go* and learn what this means." Matt 11.4: "*Go* and tell John what you hear and see." Matt 17.27: "*Go* to the lake and throw out a hook" Matt 28.7: "*Go* quickly and tell his disciples" Matt 28.19: "*Go* and make disciples" Matthew 9.13 even has both the same participle and the same imperative as Matt 28.19. What you will notice is that in every instance the *main* idea is what the imperative says (*look* carefully, *learn*, tell John, *throw out* a hook, *tell* his disciples). But the participle is *never* to be taken in a casual sense of 'as you are going.' However, when the present participle of *poreuomai* is used, the idea of 'as you are going' is indeed found. Here are all the references in Matthew (with the translation of the participle in italics): Matt 10.7: "*As you go*, preach this message" Matt 11.7: "*While they were going away*, Jesus began…" Matt 28.11: "*While they were going*, some of the guard went into the city…" Check any English translation. They should all tell the same story. If Matthew had wanted to say 'as you are going, make disciples' he would have used the present participle of *poreuomai* instead of the aorist. In every other instance when the aorist participle is followed by an imperative in Matthew, the force of the participle is a command. However, you should also notice that the command to go is a *necessary prerequisite* for fulfilling the main injunction in the sentence. It cannot be dispensed with, but neither is it the main point. This is why Greek uses the participle instead of two imperatives: the second imperative is almost invariably the main point, while the aorist participle is the necessary prerequisite. For example, Peter could not throw a hook in the lake until he went to the lake (Matt 17.27); the women could not tell Jesus' disciples that he had been raised from the dead until they went (Matt 28.7). How does this relate to the Great Commission? Essentially, it means that the apostles *must go before they could make disciples.*"[73]

The aorist imperative form of the verb *matheteuo* is an ingressive aorist imperative which emphasizes the beginning of an action which the context usually makes clear is not a momentary action. Therefore, it expresses the idea of the disciples of Jesus Christ beginning to perform the action of making disciples. This is not a constative aorist imperative which emphasizes the solemnity and urgency of the action and is used in general precepts since this type of aorist imperative is used often in commands in which the action has been going on. Up to this point in

[73] Dan Wallace, The Great Commission or the Great Suggestion? https://danielbwallace.com/

Matthew, the disciples of Jesus had not been obeying this command since this was the first time they had received it.

J. Hampton Keathley commenting the writes "Why this construction? Why not use two regular imperatives? Is it just an idiom without significance? First, the participle with the main verb is used in order to stress that there is one primary objective—making disciples. Making disciples is the core or heart of the commission. Second, the use of the participle shows the action of the participle is closely connected or vitally related to the main verb. It proposes the necessary way to fulfill the main verb. Without going, the command to make disciples is impossible, especially when it involves all nations. Going is not a secondary option. You don't catch fish in a barrel. We must do something that puts us in contact with people so we can win them to Christ and begin the process of making disciples. The going involves anything we do from hosting outreach Bible studies, getting acquainted with neighbors, or by crossing oceans to take the gospel to lost tribes. Both words, 'go' and 'make disciples' are in aorist tense which, in Greek, makes the action definite and urgent. The idea is 'go and perform your calling.'"[74]

The present tense of the verb *baptizomai* is a customary present which is used to signal either an action that regularly occurs or an ongoing state. Here the former is in view expressing the idea that the Lord wants His disciples to make it their habit of baptizing in water those who trust in Him as Savior.

The participle form of this verb is a participle of means which indicates the means by which the action of its controlling verb is accomplished. This would indicate that the Lord wanted His disciples to make disciples "by means of" baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The present tense of the verb *didaskō* is also customary present expressing the idea that the Lord wants His disciples make it their habit of teaching those who trust in Him as Savior all that He had commanded them.

The participle form of this verb is also a participle of means which would indicate that the Lord wanted His disciples to make disciples "by means of" teaching them all that He had commanded them.

Charles Ryrie writes "Baptizing is a single act; teaching is a continuous process. Disciples have to be baptized (an evidence of salvation—therefore, one may say that disciples must first be saved); then they have to be taught over and over to obey (observe all things). In New Testament times, baptism served as one of the clearest proofs that a person had accepted Christ. Baptism was not entered into casually or routinely as is often the case today. Although it is clear in the New Testament that baptism does not save, to be baptized was to signify in no uncertain terms that one

[74] ABC's for Christian Growth: Laying the Foundation, Third Edition; by J. Hampton Keathley III; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1996, 1998, 1999.

had received Christ and was also associating himself with the Christian group, the church."[75]

So, the early church practiced water baptism in obedience to the Lord's command in Matthew 28:19. In every recorded instance in Acts after trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior, the believer was baptized (Acts 2:41; 8:12-13, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5).

Therefore, it is clear from our study of Matthew 28:19-20 that our Lord commanded His disciples to observe the practice of water baptism. However, it was not to be a means of salvation but rather it was to be one of the means, along with teaching, in which to make disciples of Jesus Christ, those who have been declared justified through faith in Him.

But there is a problem with this since it would appear in several passages that water baptism was not practiced by our Lord and was not always practiced by the apostles themselves. John 4:2 reveals that the Lord Himself never personally baptized anyone in water but rather His disciples baptized people. Furthermore, it would appear from several of Paul's statements in 1 and 2 Corinthians that he followed the Lord's practice by not personally baptizing people upon their acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. In 1 Corinthians 4:15, Paul states that he became the spiritual father of the Corinthian believers through the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 9:1, he says that they are his work in the Lord. Then, in 1 Corinthians 15:1, he states that they accepted the gospel which he proclaimed to them. In 2 Corinthians 11:2, he says that he betrothed them to one husband, Jesus Christ. Lastly, in 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, Paul says he baptized none of the Corinthians except for Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus. He asserts that Christ did not send him to baptize but to preach the gospel.

From these statements, it would appear Paul did not personally baptize everyone in the Corinthian Christian community when they trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior which would seem to imply that he did not observe the practice except in a few instances. Thus, Paul did not observe water baptism as an ordinance. This leads to the question, should the church observe water baptism today? The answer is yes. The reason why Paul did not personally baptize the Corinthians when they became new converts to Christianity is that he followed the practice of the Lord Jesus who did not personally baptize anyone but rather delegated this responsibility to His disciples. Therefore, men such as Timothy and Titus would have baptized the Corinthians when they trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior on behalf of Paul and under his direction. Peter followed the same practice according to Acts 10:48 which teaches that he ordered Cornelius and his family to be baptized in water upon receiving Jesus Christ as their Savior through faith. Paul did not regard water

[75] Charles C. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL, 1989, p. 103.

baptism to be a sacrament or ordinance that required the administration of "apostolic hands."

Sanctification and the Baptism of the Spirit

The church age believer's "sanctification" is directly related to the baptism of the Spirit. "Sanctification" is a technical theological term for the believer who has been set apart through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of conversion in order to serve God exclusively and is accomplished in three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

Sanctification deals with conforming the believer to the holiness of God and reproducing it in the believer. At the moment of the moment the believer was declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ, the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit caused the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, His spiritual and physical death, His burial, resurrection and session. It also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The baptism of the Spirit results in positional sanctification and the potential to experience sanctification in time and the guarantee of perfective sanctification at the resurrection of the church.

By positional, I mean that God views the believer as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ since at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit placed the believer in union with Christ, identifying him with Christ's crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1).

"Positional sanctification" is the believer's "entrance" into the plan of God for the church age resulting in eternal security as well as two categories of positional truth (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Ephesians 5:26-27; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10; Acts 20:32; 26:18; Romans 6:3, 8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).

"Retroactive" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His death and burial (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:12). In other words, when Christ, died God considers the believer to have died with Him.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (NASB95)

1 Corinthians 1:30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (NASB95)

"Current" positional truth is the church age believer's identification with Christ in His resurrection, ascension and session (See Ephesians 2:4-6; Colossians 3:1-4). In other words, when Christ was raised and seated at the right hand of the Father, the Father considers the believer to have been raised and seated with Christ as well.

"Positional sanctification": (1) What God has done for the church age believer. (2) His viewpoint of the church age believer. (3) Sets up the potential to experience sanctification in time. (4) Provides the believer with the guarantee of receiving a resurrection body.

"Experiential sanctification" is the function of the church age believer's spiritual life in time through obedience to the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God (John 17:17; Romans 6:19, 22; 2 Timothy 2:21; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7; 1 Timothy 2:15).

The will of the Father is for the believer to obey the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ, which constitutes experiencing sanctification.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. (NASB95)

"Experiential sanctification" is the post-salvation experience of the believer who is in fellowship with God by confessing any known sin to the Father when necessary followed by obedience to the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the Word of God.

Experiential sanctification is only a *potential* since it is contingent upon the church age believer responding to what God has done for him at the moment of conversion, therefore, only believers who are obedient to the Word of God will experience sanctification in time.

The believer who experiences sanctification is walking in "**newness of life**" and he does this by obeying the teaching of the Word of God, which states that the believer has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ and which teaching is inspired by the Holy Spirit (See Romans 6).

The believer can experience this victory and deliverance by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17). This is what Paul did.

The believer's faith in the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ will express itself in obedience, which results in the believer experiencing sanctification.

The believer who appropriates by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died and buried with Christ will experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old sin nature.

Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (NASB95)

The believer is to consider the members of his body to be dead to these lust patterns of the old sin nature since they were crucified at the cross and he has died with Christ.

Colossians 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified so that the believer might not live for the lusts of the old sin nature but for the will of God (See 1 Peter 4:1-3).

Prior to salvation, the believer was enslaved to the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature since he was under real spiritual death meaning he had no capacity to experience fellowship with God (See Ephesians 2:1-3).

At the moment of conversion, through the baptism of the Spirit, the omnipotence of the Spirit identified the believer with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session (See Romans 6:4-7; Ephesians 2:4-6).

Also, at the moment of conversion, God gave the believer a new divine nature that gives him the capacity to experience deliverance from the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature (See 2 Peter 1:4).

Galatians 3:27 For all of you who were identified with Christ have clothed yourselves with the nature of Christ. (Author's translation)

1 Corinthians 15:45 So also it is written, "'The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (NASB95)

2 Peter 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. (NASB95)

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (NASB95)

The new Christ nature that indwells every believer is the holiness of God and is perfectly holy just as Christ is and thus cannot sin. Believers sin because they choose to obey the temptations of the old sin nature and the lies of Satan's cosmic system. The new Christ nature provides the believer the capacity to experience the holiness

of God in his life and Christ-likeness is the production or the result of having a lifestyle of living in the new Christ nature.

The new Christ nature functions when the believer is obedient to the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God and constitutes putting on the new man or the new self or new nature.

Ephesians 4:24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. (NASB95)

Fruit bearing, i.e., Christ-like character is the result of experiencing the holiness of God, which is synonymous with "experiential sanctification" since the believer cannot experience fellowship with a holy God unless he himself is holy.

Sanctification is experiencing the holiness of God or in other words manifesting the character of God through one's thoughts, words and actions. Since the believer has been crucified with Christ and has died with Him, he is commanded to consider himself dead to the sin nature.

Romans 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

Therefore, since the believer has been crucified, died and buried with Christ and has been raised and seated with Him and has been given a new divine nature, he is commanded to abstain from the various lust patterns of the old sin nature, which wage war against the believer's soul and is to flee them.

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. (NASB95)

2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (NASB95)

The believer is prohibited from obeying the lust patterns of the old Adamic sin nature and is commanded to put on the nature of Christ, which is accomplished by obeying the Word of Christ and this constitutes walking by means of the Spirit (See Romans 6:12-13; 13:14; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 4:17-24).

The believer sins because he chooses to disobey the teaching of the Word of God that his sin nature was crucified with Christ at the Cross and thus allows the sin nature to control and influence his soul so that he produces mental, verbal and overt acts of sin (See James 1:13-15).

The believer's sin nature will not be totally eradicated until he physically dies or when the rapture of the church takes place when the believer will receive a resurrection body to replace the body he now has, which contains the old sin nature (See 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Philippians 3:20-21).

In the meantime, the believer has a battle raging within him since he has two natures, which are diametrically opposed to one another and he must choose between the two since the old sin nature wars against the Spirit.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (NASB95)

Having died with Christ and being raised with Christ and possessing the new Christ-nature sets the Christian free from the old Adamic nature. We utilize the new Christ-nature by obeying the Word of God, which constitutes experiencing fellowship with God (1 John 2:3-5) and walking by means of the Spirit since the Spirit speaks to the believer through the Word of God.

Galatians 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (NASB95)

The believer loses fellowship through obeying the sin nature and committing personal sins. However, he is restored through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9).

1 John 1:9 If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing. (Author's translation)

This fellowship is maintained by bringing one's thoughts into obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ, which constitutes obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by means of the Spirit and Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul since both produce the same results.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not permit yourselves to get into the habit of being drunk with wine because that is non-sensical behavior but rather permit yourselves on a habitual basis to be influenced by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Therefore, obedience to the Word of God will enable the believer to experience fellowship with God, which is synonymous with experiencing sanctification.

1 John 2:5 But, whoever, at any time does observe conscientiously His Word, indeed, in this one, the love for the one and only God is accomplished. By means of this we can confirm that we are at this particular moment in fellowship with Him. (Author's translation)

This obedience constitutes loving the Lord.

John 14:15 If you love Me, you will observe conscientiously My commandments. (Author's translation)

So, this battle rages between the flesh, the sin nature and the Spirit. The believer's soul is a battleground. The battle in the soul is related to whether they will live for self in the old sin nature or live for God in the new nature. Paul relates this battle in his own life as a believer in Romans 7:14-25.

"Experiential" sanctification is experiencing the holiness or in other words manifesting the character of God through one's thoughts, words and actions (1 Peter 1:14-16).

"Perfective sanctification" is the perfection of the church age believer's spiritual life at the rapture, i.e., resurrection of the church, which is the completion of the plan of God for the church age believer (1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Galatians 6:8; 1 Peter 5:10; John 6:40). It is the *guarantee* of a resurrection body and will be experienced by every believer regardless of their response in time to what God has done for them at salvation.

All three stages of sanctification refer to the process of conforming the believer into the image of Jesus Christ, which is the Father's plan from eternity past (Romans 8:28-30).

Indwelling of the Spirit

The next ministry we will look at which is performed by the Holy Spirit at the believer's justification is the "indwelling" of the Spirit (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16). The main purpose for the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit is to provide a temple for the Indwelling of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Shekinah Glory.

In the Old Testament, He dwelt in the Tabernacle in Israel. Or in a cloud or a pillar of fire. But here in the church age, He indwells the body of every believer. The body of the church age believer is now a temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16). The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit provides a base of operations for the use of divine omnipotence. We execute the Father's plan by using divine omnipotence.

God the Holy Spirit provides a base whereby His power is available so that we can use it to execute the Father's plan for our lives. We can't execute the Father's plan apart from the divine omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is temporary for we can lose the filling of the Spirit through sinning. We regain it by using 1 John 1:9. We never lose the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit is permanent in the New Testament. The teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit is very important because without it we would never be able to understand Bible Doctrine, which is the mind of Christ. God the Holy Spirit teaches us about the mind of Christ. God the Holy Spirit is our true Teacher. God the Holy Spirit is our Mentor (John 14:26; 16:12-14; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; 1 John 2:27).

The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit provides a guarantee of 2 categories of spirituality: (1) The filling of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) (2) Walking by means of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16).

Sealing of the Spirit

At the moment of the believer's justification, God the Holy Spirit puts His invisible stamp on the believer, which guarantees salvation, which is called the "sealing" ministry of the Holy Spirit. It emphasizes our eternal security, which we have in Christ. At the moment the sinner believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior, God the Holy Spirit put His signature guarantee on them. Just as Sunkist puts its stamp on its oranges, God the Holy Spirit puts His stamp on the child of God. The Greek word for "**sealed**" is *sphagizo*, which means, "to mark with a seal as a means of identification." In the ancient world, seals: (1) Guaranteed transactions (2) Indicated ownership (3) Authenticated invoices (4) Contracts (5) Laws (6) Orders.

God the Holy Spirit puts His mark on the believer at the moment of justification. This mark not only denotes ownership but also carries with it the protection of the owner. God not only owns the believer in Jesus Christ at the moment of justification, but He is also protection their protection. This sealing ministry of God the Holy Spirit is important because it guarantees the believer's salvation.

The sealing ministry of the Spirit is mentioned by Paul in 2 Corinthians 1:22.

2 Corinthians 1:21 But it is God who establishes us together with you in Christ and who anointed us, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment. (NET)

Sealing of the Spirit in Ephesians 1:13

The sealing ministry of the Spirit is also mentioned in Ephesians 1:13.

Ephesians 1:3 The God, namely the Father of the Lord ruling over us, who is Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise. Namely, because He is the one who has blessed each and every one of us by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. 4 For He chose each and every one of us for His own purpose because of Him alone before creation in order that each and every one of us would be holy as well as uncensurable in His judgment. 5 He did this by predestinating each and every one of us for the purpose of adoption as sons because of His love through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will. 6 This was for the purpose of praising His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on each and every one of us because of the one who is divinely loved. 7 Because of whom, each one of us are experiencing that which is the redemption through His blood, namely the forgiveness of our transgressions according to His infinite grace. 8 This He provided in abundance for the benefit of each and every one of us because of the exercise of a wisdom, which is absolute and divine in nature resulting in the manifestation of an insight, which is absolute and divine in nature. 9 He did this

by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of each and every one of us according to His pleasure, which He planned beforehand because of our faith in and union and identification with Himself. 10 This was for the dispensation which brings to completion the various periods of history. Namely, to unite for the benefit of Himself each and every animate and inanimate object in the sphere of the sovereign authority of the person of the one and only Christ. Specifically, to unite for the benefit of Himself those things in the heavens as well as those things on the earth in the sphere of the sovereign authority of Himself. 11 Because of whom, each and every one of us has been claimed as a possession because of having been predestinated according to the predetermined plan. Namely, the one who is causing each and every animate and inanimate object to function according to His purpose, that is, His sovereign will 12 in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people. Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ for the purpose of praising His glory. 13 Correspondingly, because of whom, each and every one of you were sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation. Specifically, because each one of you believed in Him. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 1:13 is composed of a declarative statement *esphragisthēte tō pneumati tēs epangelias tō hagiō* (ἐσφραγίσθητε τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ), "**each and every one of you were sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy**." It is modified by the prepositional phrase *En hō* (Ἐν ᾧ), "**because of whom**," which stands in the emphatic position of the sentence. It is also modified by a participial clause and another prepositional phrase. The second prepositional phrase *en hō pisteusantes* (ἐν ᾧ πιστεύσαντες), "**Specifically, because of having believed in Him**" explains in greater detail the participial clause *hymeis akousantes ton logon tēs alētheias, to euangelion tēs sōtērias hymōn* (ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν), "**because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation**."

Therefore, in Ephesians 1:13, the apostle Paul asserts that because of Jesus Christ and specifically, because of the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Him, each and every church age believer was sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy. He then employs a participial clause and a second prepositional phrase, which explain specifically

what Paul means by the first prepositional phrase. They make explicit the reason why each and every church age believer was sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy. In other words, they explicitly state what Paul means that it was because of Christ that they were sealed by means of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy. The participial clause asserts that it was because they obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced their salvation. The second prepositional phrase explains in greater detail the participial clause and asserts that it was because of having believed in the Son as their Savior that the church age believer was sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy. Then, in Ephesians 1:14, Paul describes the Holy Spirit as the down payment of the church age believer's inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession for the praise of the Father's glory.

Therefore, Ephesians 1:13 appears to present three reasons why each and every church age believer was sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only Spirit, who was promised, who is holy. However, it is only presenting one, which is expressed by the prepositional phrase *En hō* (Ἐν ᾧ), which begins the verse and contains the figure of metonymy and speaks of the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ. The participial clause and the second prepositional phrase make explicit what is implied by this first prepositional phrase. The participial clause *hymeis akousantes ton logon tēs alētheias, to euangelion tēs sōtērias hymōn* (ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν) asserts that each and every one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced their salvation. The second prepositional phrase *en hō pisteusantes* (ἐν ᾧ πιστεύσαντες) explains in greater detail the participial clause and asserts that they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Therefore, the participial clause and the second prepositional phrase speak of the church age believer's justification through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior just as the first prepositional phrase does. At their justification, the Father placed them in union with His Son and identified them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand through the baptism of the Spirit (cf. Rom. 6; Col. 3:1-4; Eph. 2:4-6).

These assertions in Ephesians 1:13-14 correspond to the previous assertions, which appear in Ephesians 1:11-12, which discusses the work of the Son in time at the cross on behalf of the church age believer. Ephesians 1:12 continues the thought from Ephesians 1:11 and contains three prepositional phrases and a participial clause. The first prepositional phrase *eis to einai hēmas* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς), "**in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people**" modifies the first person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb

klēroō (κληρόω), "**each and every one of us has been claimed as a possession**," which appears in Ephesians 1:11. This prepositional phrase is also itself modified by the articular participial clause *tous proēlpikotas* (τοὺς προηλπικότας), "**Namely, those who are certain of possessing confident expectation of blessing**." This participial clause is then modified by the prepositional phrase *en tō Christō* (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ), "**because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ**." Lastly, the second prepositional phrase *eis epainon doxēs autou* (εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης αὐτοῦ), "**for the purpose of praising the Father's glory**," modifies the participial clause *tous proēlpikotas* (τοὺς προηλπικότας), "**Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing**" but also the first prepositional phrase *eis to einai hēmas* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς), "**in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people**."

We also noted in our study of Ephesians 1:11 that the first prepositional phrase *eis to einai hēmas* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς), "**in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people**" in this verse presents the purpose of the assertion in Ephesians 1:11 that the Father claiming each and every church age believer as His possession because of having predestinated them according to His predetermined plan. Therefore, this indicates that the Father claiming each and every church age believer was "for the purpose of" each and every church age believer belonging to a particular group of individuals. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the prepositional phrase *eis to einai hēmas* (εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς) is marking the purpose of the first person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of this verb *klēroō* (κληρόω). Therefore, this indicates that the Father claiming each and every church age believer was "for the purpose of" them belonging to a particular group of individuals. The first person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of this verb *klēroō* (κληρόω) in Ephesians 1:11 identifies them as those who have been claimed by the Father as His own possession because of the Father predestinating them according to His predetermine plan. The participial clause *tous proēlpikotas en tō Christō* (τοὺς προηλπικότας ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ) also identifies them as those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ.

We also noted in our study of Ephesians 1:12, that the second prepositional phrase *en tō Christō* (ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ), "**because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ**" is modifying the participial clause *tous proēlpikotas en tō Christō* (τοὺς προηλπικότας), "**Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing**." It presents the reason why the church age believer is the first to possess this confident expectation of blessing. It is because of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ they are the first to possess this confident expectation of blessing. This prepositional

phrase emphasizes that both Jewish and Gentile church age believers can be certain of possessing a confident expectation of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat because they will not receive these blessings because of their own merits. But rather, this prepositional phrase emphasizes that they will receive these blessings based upon the merits of the object of their faith at justification, Jesus Christ, as well as based upon the merits of their union and identification with Jesus Christ. Though, the church age believer does merit rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat, the basis of these rewards is Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. In other words, the only reason why the church age believer can merit rewards at the Bema Seat for faithful service is that their relationship to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is based upon the merits of the object of their faith at justification as well as their merits of their union and identification with Jesus Christ.

So therefore, a comparison of the assertions in Ephesians 1:11-12 with the ones in Ephesians 1:13-14 indicate that the correspondence is between the work of the Son and the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the church age believer. Specifically, the correspondence is between the church age believer being the Father's possession who possesses the confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ and the church age believer being sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. These assertions correspond with each other because the church age believer became the Father's possession who possesses the confident expectation of blessing when they were sealed with the Holy Spirit the moment the Father declared them justified through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Father identified them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13-14 completes the triadic pattern that appears in Ephesians 1:3-14. Ephesians 1:3-6 describe the Father's work in electing the church age believer in eternity past while Ephesians 1:7-12 describe the work of the Son in redeeming them at the cross and Ephesians 1:13-14 describe the work of the Holy Spirit in sealing them as the Father's possession at their justification.

As was the case n Ephesians 1:7 and 11, the prepositional phrase *En hō* (Ἐν ᾧ), "**because of whom**," which begins Ephesians 1:13, contains the figure of metonymy which means that the person of Christ is put for the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ. Therefore, it indicates that because of the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father, the church age believer was sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. In other words, the church age believer's faith in the Son at their justification as well as their

union and identification with Him was the reason why they were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

The noun *logos* (λόγος), "**the message**" refers to the content of the message that was communicated to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. Thus, it refers to the content of the gospel message that is directed to the non-Christian community. In other words, it refers to the content of the divine revelation, which was communicated by the apostles to the non-Christian community and is now recorded in the Greek New Testament.

The noun *alētheia* (ἀλήθεια), "**the truth**" refers to Paul's apostolic teaching and specifically it refers to his apostolic teaching which he communicated to the members of the non-Christian community. The word refers to the truth of God in an objective sense as a body of knowledge containing the revelation regarding the will of the Father for the non-Christian. It contains information regarding the consequences of the non-Christian obeying the gospel message by trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior. Therefore, the noun *alētheia* is a synonym for the gospel which expressed by the expression *to euangelion tēs sōtērias hymōn* (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν), "**the gospel of your salvation**" (NET).

Now, in Ephesians 1:13, the nominative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit**" not only refers to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle but also is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. Ephesians 2:11 identifies the recipients of this epistle as Gentile Christians. Therefore, the word is emphasizing that "each and every one of" the recipients of the Ephesian epistle who were Gentiles obeyed the gospel message, which is truth in contrast to those sinners who do not obey the gospel message.

The use of this personal pronoun *su* is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the subject. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

Here in Ephesians 1:13 it is used for emphasis as well as contrast. First, it is emphasizing that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle obeyed the gospel message, which is truth. Secondly, it is marking a contrast between the recipients of this epistle who obeyed the gospel message and the members of the non-Christian community who did not. It is also marking a contrast between these Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians, which Paul was of course.

In our study of Ephesians 1:11-12, we answered the question as to why does Paul switch from the first person plural to the second person plural and back again in Ephesians 1:3-14? Also, who is the referent of the first person plurals and the second

person plural? The former is translated “us” and “we,” while the latter is translated “you” but actually literally it means “all of you.”

Many expositors contend that the referent of the first person plurals in Ephesians 1:3-12 and 14 is Jewish believers and the Gentile believers are addressed with the second person plural in Ephesians 1:13. However, from the beginning of the Ephesian epistle, Paul makes no distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers. In Ephesians 1:1, he make no distinctions between Jewish and Gentile believers but simply addresses them both as “saints” as well as “faithful” in this verse. Then, in Ephesians 1:2, he addresses them with the second person plural form “all of you, you.” He does this very same thing in Ephesians 1:13. After addressing the recipients of this epistle in Ephesians 1:3-12 with the first person plurals, he then addresses them in Ephesians 1:13 with the second person plural. He then switches right back to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:14 to address the recipients of the letter.

So therefore, Paul is not employing an “editorial we” or “epistolary we” in these verses, which means that although, he is using the first person plural, he is referring to only himself in reality. He is also not using the “exclusive we,” which means that he is referring to himself and his associates (like Timothy) as distinct from the recipients of the letter.

If Paul is not making a distinction between Jewish and Gentile believers by switching from the first person plural to the second person plural on two occasions in this letter when addressing its recipients, then why is he doing so? This author believes that he employs the second person plural in Ephesians 1:2 but then switches to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:3-12 because he is simply attempting to identify with the recipients of the Ephesian epistle who were Gentile Christians. This is indicated by the fact that he addresses them as Gentiles in Ephesians 2:11-22 and he of course, was a Jewish Christian. When he makes this switch in Ephesians 1:13 and 14, it is for the same reason. In other words, he, as a Jewish believer, is demonstrating his solidarity with the Gentile Christian community.

Though Paul never mentions any specific problem or problems taking place within the Christian community in this epistle, it can be inferred from the contents of the letter that he was concerned that the Christian community remained united experientially through practice of the command to love one another. This is indicated by the fact that Paul opens the practical application of his teaching in the first three chapters by commanding the recipients of the letter to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:3. This would be accomplished by living in a manner worthy of their calling and by practicing humility, gentleness, patience and tolerance of one another through the practice of the command to love one another, which Paul instructs them to do in Ephesians 4:1-2. In fact, in Ephesians 2:11-22, he emphasizes this unity that exists among Jewish and Gentile believers in a positional

sense through the baptism of the Spirit, which took place at the moment of justification.

Unity is the first major overriding theme in the Ephesian epistle because as we noted, this is the purpose of the letter. Again, Paul was concerned that the Christian community remained united experientially through practice of the command to love one another. They were unified in a positional sense through their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Consequently, this set up the guarantee of being united in a perfective sense when they receive their resurrection bodies at the rapture or resurrection of the church. This unity in a positional sense is taught in the first three chapters of the epistle. This unity positionally sets up the potential to experience this unity when interacting with each other, which is accomplished through obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He loved them. In fact, Paul makes a point of mentioned this unity in a positional sense in relation to Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians interaction with each other. They would experience that which was true of them positionally through the practice of the command to love one another. Consequently, they would reflect the character and nature of the Trinity, who are united eternally since this love is a part of their character and nature.

Therefore, in Ephesians 1:3-14, when Paul employs the first person plural to address the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, he is using an "inclusive we," which refers to both himself as the author and the recipients of the letter. By switching from the second person plural to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:2-12 and then back again to the second person plural to the first person plural in Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul, as a Jewish believer, it attempting to identify with Gentile Christians. In other words, he is expressing his solidarity and promote unity among Jews and Gentiles in the Christian community in the Roman province of Asia.

In Ephesians 1:13, the verb *akouō* (ἀκούω), "**because each and every one of you obeyed**" refers to the non-Christian responding to the gospel message by not only listening to it but also obeying it by exercising faith in Jesus Christ as Savior since the word pertains to hearing a message and responding to it with obedience. In other words, it pertains to not only hearing a message but responding by acting upon what the message requires of a person. Specifically, the verb *akouō* refers to each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle obeying the gospel message, which is truth, which resulted in the Father imputing His Son's righteousness to them and declaring them justified. Simultaneously, the Father united them and identified them with His Son in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand through the baptism of the Spirit. Therefore, this verb is referring to the conversion experience of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when each one of them heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and then obeyed it by exercising faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Most of the modern translations interpret the participle conjugation of this verb *akouō* here in Ephesians 1:13 as a temporal participle (TNIV, NET, ESV, LEB). This type of participle in relation to its controlling verb, answers the question, "when?" The controlling verb here is the second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω), "**you were marked with the seal**." Therefore, this interpretation of this verb *akouō* would indicate that the word is expressing the idea that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit "when" they obeyed the message, which is truth, specifically, the gospel, which is truth from God.

However, though a participle might have a temporal force, one must determine if a more specific semantic value is intended by the writer before interpreting the participle as being temporal. This is the case here where *akouō* has a more specific semantic value, namely means. This author interprets the participle conjugation of this verb as a causal participle, which means that it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb. Normally, but not always, this type of participle usually precedes the main verb, which in our context is the second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω), "**you were marked with the seal**." Here, we do not have the usual use of the causal participle because the verb *akouō* follows the controlling or main verb and not preceding it. Therefore, this interpretation of the participle conjugation of this verb *akouō* indicates that this verb would be expressing the idea that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit "because" they obeyed the message, which is truth, specifically, the gospel, which produced their salvation when they obeyed it at the moment of their justification.

The action of the aorist participle conjugation of the verb *akouō* indicates that it takes place simultaneously with the action of the aorist indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō*. Thus, the aorist tenses of both verbs indicate that the Father sealing each and every church age believer with the promised Holy Spirit and the church age believer obeying the gospel message took place at the same time. Specifically, they both took place at the moment of justification. This interpretation is supported by the prepositional phrase *En hō* (Ἐν ᾧ), "because of whom," which refers to the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The noun *euangelion* (εὐαγγέλιον), "**the proclamation of the gospel**" contains the figure of metonymy which means that the gospel is put for the communication of it to the non-Christian. Therefore, the word refers to the communication of the gospel message to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle when they were unregenerate sinners. It speak of communicating the good news to the unbeliever that Christ died and rose from the dead for them and that through faith in Him they

could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins and avoid experiencing the wrath of God.

The articular form of the noun *euangelion*, "**gospel**" is monadic, which indicates that the proclamation of the Christian gospel is "unique" or "in a class by itself" since it is the only message which can deliver an unregenerate sinner from eternal condemnation in the lake of fire, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins, condemnation from the Law and spiritual and physical death.

The noun *soteria* (σωτηρία), "**salvation**" in Ephesians 1:13 speaks of the sinner's deliverance from personal sins the sin nature, Satan, his cosmic system, condemnation from the Law, spiritual and physical death and of course eternal condemnation. This salvation is in three stages: (1) positional: taking place at justification (2) experiential: taking place when the church age believer is experiencing fellowship with God through obedience to His Word (3) perfective: taking place when the church age believer receives their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

The second prepositional phrase *en hō pisteusantes* (ἐν ᾧ πιστεύσαντες), "**specifically, because of having believed in Him**" in Ephesians 1:13 is epexegetical. This means that it is explaining what Paul means by the previous assertion *kai hymeis akousantes ton logon tēs alētheias, to euangelion tēs sōtērias hymōn* (καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν), "**because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation**." Therefore, the second prepositional phrase in Ephesians 1:13 is indicating that when Paul asserts that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle obeyed the message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced their salvation, he means that they trusted or believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the subject of this message.

The prepositional phrase *En hō* (Ἐν ᾧ) appears for a second time here in Ephesians 1:13. However, this time it is marking Jesus Christ as the object of faith at the moment of the church age believer's justification. This is indicated by the fact that it is modifying the nominative masculine plural aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *pisteuō* (πιστεύω), "**you believed**." It is also indicated by the fact that the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) refers to Jesus Christ and is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which is marking Him as the object of the church age believer's faith at the moment of justification.

The verb *pisteuō* (πιστεύω), "**specifically, because of having believed**" pertains to believing to the extent of complete trust and reliance.[76] Here it refers to those sinners who have been declared justified by the Father by faith in Jesus Christ as

[76] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 375). United Bible Societies.

their Savior. Specifically, this verb speaks of a sinner who "totally and completely trusted in" the person of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross to deliver them from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, personal sins, the sin nature, the devil and his cosmic system as well as spiritual and physical death.

Most of the modern translations interpret the participle conjugation of this verb *pisteuō* here in Ephesians 1:13 as a temporal participle (TNIV, NET, ESV). Therefore, if we interpret the participle conjugation of this verb *pisteuō* here in Ephesians 1:13 as a temporal participle, it would be expressing the idea that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit "when" they believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

However, as we noted with the participle conjugation of the verb *akouō*, though a participle might have a temporal force, one must determine if a more specific semantic value is intended by the writer before interpreting the participle as being temporal. This is the case here where *pisteuō* has a more specific semantic value, namely means. Therefore, this author interprets the participle conjugation of this verb *pisteuō* as a causal participle, which means that it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb. Normally, but not always, this type of participle usually precedes the main verb, which in our context is the second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω), "**you were marked with the seal**." As was the case with the participle conjugation of the verb *akouō*, the participle conjugation of the verb *pisteuō* is following the controlling or main verb and not preceding it. Therefore, this would indicate that the participle conjugation of this verb *pisteuō* is expressing the idea that each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit "because" they trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Like the action of the aorist participle conjugation of the verb *akouō*, the aorist participle conjugation of the verb *pisteuō* indicates that it takes place simultaneously with the action of the aorist indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō*. Thus, the aorist tenses of both verbs indicate that the Father sealing each and every church age believer with the promised Holy Spirit and the church age believer trusting in Jesus Christ when they obeyed the gospel message took place at the same time. Namely, they both took place at the moment of justification.

Now, the second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω), "**each and every one of you were sealed**" speaks of the Father marking each and every church age believer with the seal by means of the Holy Spirit He promised to those sinners who trust in His Son as their Savior in order to identify church age believers as His own possession. This corresponds to the assertion in Ephesians 1:11, which states that because of the church age believer's faith in and union and identification with Jesus Christ, they have been claimed as the Father's possession because of the Father having predestinated according to the

predetermined plan. The sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit at the moment of justification also indicates that the church age believer is eternally secure.

Harold Hoehner writes "The sealing with the Spirit must not be confused with the other ministries of the Spirit. The Spirit resides in every believer (Rom 8:9; 1 John 2:27). The baptizing ministry of the Spirit places believers into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). The filling by the Spirit indicates the Spirit's control over believers' lives (5:18). Finally, the sealing ministry of the Spirit identifies believers as God's own and thus gives them the security that they belong to him (1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor 1:22). Furthermore, it should be noted that the indwelling, baptizing, and sealing ministries of the Spirit are bestowed on every believer at the moment of conversion. There are no injunctions regarding them because they are an integral part of the gift of salvation. This is not to be confused with the exhortation to believers to be continually filled by the Spirit—from the moment of their conversion to the end of their lives here on earth.

This seal of the Holy Spirit also serves as a deposit or down payment, providing a guarantee of more to come. It is the initial installment of the believers' future inheritance. As ones adopted into God's family with all the accompanying privileges, we have an inheritance from God that qualifies us to live eternally in his presence in heaven. The initial installment of the Holy Spirit is a little bit of heaven in the believers' lives—with a guarantee of much more yet to come. This initial deposit continues literally "until the redemption of the purchased possession." God is going to set free what he had already purchased. The purchased possession refers to Christ's redemption, accomplished on the cross to set believers free from sin and its obligation. There is going to be a second phase of redemption in the future, when Christ comes for believers, who will then be set free from the presence of sin. This is analogous to Romans 8:23, where it says that believers who have been adopted into God's family (1:5; Rom 8:15) have the firstfruits of the Spirit and are now eagerly awaiting Christ's return to fully realize their adoption, the redemption of their bodies. In the meantime, we have the initial installment, the Holy Spirit, as our portion."[77]

Warren Wiersbe writes "What is the significance of this sealing of the Holy Spirit? For one thing, it speaks of a *finished transaction*. Even today, when important legal documents are processed, they are stamped with the official seal to signify the completion of the transaction. This sealing also implies *ownership:* God has put his seal on us because He has purchased us to be His own (1 Cor. 6:19–20). It also means *security and protection*. The Roman seal on the tomb of Jesus carried this meaning (Matt. 27:62–66). So, the believer belongs to God and is safe and protected because he is a part of a finished transaction. According to John 14:16–17, the Holy Spirit

[77] Hoehner, H. W., Comfort, P. W., & Davids, P. H. (2008). *Cornerstone biblical commentary: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, Philemon.* (Vol. 16, pp. 38–39). Tyndale House Publishers.

abides with the believer forever. It is possible for us to grieve the Spirit and thereby lose the blessings of His ministry (Eph. 4:30). But He doesn't leave us.

Another use for the seal is as a mark of *authenticity*. Just as a signature on a letter attests to the genuineness of the document, so the presence of the Spirit proves the believer is genuine. 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His' (Rom. 8:9). It is not simply our lip profession, our religious activity, or our good works, but the witness of the Spirit that makes our profession authentic."[78]

Peter O'Brien writes "In speaking of the Holy Spirit as a *seal* the notions of ownership and protection are in view. Cattle, and even slaves, were branded with a seal by their masters to indicate to whom they belonged. Owners thus guarded their property against theft; in this sense the seal was a protecting sign or a guarantee. In the Old Testament God set a sign on his chosen ones to distinguish them as his own possession and to keep them from destruction (Ezek. 9:4–6). The figure of sealing is used by Paul in relation to the Spirit at 2 Corinthians 1:22: 'God has made them his inviolable possession; the pledge of this is the Spirit of God in the heart'.[79] By giving Gentile believers the Spirit, God 'seals' or stamps them as his own now, and he will be protect them through the trials and testings of this life (cf. 6:10–18) until he takes final possession of them (cf. v. 14) on 'the day of redemption' (4:30).[80]

Although many have claimed that the imagery of sealing by the Holy Spirit corresponds to the experience of baptism, there is no direct reference to baptism in Ephesians 1:13; 4:30 (or 2 Cor. 1:22).[81] In fact, the only specific mention of baptism in Ephesians is at 4:5, in a context which is concerned with unity, not baptism! This sealing is a reference to the actual reception of the Spirit by the readers. The Pauline connection between hearing the gospel, believing, and receiving the Spirit is made, and these are important elements of conversion-initiation."[82]

J. B. Bond writes "Sealing suggests security (cf. Eph 4:30). The moment one believes in Jesus Christ he is sealed by the Holy Spirit and is thus secure and safe forever. Believers can know that the moment they trust in Christ as their Savior they are sealed by the Holy Spirit and are safe forever. Believers have the assurance of salvation based on Christ's promises (cf. John 5:24; 6:35; 11:26). Sealing also suggests ownership. The Holy Spirit's seal reminds believers that they belong to God (Rom 8:16–17)."[83]

The articular dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the one and only Spirit**" contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of

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[78] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 12–13). Victor Books.
[79] G. Fitzer, *TDNT* 7:949.
[80] Cf. G. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 669.
[81] G. Fitzer, *TDNT* 7:949. Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Baptism*, 160. Arnold, 135, who claims that 'any hint of baptism is extraneous to the context' of Eph. 1:13, argues that the notion of Ephesians being a 'baptismal homily' should be viewed with skepticism. There is only one explicit reference to the term (4:5), 'not for the sake of baptism itself but as one of a number of points that constitute the Christian faith' (see the Introduction).
[82] O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (p. 120). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
[83] Bond, J. B. (2010). The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians. In R. N. Wilkin (Ed.), *The Grace New Testament Commentary* (pp. 864–865). Grace Evangelical Society.

the Holy Spirit is put for His divine omnipotence. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which indicates that the Spirit is "unique" or "in a class by Himself" since He is God and holy and promised by Jesus Christ to those who would trust in Him as their Savior. It functions as a dative of means, which indicates that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, who the Father and the Son promised to those sinners who trust in His Son as their Savior, is "the means by which," each and every church age believer was sealed or marked as the Father's own possession.

The adjective articular dative masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**who is holy**" is used to describe the third member of the Trinity, the Spirit and denotes the state of being holy, thus it refers to the holiness of the Spirit. It is describing or identifying the referent of the noun *pneuma* as being holy.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines "holiness" as "the quality or state of being holy; sanctity" and they define "sanctity" as, "sacred or hallowed character."

One of the definitions that Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary gives for the adjective "holy" is, "entitled to worship or profound religious reverence because of divine character or origin or connection with God or divinity."

One of the definitions for the noun "character" that Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary provides that applies to the context of our passage is the following: "the aggregate of features and traits that form the apparent individual nature of some person or thing."

If we paraphrase these definitions, we would say that the Spirit's holiness refers to "the aggregate (i.e. sum total) of perfect features and traits that form the divine nature of God." Thus, God's holiness is related to all of His divine attributes or in other words, it is simply the harmony of all His perfections or attributes.

The holiness of the Spirit is the aggregate of perfect divine attributes that form His nature. Thus, the Spirit's holiness is related to all of His divine attributes.

Therefore, the term "holiness" refers to the absolute perfection of the character of the Spirit, expressing His purity of character or moral perfection and excellence, thus making Him totally separate from sin and sinners. He is totally separate from sin and sinners unless a way can be found to constitute them holy and that way has been provided based upon the merits of the impeccable Person and Finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross.

The adjective *hagios*, "**holy**" here in Ephesians 1:13 is a reminder to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle that the Spirit's holiness or the absolute perfection of His character is responsible in appropriating the salvation the Father provided for them through His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His right hand.

Lastly, the noun *epangelia* (ἐπαγγελία), "**promised**" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ's promise that those sinners who trust in Him as Savior will receive the gift

of the Holy Spirit (cf. Luke 24:49; John 7:37-39; 14:16; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5; 2:14-21; cf. Ezek. 36:22-27; 37:1-14; Joel 2:28; Isa 32:15; 44:3, 55:1, 58:11; Zech. 12:10; 14:8). The articular construction of this word *epangelia* is also monadic, which indicates that this promise is "unique" or "in a class by itself" since it is found in the New Covenant and is related to the gift of the Spirit. It is also "unique" because it was promised by both the Father and the Son to those who would trust in the Son as their Savior. The promise is received through faith in the coming Messiah, who was Jesus of Nazareth. The word is thus identifying or describing the Holy Spirit as being promised by the Father and the Son to those who trust in the Son as their Savior.

Sealing of the Spirit in Ephesians 4:30

As we noted, the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit is also mentioned by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:30.

Ephesians 4:17 Therefore, at this particular time I am communicating, specifically, at this particular time I am solemnly and earnestly making a request on the basis of the Lord's sovereign authority. Namely, that each and every one of you as a corporate unit continue to no longer make it your habit of conducting your lives as in fact the Gentiles are conducting their lives by means of the futility produced by their thinking. 18 Specifically, because they are darkened with respect to their understanding (of the three-fold revelation of the triune God). Consequently, they are alienated from the life, which originates uniquely in the character and nature of the one and only God because of the ignorance, which is a characteristic within them because of the hardness, which is produced by the function unique to their hearts. 19 Because they are characterized as insensitive (to God and His will and ways), each and every one of them as a corporate unit have given themselves over to self-indulgence for the purpose of practicing every type of sexual immorality in an inordinate and insatiable manner. 20 On the contrary, by no means whatsoever in this manner did each and every one of you as a corporate unit learn about the one and only Christ through experience. 21 If and let us assume for the sake of argument that each and every one of you as a corporate unit in fact conformed to an experiential knowledge of Him and we all agree each one of you did. In other words, each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught about Him through personal experience because obedience to the truth corresponds to an experiential knowledge of Jesus. 22 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught with reference to your former lifestyle to lay aside the old man's sinful desires, which are being corrupted in accordance with deceitful lust patterns. 23 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught to make it your habit of replenishing your human spirit, that is, your regenerate

mind. 24 Specifically, each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught to clothe yourselves with the new man, which has been created in conformity with God's image by the one and only truth exemplifying righteousness, indeed by exemplifying a holy righteousness. 25 Therefore, because each and every one of you as a corporate unit have laid aside that which characterized by falsehood, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of speaking truth with his neighbor for each and every one of us as a corporate unit are members of one another. 26 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of permitting yourselves to be justifiably angry with the result that each and every one of you as a corporate unit continue to make it your habit of not committing sin. Each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not letting the sun go down when justifiably angered. 27 Each and every one of you as a corporate unity must continue to make it your habit of not allowing an opportunity which benefits the devil. 28 The one who does steal must no longer steal but rather they must begin to work hard for a living and continue doing so. Specifically, by making it their habit of being diligently engaged in performing activities with their own hands, which for their own benefit produce good, which is divine in quality and character in order to possess the capacity to make it their habit of sharing for the benefit of those who possess a need. 29 Any harmful word must never at any time proceed from the mouth of any one of you. But rather, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that something is characterized as the production of divine good in quality and character for the building up of the one who does possess a need. And we agree that something is characterized as the production of divine good in quality and character for the building upon of the one who does possess a need. Then, the production of divine good in quality and character must at any time proceed from the mouth of each one of you in order that it would provide grace for the benefit of those who are hearing. 30 Consequently, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, originating from the one and only God by means of the exercise of whose omnipotence all of you without exception have been sealed for the day, namely, redemption. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 4:30 is composed of the following: (1) prohibition: *mē lypeite to pneuma to hagion tou theou* (μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, originating from the one and only God**." (Author's translation) (2) declarative statement: *en hō esphragisthēte eis hēmeran apolytrōseōs* (ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως), "**by means of the**

exercise of whose omnipotence all of you without exception have been sealed for the day, namely, redemption." (Author's translation)

Therefore, Ephesians 4:30 begins with a prohibition, which required that the recipients of this letter, who were members of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia, continue to make it their habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, and who originates from the Father. This is followed by a declarative statement, which describes a ministry performed by the Holy Spirit at justification on behalf of each member of the body of Christ, namely, He sealed every one of them for the day of redemption. The latter is a reference to the believer receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

The prohibition presents the logical result of obeying the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions presented in Ephesians 4:25-29. In other words, it indicates that if the recipients of this epistle obey the various Spriit inspired commands and prohibitions presented in Ephesians 4:25-29, they will never grieve the Holy Spirit. However, if they disobey them, they will in fact grieve the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 summarizes the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians 4:25-29.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, 17, 2:18, 22, 3:5, 16, 4:3, and 4, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) in Ephesians 4:30 refers of course to the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which indicates that He is "unique" or "in a class by Himself" since He is God and whose holy character transcends that of his moral rational creatures, namely, human and angelic beings.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) here in Ephesians 4:30 is modified by the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), which means "holy" and is used to describe the third member of the Trinity, the Spirit and denotes the state of being holy. This adjective describes the transcendent character of the Spirit in that His character is superior to the character of both angelic and human beings since the latter are inferior to Him due to the fact that He is their Creator and they are sinners.

The noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, in every instance in which the word has appeared in this epistle up to this point in the Ephesian letter, the Father is this word's referent (1:1, 2, 3, 17, 2:4, 8, 10, 16, 19, 22, 3:2, 7, 9, 10, 19; 4:6, 13, 18, 24). The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worship was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity, which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods. This noun functions as a genitive of source, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit "originates from" God in the sense that the Father sent the Holy Spirit to permanently

indwell each member of the body of Christ at the request of His Son to do so (cf. John 14:26).

The verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) expresses the Holy Spirit's sorrow, which is caused when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or over act of sin. Thus, it speaks of the Holy Spirit experiencing emotional distress when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or overt act of sin. The second personal plural form of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) refers of course to the recipients of this letter, who we noted are members of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia. This form of the verb refers to them not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by the fact that Paul is using the distributive sense of the second person plural, which emphasizes no exceptions expressing Paul's concern for the recipients of this letter not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The meaning of this verb is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), which denies any idea of committing this sin against the Holy Spirit. Together, they form a prohibition. This negative particle denies any idea of these Gentile Christians causing the Holy Spirit sorrow or emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin, which is the result of disobeying any of the Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions in the Scriptures.

Of course, no human or angelic being can literally cause the Holy Spirit to experience sorrow or emotional distress. Thus, the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, employs an anthropopathism, which is ascribing the human emotion of grieving to the Holy Spirit, which He does not possess in order to communicate the Spirit's attitude towards the believer when they commit a mental, verbal or overt act of sin. Paul is thus using language of accommodation to communicate the Spirit's attitude toward the believer when they sin.

An "anthropopathism" is language of accommodation through which infinite God reveals Himself to the finite man. The term is derived from the Greek: (1) *Anthropos*, "man." (2) *Pathos*, "an inner function of the soul with overt manifestations."

Anthropopathisms ascribe to God human characteristics, which He does not have, in order to explain God's policy or viewpoint to us in terms of human attitudes. The Bible ascribes the following human emotions to God that He does not possess in order to convey His attitude towards man in terms that man can understand.

The following is a brief list of anthropopathisms found in the Word of God. Examples of Anthropopathisms: (1) God hates (Rm. 9:13). (2) Harbors jealousy (Ex. 20:5a; 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 6:15a). (3) Changes His mind (Gen. 6:6). (4) Vents violent anger (Jer. 4:8; 12:13; 25:37; 51:45; Ezek. 5:15).

These qualities are incompatible with God's essence, but such statements are descriptive and gain the attention of the reader.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:30 Paul issues the recipients of Ephesians a prohibition, which required that they do not grieve or cause the Holy Spirit to experience emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of the Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions recorded in Ephesians 4:25-29.

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present imperative, which has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. However, in Ephesians 1:15, Paul commends the recipients of this epistle for their post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures. Correspondingly, he also commends them for obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them.

The present tense of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present tense, which is used to signal a regularly occurring or habitual action on the part of the subject of the verb. Therefore, it expresses the idea of the recipients of this epistle "continuing to make it their habit of" not causing the Holy Spirit grief in the form of emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of His commands and prohibitions recorded in the Scriptures.

Therefore, by issuing this prohibition, Paul is performing preventative maintenance. He is warning them ahead of time to not make it a habit of grieving the Holy Spirit. He is not telling them to cease from this act implying that they were in already in the process of doing so. But rather, it is a prohibition designed to prevent them from grieving the Holy Spirit on a habitual basis, which would hinder the Holy Spirit from performing His function of forming Christ-like character in them. In other words, he is not implying that they were already involved in this sin of grieving the Holy Spirit but rather he is expressing a general precept.

Please note that this author is not saying that Paul does not want them to commit this sin ever again because as long as they possess an indwelling old Adamic sin nature and live in the devil's world they will be tempted to sin and they will sin. The Bible states that the believer is deceiving themselves if they say they can stop sinning altogether while they still have an old sin nature and live in the devil's world (cf. 1 John 1:8-10).

Clinton Arnold writes "As many theologians have rightly pointed out over the centuries, the fact that the Spirit grieves over sin demonstrates that the Spirit is a person. This is consistent with other attributes of personhood attested about the Spirit in Paul's writings, such as the Spirit's bearing witness (Rom 8:16), speaking (1 Tim 4:1), interceding for believers (Rom 8:26), having thoughts (Rom 8:27), having desires (Gal 5:17), dwelling in the lives of believers as in a temple (Rom 8:9, 11; 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14), searching and investigating (1 Cor 2:10), teaching believers (1 Cor 2:13), leading the people of God (Gal 5:17–18, 25), and giving divine gifts

and abilities to people (1 Cor 12:9, 11). The Spirit is therefore not an impersonal force or power."[84]

Interestingly, this prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 is similar to the language used by Isaiah 63:10, which speaks of the Israelites rebelling against the Spirit and thus grieving Him.

Isaiah 63:7 I will tell of the faithful acts of the Lord, of the Lord's praiseworthy deeds. I will tell about all the Lord did for us, the many good things he did for the family of Israel, because of his compassion and great faithfulness. 8 He said, "Certainly they will be my people, children who are not disloyal." He became their deliverer. 9 Through all that they suffered, he suffered too. The messenger sent from his very presence delivered them. In his love and mercy he protected them; he lifted them up and carried them throughout ancient times. 10 But they rebelled and offended his holy Spirit, so he turned into an enemy and fought against them. (NET)

Peter O'Brien writes "As elsewhere in Ephesians, Paul's words 'echo' the language of an Old Testament text, in this case Isaiah 63:10,[85] and once again an understanding of the scriptural context is important for interpreting the Ephesians passage. After depicting the messianic judgment and the victory of the anointed conqueror (Isa. 63:1–6), the prophet is stirred to eloquent intercession as he focusses on God's past goodness and the present desperate situation of his people. As the prophet reviews God's gracious actions, he begins with the exodus and recounts how Yahweh brought his people Israel into a covenant relationship with himself (v. 8). In language which directly recalls Exodus 33:12–14, v. 9 states that it was the 'presence' of God himself, not simply an angel or a messenger, which saved his people in the wilderness.[86] Israel, for its part, 'rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit' (v. 10). Nevertheless, the Lord placed his Holy Spirit in the midst of his people to deliver them and give them rest (v. 14).

The 'presence' of God is interpreted in the Isaianic passage in terms of the 'Holy Spirit' (vv. 10, 11). Although the Exodus narrative makes it plain that Yahweh himself led his people through the desert and gave them rest (note esp. Exod. 33:14, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest'), v. 14 of Isaiah 63 unequivocally asserts that it was 'the Spirit of the Lord' who gave them rest. The

[84] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 306). Zondervan.

[85] Paul's Greek is καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ ('do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God'), while the LXX of Isa. 63:10 has καὶ παρώξυναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ ('and they vexed his holy spirit'). Paul uses the verb λυπεῖτε (which is closer to the original Hebrew and corresponds to the usual LXX rendering of this Hebrew verb), turning the indicative statement of Isaiah into an imperative (for reasons see below). Cf. T. Moritz, *A Profound Mystery*, 92. Best, 457, is much more cautious, unnecessarily so in our judgment, about the dependence of Eph. 4:30 on Isa. 63:10. See the comments below regarding the intertextual relations between Exod. 33 and Isa. 63 and what we judge to be significant salvation-historical and, ultimately, theological connections between this New Testament text and its Old Testament antecedents.

[86] The words 'so he became their Saviour' (Isa. 63:8) seem to hark back to Exod. 14:30, where the verb 'to save' is used comprehensively of 'the Red Sea event [which] completed and sealed the whole enterprise as a work of salvation'; J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1993), 513.

conclusion in the following line, 'this is how *you* guided your people,' underscores this equation of God's presence with his Holy Spirit.[87]

The links between the two biblical passages are so significant as to suggest a typological correspondence between the two events in the history of God's covenant people. In Isaiah 63, which looks back to the exodus, Yahweh is presented as the Saviour of Israel, who *redeemed* his people from Egypt, brought them into a covenant relationship with himself, led them by his own personal presence (i.e., his Holy Spirit) through the wilderness, and gave them rest. For its part, Israel the covenant people had rebelled against its Lord 'and grieved his Holy Spirit' (v. 10). In Ephesians Paul addresses the new covenant community, 'the one new man' (2:15) comprising Jews and Gentiles who have been *redeemed* (1:7) and reconciled to God through the cross of Christ (2:14–18). They have become a holy temple in the Lord, the place where *God himself* dwells by his Spirit (2:21, 22). Using the language of Isaiah 63:10, Paul issues a warning to this new community not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, 'as Israel had done' in the wilderness (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1–11), the more so since they have been sealed by that same Holy Spirit until the day of *redemption* (4:30).[88] The change from the indicative ('they [Israel] grieved his Holy Spirit') to the imperative ('do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God') is deliberate and makes eminent sense in this exhortatory context. Paul picks up the Isaianic text in a chapter that highlights the work of God's Spirit (= God's personal presence; Isa. 63:10, 11, 14) in relation to the major salvation-historical event of the Old Testament, namely, the exodus. As he handles this scriptural passage, the apostle is obviously not engaging in some kind of atomistic exegesis, as he is often charged. Rather, he reads the Old Testament text with an understanding of its immediate context, its place in the flow of salvation history, and, apparently, within a pattern of new Exodus typology. Paul interprets the passage according to its plain sense, applying it to the new covenant community upon whom the ends of the ages have come (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11).

The exalted title used in Paul's exhortation, that his readers should not cause grief or distress to God's Spirit, echoes the language of Isaiah. *The Holy Spirit of God*, which is a rich expression not usually found elsewhere (cf. 1 Thess. 4:8), emphatically underscores the identity of the one who may be offended, and thus the seriousness of causing him distress. He is the 'Spirit' who is characterized by

[87] Commenting on Isaiah 63, J. Wright, 'Spirit and Wilderness: The Interplay of Two Motifs within the Hebrew Bible as a Background to Mark 1:2–13', in *Perspectives on Language and Text: Festschrift for F. I. Andersen*, ed. E. W. Conrad and E. G. Newing (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 269–98, esp. 289, states: 'The spirit in this chapter is not the spirit of the special endowment as of the leaders of old, but is the very presence of God himself manifested in power and in operation'. Note the discussion of G. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 713–14.

[88] In the preceding verse, Isa. 63:9, the prophet refers back to the Exodus event when he speaks of Yahweh acting 'in love and mercy' to redeem his people (and this is parallel to 'the angel of his presence [i.e., his Holy Spirit] saved them'), and as he looks forward to a new Exodus of Israel from exile. Isaiah's use of Exodus typology to depict Israel's future redemption from exile in a new Exodus has recently been shown to provide an important pattern for the substructure of Mark's Gospel and an understanding of Jesus' mission in Luke. Note R. E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1997), and M. Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1996), 247–66, etc., respectively. The parallels here in Eph. 4 suggest that Paul also was aware of this new Exodus focus in relation to his Gentile Christian readers.

holiness, and therefore sensitive to anything unholy. And he is none other than the Spirit *of God*, who is at work in those who have been *created to be like God* in the *righteousness and holiness* that come from the truth (v. 24). Paul understands the Spirit in fully personal terms, since only persons can be grieved or feel pain and distress.[89] His injunction is striking, for it refers not to a direct attack on the Spirit but to believers engaging in sinful activities mentioned in the previous verses (especially harmful speech) which destroy relationships within the body and so mar the Spirit's work in building Christ's people (cf. 2:22; 4:3, 4). Anything incompatible with the unity or purity of the church is inconsistent with the Spirit's own nature and therefore grieves him.[90]"[91]

Clinton Arnold writes "Paul echoes the language of Isa 63:10 when he warns his readers not to grieve the Holy Spirit. In that passage, the prophet recalls the exodus event and how God redeemed his people with love and mercy (63:9), yet they rebelled against him in the desert and 'grieved[92] his Holy Spirit' (63:10). The psalmist likewise laments, 'How often they rebelled against him in the desert and grieved him in the wasteland!' (Ps 78:40). Paul recognizes that the new people of God face a similar danger. They, too, have been redeemed by God (Eph 1:7, 14) in an act of his love and mercy (2:4) and run the risk of rebelling against God in their words and actions.[93]"[94]

Darrell Bock writes "The language parallels Isaiah 63:9–10, where acts that produced grieving by the Spirit were preceded by acts of good faith by God. The allusion may also hint at a risk in doing so. Believers are accountable to God, who can respond with discipline. Psalm 78:40–72 shows how these themes can be juxtaposed.[95] The offence is a significant one since they are called to reflect and represent God's presence in the world. The idea of grief also points to the pain or loss that such misrepresentation produces. Some hesitate to give emotions to God, but he also loves, has anger and rejoices. These acts that cause grieving are counter to why the Spirit indwells them and seals them for their day of deliverance (1:13–14). It is inconsistent with why God took the initiative to save them and with where God is taking them one day."[96]

The declarative statement, which modifies this prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 describes a ministry the Holy Spirit performs at the moment of justification on behalf

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[89] The verb λυπέω has the basic idea of grief or sorrow and occurs frequently in the LXX (cf. Gen. 45:5; 2 Sam. 19:2), as well as some fifteen times in Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 2:2–5; 7:8–11), out of a total twenty-six New Testament occurrences. Here the verb signifies 'to cause someone to be sad, sorrowful or distressed;' cf. Louw and Nida §25.75.
[90] Stott, 189.
[91] O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (pp. 346–348). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
[92] The LXX has a different word for "grieve" (παρώξυναν, which actually means "provoke") from what appears in Ephesians. The word Paul uses (λυπεῖτε) more correctly reflects the Hebrew original (*ʿṣb*).
[93] The LXX has a different word for "grieve" (παρώξυναν, which actually means "provoke") from what appears in Ephesians. The word Paul uses (λυπεῖτε) more correctly reflects the Hebrew original (*ʿṣb*).
[94] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 306). Zondervan.
[95] Arnold, p. 306.
[96] Bock, D. L. (2019). *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (E. J. Schnabel, Ed.; Vol. 10, pp. 143–144). Inter-Varsity Press.

of every member of the body of Christ. It asserts that by means of the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence at the moment of justification, every believer has been sealed for the day of the redemption, which is a reference to the rapture.

The referent of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is God the Holy Spirit and contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence at the moment of the believer's justification. It is the preposition *en* (ἐν), which serves as a marker of means, which indicates that the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence is "the means by which" the church age believer was marked with the seal, which identifies them as the Father's possession and which seal was for the day of the redemption.

The verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) pertains to marking something with a seal as a means of identification in order to secure it as one's own possession. Thus, it speaks of something making something secure as a sign of ownership. The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is of course the recipients of the Ephesian epistle and specifically the members of the Gentile Christian community who lived in the Roman province of Asia. The word not only refers to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by this form is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exception expressing the idea that the "each and every" member of the church was sealed identifying them as the Father's possession and which sealing too place at the moment of justification.

The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) refers to an event, which will occur within a twenty-four hour period, namely the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is signified by the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις), which modifies it. As was the case in Ephesians 1:7 and 14, the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) appears here in Ephesians 4:30 and as was the case in Ephesians 1:14, here in Ephesians 4:30, it is used of the redemption of the body of the church age believer when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is imminent. Specifically, it speaks of the church age believer experiencing receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church. The redemption of the church age believer's body at the rapture or resurrection of the church will be the completion of their salvation and sanctification. The noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which means that it is identifying the referent of the latter as the moment when the church age believer receives their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which completes their salvation and sanctification. The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of purpose, which means that it is marking the day of redemption as the purpose for which the Holy Spirit sealed the church age believer at the moment of their justification. Thus, it is marking the church age believer receiving a resurrection

body at the rapture or resurrection of the church as the purpose for which the Holy Spirit sealed them church age believer at the moment of their justification.

The day of redemption when every church age believer receives their resurrection body is first mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 1:14 and he also alludes to it in Romans 8:23.

The relationship between the declarative statement and the prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 is extremely important for the recipients of this letter and all Christians throughout history and up to the present moment and future because the declarative statement presents the motivation for continuing to obey this prohibition. Namely that, they must continue to obey this prohibition because the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit at justification made them Father's permanent possession and will result in them receiving a resurrection body.

They must continue to obey this prohibition because of what the Spirit did for them at the justification in making them the Father's permanent possession and because of what the Father will do for them through His Son at the rapture when He gives them a resurrection body. In other words, they must live their lives in a manner consistent with what the Spirit did for them at the justification in making them the Father's permanent possession and because of what the Father will do for them through His Son at the rapture in the future when He gives them a resurrection body.

So therefore, the declarative statement in Ephesians 4:30 is referring to two events which serves as bookends for the church age and the eternal plan of the Father for every church age believer, namely, the sealing ministry at justification and the resurrection of the church.

Clinton Arnold writes "What is interesting in this context that deals with the problem of ongoing sinful practices in the lives of believers is that Paul does not threaten them with the potential loss of the Spirit if they persist in their sin. Rather, he stresses that they continue to belong to God and bear his mark of ownership until their final redemption. Under the new covenant, the Spirit does not depart when sin is committed. Instead, the Spirit deeply grieves over it. Paul presents this as a truth that should motivate believers not to indulge their sinful desires—whether this might be filthy talk, stealing, uncontrolled anger, lying, or any other vice."[97]

Lewis Sperry Chafer writes "Because of the fact that the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other, the Apostle goes on to say: 'and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption' (verse 30). This important text, in addition to its clear implications as to the personality of the Holy Spirit, discloses the engaging fact that the child of God from the moment he is saved is so related to the indwelling Spirit that the sensitiveness of the Spirit supplements the normal functions of conscience. The Christian no longer lives according to his

[97] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (pp. 306–307). Zondervan.

conscience alone, which conscience may be perverted and seared, but with the Holy Spirit Who may be grieved or not grieved by an act, a word, or a thought. That this new standard which the presence of the Spirit creates is higher than the old, and that under these conditions the true believer cannot walk as he walked before, needs no added emphasis (cf. Rom. 9:1). So, also, it should be observed that the Spirit Himself indwelling the believer becomes that *sealing* of God which is unto the day of redemption. That 'day,' be it said, is not the day of our death: it is rather the Day of Christ—the day when the body will be raised, redeemed, and reunited to the glorified soul and spirit. It is the day of 'our gathering together unto Him' (2 Thess 2:1). Thus, as we grieve the Spirit by turning to seek our consolation in the world and not in Christ, so, contrariwise, we satisfy the Spirit when we live wholly unto Christ and look steadfastly for the day of redemption which ever draweth nigh."[98]

Spiritual Gifts

The Scriptures teach that at the moment of conversion, i.e., justification, each and every church age believer has been given a spiritual gift for the purpose of serving other members of the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:7). The distribution of spiritual gifts was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of His strategic victory over Satan at the cross during the dispensation of the hypostatic union (Ephesians 4:7-10). However, the actual appointment of the believer's spiritual gift is made by God the Holy Spirit as per 1 Corinthians 12:11.

Spiritual gifts are stewardships for which the believer will have to give an account to the Lord. They are also assignments of position within the body of Christ. Identification of one's spiritual gift and production from this gift is a direct result of spiritual growth which can only be achieved through the consistent and persistent learning and applying of the Word of God which in turn enables the Holy Spirit to identify for you, your spiritual gift.

Just as a car operates on gas so the believer's spiritual gift operates on God's love. This is indicated in that in Romans 12 after Paul discusses spiritual gifts in verses 6-8, he then discusses loving one's fellow believer in verses 9-16. Also, after discussing spiritual gifts extensively in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul then discusses the importance of the believer operating in the love of God in 1 Corinthians 13 and even teaches that loving one's fellow Christian is more important than spiritual gifts since they run on love. The believer discovers for himself or herself and manifests to others their spiritual gift by loving God and their fellow believer.

The nature of spiritual gifts is important for the believer to understand. First of all, they are never merited or earned. Gifts are a special grace-given ability (nature

[98] Chafer, L. S. (1935). *The Ephesian letter* (p. 142). Loizeaux Brothers.

or essence). They are given by the Holy Spirit to each believer in Christ. Spiritual gifts are for service to the body of Christ that it may grow quantitatively (evangelism), qualitatively (edification), and organically (developed ministries and offices in the church). Ultimately, they are for the glory of God. Spiritual gifts are God's special gifts given to believers to enable them for special service to the body of Christ and in the world. When related to the gift of ministry or service or helps, it may include natural talents received at birth.

A spiritual gift is not an office in the local church like pastor or deacon. Certain gifts are needed to function effectively in those offices, but an office and a gift are not the same thing. It is not a particular geographical area or a place of service. It is the ability to serve, not the place where one serves. A spiritual gift is not a particular specialty or method of ministry. The gift of teaching may be used through radio or through writing or through the classroom, etc. It is not a certain personality type (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 with 2 Corinthians 10:10).

There are two categories of spiritual gifts: (1) Temporary: Functioned only during the pre-canon period of the church age (1 Corinthians 13:8, 10). (2) Permanent: Function during the pre and post-canon period of the church age.

The following gifts were temporary and had disappeared by 96 A.D.: (1) Apostleship (2) Prophecy (3) Miracles (4) Tongues (5) Interpretation of Tongues (6) Knowledge and Wisdom (7) Discerning spirits (8) Temporary gift of faith (9) Healing.

The gift of apostleship no longer exists since there are only twelve apostles and the last one went home to be with the Lord in 96 A.D. The gifts of prophecy, knowledge, wisdom, faith and the discerning of spirits no longer exist since they were to fill the void until the canon of Scripture was completed. The gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues no longer exist today since they were given to evangelize Jewish unbelievers who were dispersed throughout the Roman Empire and spoke foreign languages. The gifts of healing and miracles were to establish the authority of the apostles and authenticate that the Lord Jesus Christ sent them.

The following gifts are permanent: (1) Pastor-teacher (2) Evangelist (3) Administrations (4) Helps.

Spiritual Gifts and Ephesians 4:7-16

Ephesians 4:7-11 discusses spiritual gifts by teaching about the diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ despite the fact that there is unity in this body. Ephesians 4:11-16 presents the three-fold purpose of the communication gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11.

Ephesians 4:7 Now, however, to each one of us grace was given corresponding to the incomparable Christ's proportionate gracious giving. 8

Therefore, it says, "When he ascended to the highest place, he captured captives. He generously gave gifts to certain members of the human race." 9 In other words, what is the meaning of the statement, "he ascended?" Namely that, he also descended into the lower regions, which are part of the earth? 10 He, the very one who has descended is the one who also has ascended above each and every one of the heavens in order that He would enter into the state of bringing to completion each and every animate and inanimate object. 11 Therefore, on the one hand, He Himself generously gave some to be apostles but on other hand, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors, specifically, teachers 12 for the purpose of equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to ultimately build up the members of Christ's body 13 until each and every one of us as a corporate unit attains to experiencing the unity produced by obedience to the one and only Christian faith. Correspondingly, until all of us without exception attains to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son. Until each and every one of us as a corporate unit attains to experiencing a mature man. Until all of us without exception attain to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character. 14 In order that each of us as a corporate unit would no longer be children. Specifically, those who are tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place by means of every wind, that is teaching by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race because of craftiness according to their program which is characterized by that which produces deception. 15 Instead, on the basis of each and every one of us as a corporate unit making it our habit of practicing the truth by means of the practice of divine-love, let all of us without exception grow with respect to every area of our character into the state of being like Him, namely, Christ, who is the head. 16 From whom, each and every member of the body does get fitted together, yes does get united together through the function of each and every ligament, which provide support for the purpose of working. Simultaneously, in proportion to each individual part belonging to the body does cause itself to grow for the purpose of building one another up by means of the practice of divine-love. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 4:7 is composed of the following: (1) Declarative statement *Heni de hekastō hēmōn edothē hē charis* (Ἑνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη °ἡ χάρις), "**Now, however, to each one of us grace was generously given**" (2) Prepositional phrase *kata to metron tēs dōreas tou Christou* (κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**according to the incomparable Christ's proportionate generous giving**."

Ephesians 4:7 marks not only a transition from the contents of Ephesians 4:1-6 and Ephesians 4:7-11 but also a mild contrast between the contents of the former and the latter. It marks a transition from the contents of Ephesians 4:1-6 to the

contents of Ephesians 4:7-16. The former contains an exhortation for the recipients of this epistle to maintain unity with each other experientially through the practice of the command to love one another (Eph. 4:1-3). It also contains a list of seven essential, fundamental elements or spiritual realities which define Christian unity in a positional sense (4:4-6). The former is based upon the latter. Ephesians 4:7-16 contains a discussion regarding the diversity of spiritual gifts distributed to members of the body of Christ despite the fact that they are unified in a positional sense (4:7-16). Therefore, Ephesians 4:7 marks a transition from a discussion regarding maintaining unity in the body of Christ experientially which is based upon the fact that they are unified in a positional sense to a discussion regarding the diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ despite the unity of the body of Christ in a positional sense. In other words, it marks a transition between unity and diversity in the body of Christ. It is also marking a contrast between maintaining unity in the Christian community experientially which is based upon the fact that they are unified in a positional sense and the diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ. In other words, it is marking a contrast between unity and diversity in the body of Christ with the latter manifested in the spiritual gift given to each member of the body of Christ.

The declarative statement in Ephesians 4:7 contains the adjective *hekastos* (ἕκαστος), "**each**," which denotes each one of a totality in a distributive sense. We also noted it is modified by the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**," which refers to a single person since it pertains to one person in contrast to more than one.

Paul's use of the adjective *heis* (εἷς), "**one**" here links the contents of Ephesians 4:7-11 with the contents of Ephesians 4:1-6 since it appears in the latter seven times and also links it to the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 since it appears four times in this passage.

This expression *Heni hekastō* (Ἑνὶ ἑκάστῳ), "**each one**" is fronted for emphasis and thus emphasizes that each member of the body of Christ receives a spiritual gift at the moment of justification implying that there is not only unity in the body of Christ but also diversity because of this distribution of these spiritual gifts.

This expression is also modified by the genitive first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ) means "**of us**" and its referent is Paul, who was a Jewish Christian and the recipients of this epistle who were Gentile Christians. The personal pronoun *egō* (ἐγώ) functions as a partitive genitive, which denotes the body of Christ as a whole of which Paul and these Gentile Christians are a part of or are those who help to compose it.

Therefore, this entire expression *Heni hekastō hēmōn* (Ἑνὶ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν), "**to each one of us**" serves to emphasize that each and every member of the Christian community whether they are Jewish and Gentile church age believers received a spiritual gift through the work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of justification. In

other words, it stresses the diversity of gifts distributed to each member of the body of Christ.

The noun *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" speaks of a particular unmerited blessing that flowed to the apostle Paul and the recipients of this epistle from the function of the Father's attribute of love. Specifically, the referent of this word is a spiritual gift which each member of the body of Christ was given at the moment of justification by the Holy Spirit. The basis for this gift is that the Father declared them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ and simultaneously, they were placed in union with His and identified with Him through the baptism of the Spirit.

The verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**was generously given**" pertains to giving someone something implying something of great value and a gift and speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity. Therefore, it refers to the unmerited blessing of a spiritual gift, which was given to each member of the body of Christ at the moment of justification by the Holy Spirit.

The passive voice of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) indicates that grace or in other words, the unmerited blessing of a spiritual gift as the subject received the action of being given by the Lord Jesus Christ to each member through the Spirit at justification. It is also indicated by the contents of Ephesians 4:8-10, which teaches that the distribution of spiritual gifts is the result of Jesus Christ ascended into the throne room of God and resultant present session at the right hand of the Father. Ten days after His session on the day of Pentecost Jewish believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, not only did the baptism of the Spirit take place for the first time but also each of these believers received a spiritual gift (cf. Acts 2). Acts 10 records this same thing happening among Gentile church age believers. Therefore, the passive voice of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) here in Ephesians 4:7 is another case of a "divine-passive" appearing in the Ephesian epistle.

The aorist tense of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) is a consummative or culminative aorist, which emphasizes the cessation of the act of grace in the form of the unmerited blessing of a spiritual gift being bestowed upon each member of the body of Christ at the moment of justification by the Father through the work of the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 4:7, the prepositional phrase in this verse contains the noun *metron* (μέτρον), "**proportionate**" pertains to making the parts of something harmonious or symmetrical. Of course, it is used in relation to spiritual gifts, which were given to each church age believer at the moment of the justification through the work of the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, this word is describing these spiritual gifts as "in proportion to" or "proportional" to the incomparable Christ's generous gift in the sense that they are made harmonious or symmetrical with each other. In other words, spiritual gifts in the body of Christ are marked by due proportion, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to each other or to

the whole of the body of Christ. Therefore, this *metron* (μέτρον) emphasizes that each spiritual gift is marked by harmonious or symmetrical with the other spiritual gifts given to other members of the body of Christ. This concept is used by Paul in Romans 12:3 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

The noun *metron* (μέτρον), "**proportionate**" appears three times in Ephesians 4:7-16 (4:7, 11, 13). In fact, the use of this word in verses 11 and 16 form the figure of speech called *inclusio*, which is a rhetorical device that is also called "book ending" or "bracketing" or "stitching." Thus, this word in verses 7 and 16 serves to form a bracket around the contents of Ephesians 4:7-16. In other words, it form a book end around this pericope. The purpose of which device is to mark these verses as a textual unit and to emphasize that every member of the body of Christ has received a spiritual gift at the moment of justification, which is harmonious and symmetrical relation to other spiritual gifts in the body of Christ.

The prepositional phrase in Ephesians 4;7 also contains the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**generous gift**" pertains to something acquired without compensation in return but also it pertains to being liberal in giving. In other words, it not only speaks of something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation but also speaks of being marked by abundance or ample proportions. In context, it is used of the non-meritorious blessing in the form of a spiritual gift, which is bestowed upon each church age believer without exception at the moment of justification through the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11) who was authorized to do so by the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:7). The

The articular construction of this noun *dōrea* (δωρεά) is monadic which indicates that this generous gift is in a class by itself in that it was given exclusively to only church age believers at the moment of justification through the work of the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ, which is in accordance with the Father's will.

The noun *dōrea* (δωρεά) functions as an attributed genitive which means that it is functioning as an attributive adjective and is thus ascribing an attribute to the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), namely, of being "proportionate" to the incomparable Christ's generous gift. In other words, these spiritual gifts are marked by due proportion, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to each other in the body of Christ or to the whole of the body of Christ.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), which denotes the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth; thus He is the Deliverer of the human race in three areas through His death, resurrection, ascension and session: (1) Satan (2) Cosmic System (3) Old Sin Nature.

The Lord's Messiahship has a four-fold significance: (1) Separation unto God. (2) Authorization from God. (3) Divine enablement. (4) The coming Deliverer.

The articular construction of this word *Christos* (Χριστός) indicates that the referent of this word is in a class by himself and the only one deserving of the name

since there were many individuals in the first century A.D. who claimed to be the Christ or were proclaimed to be the Christ. Thus, the articular construction of this word means that He is "the one and only Christ" or "the incomparable Christ" and speaks of the incomparability of Jesus of Nazareth in that He is true Messiah and contrast to those who claim they are but are not.

The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) functions as a subjective genitive, which means that it functions semantically as the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun, which is the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**generous gift**." With this type of genitive, the verbal noun can be converted into a verbal form and also turn the genitive into it a subject. The verbal form of this noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "generous gift" is the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), which appeared in the previous declarative statement. Therefore, we can translate the expression *tēs dōreas tou Christou* (τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "the incomparable Christ's generous giving."

We also noted that the noun *metron* (μέτρον) is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which functions as a marker of correspondence indicating being in conformity or agreement with something. In other words, it is marking the agreement of two things. In context it is marking the agreement of or the correspondence between the prepositional phrase *kata to metron tēs dōreas tou Christou* (κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**according to the incomparable Christ's proportionate generous giving**" and the declarative statement *Heni de hekastō hēmōn edothē hē charis* (Ἑνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη °ἡ χάρις), "**but to each one of us grace was generously given**." Specifically, the former corresponds to the latter because both speak of the church age believer receiving something from the Lord Jesus Christ at the moment of justification, namely they received a spiritual gift. The latter describes it as grace or an unmerited blessing while the former describes it as the result of the incomparable Christ's generous giving.

Therefore, the declarative statement *Heni de hekastō hēmōn edothē hē charis* (Ἑνὶ δὲ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν ἐδόθη °ἡ χάρις), "**but to each one of us grace was generously given**" is "in agreement with" the prepositional phrase *kata to metron tēs dōreas tou Christou* (κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τῆς δωρεᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**according to the incomparable Christ's proportionate generous giving**." Consequently, the grace or unmerited blessing each church age believer was generously given at the moment of justification is "in agreement" with the incomparable Christ's proportionate generous giving. In other words, they are "equivalent to" each other or "identical" to each other" or "one in the same."

This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the expression *Heni hekastō hēmōn* (Ἑνὶ ἑκάστῳ ἡμῶν), "**each one of us**" corresponds to the articular expression *to metron* (τὸ μέτρον), "**proportionate**" because the latter describes these spiritual gifts as being made harmonious or symmetrical with each other and the former speaks of each church age believer without exception. In other words, the latter

describes these gifts as being marked by due proportion, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to each other or to the whole of the body of Christ and the former speaks of each member of the body of Christ. Secondly, the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**was generously given**" is the cognate verb of the noun *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**generous giving**." Both are referring to giving generously to someone. Lastly, the nouns *charis* (χάρις), "**grace**" and *dōrea* (δωρεά), "**generous gift**" express the concept of something that is non-meritorious.

Now, in Ephesians 4:1-3, the apostle Paul exhorts the recipients of this epistle to maintain unity with each other experientially through the practice of the command to love one another, which will manifest the love of God in their lives. Then, in Ephesians 4:4-6, he presents a list of seven essential, fundamental elements or spiritual realities, which define Christian unity in a positional sense. These seven essential, fundamental elements or spiritual realities, which define Christian unity in a positional sense, serve as the basis for the exhortation to maintain unity experientially through obedience to the command to love one another as Christ loved the believer. Next, in Ephesians 4:7-11, Paul presents the means by which the church age believer is to practice the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command to love one another as He has loved the believer. Namely, they are to practice this command by operating or functioning in their spiritual gift. In other words, the believer is to practice the love of God by utilizing their spiritual gift for the benefit of their fellow believers. Just as a car runs on gas or just as an electric car runs on electricity, so the believer's runs on the love of God when they obey the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved them.

Paul's statement in Ephesians 4:7 is echoed by a portion of the contents of 1 Peter 4:10 and specifically the first statement in this verse.

1 Peter 4:10 Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God. (NET).

Ephesians 4:8 is a strong inferential statement, which is composed of the following: (1) Temporal participial clause *anabas eis hypsos* (ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος), "**When He ascended to the highest place**" (Author's translation) (2) Declarative statement: *ēchmalōteusen aichmalōsian* (*ἠχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν*), "**he captured captives**." (Author's translation) (3) Declarative statement: *edōken domata ⌜tois anthrōpois* (*ἔδωκεν δόματα ⌜τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*), "**He generously gave gifts to certain members of the human race**." (Author's translation)

This strong inferential statement quotes Psalm 68:18 as confirmation or as the basis for Paul's assertion in Ephesians 4:7, which asserts that grace in the form of a spiritual gift was given to each church age believer at the moment of justification which corresponds to the incomparable Christ's proportionate gracious giving. In Ephesians 4:8, he employs the strong inferential conjunction *dio* (διό) to introduce a quotation from Psalm 68:18, which actually summarizes the contents of Psalm 68

because as we will note the latter contains many words which are similar to the words found in Psalm 68:18. This quotation is a prophecy of the Messiah and actually called a "divine Warrior" psalm, which is a call for the Messiah to rescue His people. It asserts that the Messiah captured captives and gave gifts to men when He ascended to the highest place. This was fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth when He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father after His resurrection.

Therefore, the strong inference here in Ephesians 4:8 from the assertion Ephesians 4:7 is that Jesus Christ fulfilled the contents of the Messianic Divine Warrior prophecy in Psalm 68. He did this when He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father after His resurrection while bringing with Him the dead Old Testament saints and the saints who died before His resurrection and also giving spiritual gifts to the members of His body, His future bride, the church. In other words, the contents of Ephesians 4:7 are confirmed by the contents of Psalm 68 in that Jesus Christ fulfilled the latter when He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father after His resurrection while bringing with Him the dead Old Testament saints and the saints who died before His resurrection and also giving spiritual gifts to the members of His body, His future bride, the church. The contents of this quotation serves as the basis for the assertion in Ephesians 4:7.

Now, in Ephesians 4:8, Paul employs the third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *legō* (λέγω) to introduce this Old Testament quotation. This verb pertains to expressing oneself orally or in written form with indication of the pers. or thing about which something is said, or that is meant by something.[99] The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is the Old Testament Scriptures and in particular Psalm 68:18.

The present tense of the verb *legō* (λέγω) is used in indirect discourse and the syntactical category of the present tense of this verb is a "perfective" present, which is used to emphasize the results of a past action. The past action is Jesus Christ authorizing the distribution of spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit to those whom the Father declared justified through faith in Himself. The result is that these justified sinners received a spiritual gift.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:8 Paul quotes from Psalm 68:18. The following is the Massoretic text (MT) of Psalm 68:18: עָלִית לַמָּרוֹם שָׁבִיתָ שֶּׁבִי לָקַחְתָּ מַתָּנוֹת בָּאָדָם. The following is the Septuagint (LXX) text of Psalm 68:18: ἀνέβης εἰς ὕψος ἠχμαλώτευσας αἰχμαλωσίαν, ἔλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ.

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pers. **pers.** = person(s)
someth. **someth.** = something
[99] Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). In *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (3rd ed., p. 588). University of Chicago Press.

Psalm 68:18 You ascend on high, you have taken many captives. You receive tribute from men, including even sinful rebels. Indeed the Lord God lives there! (NET)

Paul's use of Psalm 68:18 here in Ephesians 4:8 as support for his assertion in Ephesians 4:7 has created enormous difficulties for interpreters throughout the centuries. The major problem lies with Paul's apparent alteration of this quotation because the Hebrew the text of Psalm 68:18 asserts that the Messiah received tribute or gifts from men but the Greek text of Ephesians 4:8 states that Jesus Christ gave gifts to men instead.

Like many expositors, this author interprets Paul as not attempting to quote Psalm 68:18 specifically or verbatim but rather he is simply summarizing the entire contents of Psalm 68, which is a Divine Warrior Psalm calling for the Messiah to rescue His people. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that Psalm 68 contains many words which are similar to the words found in Psalm 68:18. Psalm 68:18 asserts that the Messiah captured captives and gave gifts to men when He ascended to the highest place. Paul also as noted above changes the text for the purpose of supporting his assertion in Ephesians 4:7. He can do this because he's an apostle of Jesus Christ and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In other words, Paul was writing Scripture. Psalm 68 to certain extent was fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth when He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father after His resurrection. It will be completely fulfilled at His Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign. The purpose of this quotation is to assert that Jesus Christ fulfilled the contents of the Messianic Divine Warrior prophecy in Psalm 68 when He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father after His resurrection. The quotation from Psalm 68:18 by Paul in Ephesians 4:8 serves as the basis for the assertion in Ephesians 4:7.

This author believes that the reason why Paul changed the text from the Messiah receiving gifts to giving them is that he was attempting to emphasize the transcendent nature of God's love from which He pours out unmerited blessings to sinners who trust in Him as Savior, i.e., grace. The Psalmist describes the Divine Warrior, i.e., the Lord ascending His throne after defeating His enemies and receiving tribute or gifts from those whom He had conquered. However, Paul in Ephesians 4:8 describes the Lord Jesus as ascending into heaven but instead of receiving gifts from His enemies, He instead gave gifts to them, namely, regenerate human beings who once belonged to Satan's kingdom and were enslaved to the sin nature. In other words, the Lord gave gifts to those who were once His enemies. This beautifully describes God's grace policy towards sinners and which policy flows from the exercise of the attribute of His love. Therefore, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul is giving us additional revelation of the Messiah, which is in addition to the revelation of Him in Psalm 68. The latter will be perfectly fulfilled

during Jesus Christ's Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign when the nations of the earth at that time will bring tribute to the Lord who will be King over the earth's inhabitants.

The apostle Paul chose Psalm 68 for at least three reasons. First, it exalts in God's victory over his enemies and describes the victorious triumphal procession of the victorious Lord receiving gifts from the defeated kings and praise from those whom He delivered. This will be fulfilled during Jesus Christ's millennial reign. Secondly, this psalm alludes to an extremely important theme in Ephesians, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ defeated Satan and his fellow evil spirits and restored the rulership of planet earth to human beings (Ephesians 1:10, 20-21, 3:10, 6:10-18). In fact, in Colossians, Paul teaches that Jesus Christ disarmed Satan and the members of his kingdom and made public spectacle of them by means of His suffering the wrath of His Father in the place of all of unregenerate humanity on the cross (Col. 2:15). Thirdly, the word "ascend" in this psalm is an important theme in Paul's Christology because in Romans 10:6-8, he quotes Deuteronomy 30:12-14 to teach the Roman Christian community that the return of Christ is imminent and is still offering salvation to all of humanity. Also, the Christ hymn in Philippians 2:6-11 describes Jesus Christ as the Son of God who descended to earth and then ascending back to His Father after His resurrection and receiving the sovereign rulership over all of creation and every creature as a result of suffering the wrath of His Father on the cross for all of sinful humanity.

Now, in Ephesians 4;8, the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) pertains to travelling up to a specific physical location. The upward movement may be of almost any gradient, for example, in going up a road to Jerusalem (Ga 1:17) or in going up into a tree (Lk 19:4) or in ascending into heaven (Ac 2:34).[100] The referent of the masculine singular form of this verb is Jesus Christ. We also noted that the noun *hypsos* (ὕψος), "**the highest point**" not only pertains to a location above the earth and associated with supernatural events or beings[101] but also the highest part of creation, which is the throne room of God in the third heaven. We also noted that it is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of direction towards a particular physical location with reference to bodily motion. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *eis hypsos* (*εἰς ὕψος*) expresses the upward physical motion of Jesus Christ's resurrection body into the throne room of God at the right hand of the Father. Thus, the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) and the prepositional phrase *eis hypsos* (*εἰς ὕψος*) are referring to Jesus Christ's ascension to the right hand of the Father forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:9-11). The participle conjugation of the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) is a temporal participle which expresses the idea that Jesus Christ

[100] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 195). United Bible Societies.
[101] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 3). United Bible Societies.

captured captives and gave gifts to those sinners declared justified by His Father through faith in Himself "when" He ascended to the right hand of His heavenly Father.

Therefore, the temporal participial clause asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to the highest place. This is a reference to being seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father forty days after His resurrection. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that in Ephesians 1:20-21, Paul teaches that the Lord sat down at the right hand of His heavenly Father. Furthermore, the Lord first distributed spiritual gifts to Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. At that time, His disciples first received the gift of the Holy Spirit, which resulted in them not only being baptized into Christ or identified with Him but also receiving a spiritual gift. Thus, the implication of Paul's assertion in Ephesians 4:8 is that the Lord not only ascended to the highest place but for the purpose of being seated at His Father's right hand. In fact, the prepositional phrase *eis hypsos* (*εἰς ὕψος*), "**to the highest place**" is identifying the location to which Jesus Christ ascended.

Now, when the Lord Jesus Christ sat down at the right hand of the Father, He was declared the victor over Satan. Consequently, He received the title deed of planet earth and assumed the sovereign rulership over the earth at that time. By seating His Son, Jesus Christ and His bride the church at His right hand and placing every animate and inanimate object under their authority, the Father restored humanity to its original position, namely rulership over the earth. This restoration of humanity to rulership over the earth is prophesied about in Daniel 7:14. Also, the title deed to the earth that is mentioned in Revelation 5 is related to the rulership of the earth. In this chapter, this title deed to the earth was sealed with seven seals, which no one moral rational creature in creation was able to open except Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:26-30, Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2:7-8 teach that mankind was designed to rule over the works of God's creation. Adam was created and designed in the image and likeness of God in order that he might exercise sovereign authority over all creation. So Adam was created and designed in the image and likeness of God in order that he might exercise sovereign authority over all creation (Psalm 8). However, the rulership of the creation was lost by Adam and the Woman in the Garden of Eden when they disobeyed the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3). Satan usurped the rulership of the first Adam over the earth when he deceived the woman into disobeying the Lord's prohibition to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and getting Adam to do so as well. However, the Last Adam, the God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ has regained that rulership over the earth with His obedience to the Father's will in going to the cross in order to suffer the wrath of God as a substitute for all of sinful humanity (Rom. 5:12-21; Hebrews 2:6-9).

That Satan is the temporary authority over the earth is indicated in that 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that he is the "**god of this world**." 1 John 5:19 states all the unregenerate inhabitants of planet earth are united with Satan. The Lord Jesus Christ's death on the cross gained the rulership of the earth back for mankind according to Philippians 2:5-11 and Hebrews 2:9.

In Hebrews 2:6-8a, we have the record of God's purpose for mankind decreed whereas in Hebrews 2:8, we have this purpose delayed due to the Fall and in Hebrews 2:9, 14 and 17 we have this purpose accomplished through the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 8 teaches that all things are not in subjection to the members of the human race. However, verse 9 does asserts that Jesus was crowned with glory and honor as a result of His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross.

Now, the church is the bride of Christ according to Ephesians 5:32 and a comparison of this verse with Ephesians 2:6, and Colossians 3:1-4, which assert that the church age believers identified with Christ in His resurrection and session, implies that the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride, the church will restore humanity to its rightful place as rulers of the earth. As we noted in our study of Ephesians 1:3-14, 2:11-22 and 3:2-13, the mystery of the Father's will is tied to the millennial reign of Christ because it reveals that the church will be the bride of His Son and together the two will restore humanity to rulership over the earth. The church's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand is the means by which the Father is providing a bride for His Son and restoring the human race to rulership over the earth.

In Ephesians 1-3, Paul is communicating to the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who we noted were Gentile Christians living in the various cities and towns throughout the Roman province of Asia, that they and Jewish Christians like himself have victory over Satan and his armies. The first reason for this is that they are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Spirit at justification. The second reason is that Jesus Christ and His bride, the church will dispossess Satan and his armies at His Second Advent, which will establish the millennial reign of Christ. During which time, the church will reign with Him.

By suffering the wrath of God in the place of all of unregenerate humanity, Jesus Christ propitiated the Father's holiness, which demanded that sin and sinners experience His wrath for all of eternity. Also, He redeemed all of unregenerate humanity from the slave market of sin in which they were all born physically alive yet spiritually dead. He also reconciled all of unregenerate humanity to a holy God. This constitutes the finished work of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ's resurrection, ascension and session at His heavenly Father's right hand was His Father's vindication of His Son in the sense that He had accepted His Son's sacrifice on behalf of all of sinful humanity as the propitiation for the sins of sinful humanity. Thus, His

suffering reconciled sinful humanity to a holy God. It also redeemed sinful humanity out of the slave market of sin in which all were born physically alive yet spiritually dead.

This so great salvation is appropriated by the unregenerate sinner when they are declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, they are placed in union with His Son and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. Consequently, they become members of His Son's body and eventual bride and along with Jesus Christ constitute the new humanity which will dispossess Satan and his fellow evil spirits at His Second Advent and will rule for a thousand years on earth.

In Ephesians 4:8, the verb *aichmalōteuō* (αἰχμαλωτεύω) is a technical military term for causing someone to become a prisoner of war[102] pertaining to taking possession of someone by physical force as after an invasion. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is Jesus Christ. The noun *aichmalōsia* (αἰχμαλωσία) is the cognate noun of the verb *aichmalōteuō* (αἰχμαλωτεύω) and means "captive" since the word pertains to the state of being taken as a prisoner of war and kept a captive.[103]

Among expositors, there are two interpretations with regards to the referent of this noun: (1) The enemies of Jesu Christ as enumerated by Paul in Ephesians 2:1-3, namely, the sin nature, Satan and cosmic world system governed by his fellow evil spirits. (2) The people who had been enslaved or held as captives of the sin nature, Satan and his fellow evil spirits who under his authority rule his cosmic world system. The second interpretation makes the most sense because the text of Ephesians 4:8 says that these individuals who were captured by Jesus Christ or made His prisoners were already existing in the state of being prisoners of war or captives.

Therefore, this noun *aichmalōsia* (αἰχμαλωσία) refers to those sinners who were declared justified by the Father when they trusted in His Son, Jesus Christ as their Savior and who were once slaves to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic world system and thus held as captives or prisoners by the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic world system.

Therefore, the first declarative statement which helps to complete the thought of the temporal participial clause in Ephesians 4:8 asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ captured these justified sinners when He ascended to the right hand of the Father. Those whom He captured were those sinners who had been enslaved or held as captives of the sin nature, Satan and his fellow evil spirits who under his authority

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[102] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 550). United Bible Societies.
[103] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 550). United Bible Societies.

rule his cosmic world system but were freed from this enslavement through faith in Jesus Christ.

These justified sinners were not only church age believers but also Old Testament saints who looked forward in faith to the Messiah. In fact, in Ephesians 4:9, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ descended into the lower regions of the earth, which took place after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection. He descended into "Hades" or as it is called in the Old Testament, "Sheol," which contained two compartments: (1) Paradise: the place of the departed souls of believers before the resurrection of Christ (Lk. 23:39-43; Eph. 4:8-9) who were transferred to heaven after the resurrection of Christ (Eph. 4:10). (2) Torments: the temporary fire for the souls of unbelievers from all dispensations (Lk. 16:19-31). Therefore, Jesus Christ removed the Old Testament saints that were located in the Paradise portion of Hades and brought them to heaven. Those believers who died before the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like the thief on the cross, were brought to heaven by Him along with the dead Old Testament saints (Lk. 23:43).

In Ephesians 4:8, the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) means "to give generously" since the word pertains in this context to giving someone something implying something of great value and a gift. It speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is of course Jesus Christ.

The noun *doma* (δόμα) pertains to that which is given to someone without expectation of payment. In other words, it pertains to something transferred to a person as an object to be received without compensation. In context, the referent of this word is the spiritual gifts that each church age believer received at the moment of justification from the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ while seated at the right hand of His heavenly Father.

The noun *anthropos* (ἄνθρωπος) means "the members of the human race" since the word pertains to the members of the human race in a generic sense as a collection of various people groups. In context, the referent of this word are those members of the human race who trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior. Consequently, they were declared justified by the Father and simultaneously regenerated by the Holy Spirit. They were also at justification placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Spirit.

This interpretation is indicated by the articular construction of this word, which is generic which indicates that it is distinguishing justified, regenerated members of the human race from those who are unrepentant, unregenerated sinners enslaved to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic world system. Furthermore, the context indicates this as well because Jesus Christ did not give spiritual gifts to every member of the human race and in particular unrepentant, unregenerate sinners. On the contrary, He

gave spiritual gifts to only those sinners who are members of His body and are His bride as a result of being declared justified by His heavenly Father through faith in Him. Simultaneously, as we noted, at justification, they were placed in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His Father's right hand.

Therefore, the second declarative statement which also helps to complete the thought of the temporal participial clause in Ephesians 4:8 asserts that not only did the Lord Jesus capture captives but He also gave gifts to certain members of the human race when He ascended to the right hand of the Father. This statement refers to Jesus Christ authorizing the Holy Spirit to give spiritual gifts to those sinners who have been declared justified through faith in Him by His heavenly Father. Simultaneously, we noted, they were placed in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at His Father's right hand. As we noted in our study of Ephesians 4:7, Paul discusses these spiritual gifts not only in Ephesians 4:11 but also 1 Corinthians 12:28-30, 1 Corinthians 12, and Romans 12:3-8. Peter discusses them in 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:8, the apostle Paul asserts quotes Psalm 68:18 to support his assertion in Ephesians 4:7 that Jesus Christ gave grace in the form of a spiritual gift to each member of the body of Christ which corresponds to the incomparable Christ's gracious giving. The quote states that Jesus Christ captured captives when He ascended to the highest place in creation, namely the right hand of His heavenly Father. He then slightly changes the quote, which asserts that He received gifts from men. However, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ generously gave them gifts when He ascended to the highest place in creation, namely the right hand of His heavenly Father.

The church age believer was once the enemy of God because of being enslaved to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic world system prior to justification but now they are adopted members of His family and future bride who will reign with Him during His millennial reign. The church age believer was not only captured by Jesus Christ at their justification but also at that moment they received a spiritual gift. They were once the slaves or captives of the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system but were captured by Jesus Christ at the moment of justification. While seated at the right hand of the Father, on the day of Pentecost, Jesus Christ first gave spiritual gifts to those who had trusted in Him as Savior and were thus declared justified by His heavenly Father (Acts 2). Jesus Christ will continue to give spiritual gifts to those who trust in Him as Savior until the rapture of the church, which is imminent.

Not only does Paul mention Jesus Christ's ascension and by way of implication, His session in Ephesians 4:8 but he also does so in Ephesians 1:15-23. In the latter, Paul refers to not only Jesus Christ's resurrection explicitly but also His ascension

into the third heaven and present session at the right hand of the Father as a result of His over Satan and his kingdom at the cross.

Ephesians 4:9 is composed of the following: (1) rhetorical question: *to anebē ti estin* (τὸ *ἀνέβη* τί ἐστιν), "**what is the meaning of the statement, 'he ascended?'**" (Author's translation) (2) appositional clause: *ei mē hoti kai katebē eis ta katōtera merē tēs gēs* (εἰ μὴ ὅτι καὶ κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς), "**Namely that, he also descended into the lower regions, which are part of the earth?**" (Author's translation)

This rhetorical question and appositional clause serve to explain the previous quotation from Psalm 68:18, which Paul uses in Ephesians 4:8 to support his assertion in Ephesians 4:7. In fact, not only does Paul explain this quotation in Ephesians 4:9 but he also does so in Ephesians 4:10. He is not simply explaining what Christ's ascension means but the entire quotation is being explained.

The interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις), "**what**" introduces a rhetorical question, which Paul then in turn explains in the rest of the verse and in Ephesians 4;10. The referent of this interrogative pronoun is identified by the rest of the verse, namely, *ei mē hoti kai katebē eis ta katōtera merē tēs gēs* (εἰ μὴ ὅτι καὶ κατέβη εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς), "**except that he also descended to the lower regions, namely, the earth?**" (NET)

The verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) here in Ephesians 4:9 and as was the case in Ephesians 4:8 refers to the act of Jesus Christ ascending to the right hand of His heavenly Father forty days after His resurrection.

We also noted that in Ephesians 4:9 the third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) means "to be equivalent to, to be identical to" since the word pertains to showing how something is to be understood. In context, it pertains to expressing or conveying or explaining the meaning of the Psalm 68:18, which Paul quotes in Ephesians 4:8. Therefore, this would indicate that Jesus Christ descending to the lower parts of the earth as the subject performs the action of explaining the quotation from Psalm 68:18, which Paul uses in Ephesians 4:8 to support his assertion in Ephesians 4:7.

The interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις) functions here as the nominative subject, which would indicate that Jesus Christ descending to the lower parts of the earth as the subject performs the action of explaining the quotation from Psalm 68:18, which Paul uses in Ephesians 4:8 to support his assertion in Ephesians 4:7.

The predicate nominative is the third person singular aorist active indicative conjugation of the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω), which would indicate that this word is making an assertion about the subject. This would indicate that Jesus Christ's ascension is making an assertion about the subject, which is His descending to the lower regions of the earth. Specifically, the assertion is that Jesus Christ's ascension is explained as His descending to the lower parts of the earth.

We also noted that the conditional particle *ei* (εἰ) and the negative particle *me* (μή) coalesce into one particle and together they function as an explanatory marker meaning the word is introducing an assertion which answers the previous rhetorical question and defines or explains the meaning of Jesus Christ's ascension to the right hand of the Father.

The conjunction *hoti* (ὅτι), "**that**" is employed with the indicative mood of the verb *katabainō* (καταβαίνω), "**he descended**" in order to form an appositional clause, which means that it stands in apposition to the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις) and identifies the referent of the latter.

The conjunction *kai* (καί) "**also**" is adjunctive meaning that the word introduces the verb *katabainō* (καταβαίνω), "**he descended**," which serves as an addition to the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω), "**he ascended**" and helps to define the meaning or explain the meaning of the latter. Jesus Christ first had to descend to the lower regions of the earth before He ascended to the right hand of His heavenly Father because before He could give gifts to those who trust in Him as Savior, He first had to redeem these individuals and reconcile them to His Father who is holy by propitiating the Father's holiness, which demanded that sin and sinners experience His wrath in the eternal lake of fire.

The verb *katabainō* (καταβαίνω) expresses the idea of Jesus Christ "descending" into the lower regions of the earth. The adjective *katōteros* (κατώτερος), "**the lower**" pertains to being in a position below a point of orientation. In context, it speaks of a position lower than the surface of the earth and thus underneath the earth's surface. The noun *meros* (μέρος), "**regions**" refers to the regions underneath the surface of the earth and the noun *gē* (γῆ), "**the earth**" pertains to the place where human beings and animals live and in the modern sense is the third plant from the sun. The articular construction of this word is generic meaning it is distinguishing planet earth from the three levels of heaven, which are the earth's atmosphere, the stellar universe and the throne room of God.

The noun *gē* (γῆ) is interpreted by some expositors as functioning as a genitive of apposition or an epexegetical genitive, which takes place when the substantive in the genitive case refers to the same thing as the substantive to which it is related. The genitive of apposition typically states a specific example that is a part of the larger category named by the head noun. It is frequently used when the head noun is ambiguous or metaphorical (hence the name "epexegetical genitive" is quite appropriate).[104]

This interpretation of the genitive case of the *gē* (γῆ) would express the idea that Jesus Christ descended "into the lower parts, namely, the earth." The NET Bible has

[104] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 95). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

the following note on this interpretation, they writes "Many recent scholars hold this view and argue that it is a reference to the incarnation."

They also state another interpretation of the genitive form of this noun is that it refers to the descent of Jesus Christ occurs "after" His ascent rather than before it and refers to the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (cf. Acts 4:11–16). Support for this latter view is found in the intertestamental and rabbinic use of Ps 68:18 (quoted in v. 8), which is consistently and solely interpreted as a reference to Moses' ascent of Mt. Sinai to "capture" the words of the law. The probability, therefore, is that the comments here in v. 9 reflect a polemic against the interpretation of Ps 68:18 in certain circles as a reference to Moses. See W. H. Harris, *The Descent of Christ* (AGJU 32), 46–54; 171–204.[105]

However, this author interprets the noun *gē* (γῆ) as functioning as a partitive genitive, which takes place when the substantive in the genitive denotes the whole of which the head noun is a part. In this present context, the head noun is *meros* (μέρος), "**regions**," which is modified by the adjective *katōteros* (κατώτερος), "**the lower**." Therefore, this indicates the noun *gē* (γῆ) denotes the whole of which the head noun is *meros* (μέρος) is a part. Thus, this construction indicates that the lower regions are part of planet earth. The NET Bible writes that "the traditional view understands it as a reference to the underworld (hell), where Jesus is thought to have descended in the three days between his death and resurrection."[106]

The noun *meros* (μέρος) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which is marking the area into which Jesus Christ descended after physically dying on the cross indicating that He descended "into" the lower regions, which are a part of the earth.

This author interprets the expression *eis ta katōtera merē tēs gēs* (εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς), "**into the lower regions, which are part of the earth**" as referring to Jesus Christ's descent into Hades after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection.

Hades or Sheol contains four compartments: (1) Paradise: the place of the departed souls of believers before the resurrection of Christ (Lk. 23:39-43; Eph. 4:8-9) who were transferred to heaven after the resurrection and ascension of Christ (Eph. 4:10). (2) Torments: the temporary fire for the souls of unbelievers from all dispensations (Lk. 16:19-31) who will be transferred to the Great White Throne Judgment that concludes human history and from there will be cast in the Lake of Fire forever (Rev. 20:11-15). (3) Tartarus: the abode of the fallen angels of Genesis 6 who possessed unregenerate men during the antediluvian period in order to have sex with unregenerate women in order to corrupt the character of the human race and thus prompt God to judge the human race and consequently prevent the

AGJU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums (a monograph series)

[105] Biblical Studies Press. (2005). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

[106] Biblical Studies Press. (2005). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

incarnation of the Son of God (1 Peter 3:18-22; 2 Peter 4; Jude 6). (4) The Abyss: the place of imprisonment for the demons who violated certain rules for angelic creation and will be released during the Tribulation (Lk. 8:30-31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 20:1-3).

Prior to the resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ, Old Testament saints when they died did not go to the third heaven but rather to Paradise. These Old Testament saints such as Abraham ascended with Jesus Christ into heaven as part of our Lord's triumphal procession as victor in the angelic conflict and were part of the booty from our Lord's victory that was accomplished through His death and resurrection.

In Ephesians 4:8, Paul quotes Psalm 68:18, which predicts that when Jesus Christ ascended to the highest place, he captured captives, who were the Old Testament saints that were located in the Paradise portion of Hades. This passage also asserts that he brought them to heaven. Those believers who died before the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like the thief on the cross, were brought to heaven by Him along with the dead Old Testament saints (Lk. 23:43).

That the expression *eis ta katōtera merē tēs gēs* (εἰς τὰ κατώτερα [μέρη] τῆς γῆς), "**into the lower regions, which are part of the earth**" refers to Jesus Christ's descent into Hades after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection is supported by the contents of 1 Peter 3:17-22. The latter speaks of Jesus Christ after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection proclaiming His victory over sin and Satan at the cross to unregenerate human beings who are now located in Torments.

1 Peter 3:17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil. 18 Because Christ also suffered once for sins, *the just for the unjust*, to bring you to God, by being put to death in the flesh but by being made alive in the spirit. 19 In it he went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 after they were disobedient long ago when God patiently waited in the days of Noah as an ark was being constructed. In the ark a few, that is eight souls, were delivered through water. 21 And this prefigured baptism, which now saves you—not the washing off of physical dirt but the pledge of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who went into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels and authorities and powers subject to him. (NET)

This author believes that the contents of 1 Peter 3:17-22 refer to the Lord Jesus Christ proclaiming His victory over sin and Satan at the cross to unregenerate human beings in Torments after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection. While in Hades, He also released regenerate humanity from Paradise and brought them with Him when He ascended to His heavenly Father.

The text does not support the interpretation that He preached repentance to these people through Noah. This is indicated by two factors. First, the term "repentance"

is not in the text. Unregenerate human beings cannot repent after they have died physically and neither can the fallen angels who are incarcerated in Tartarus (2 Pet. 2:4) or the Abyss (Rev. 9). Secondly, The referent of the neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**it**" in 1 Peter 3:19 is the neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**spirit**" which refers to the Lord's state of being disembodied after His physical death. This is indicated in that it parallels the noun *sarx* (σάρξ), "**flesh**" in 1 Peter 3:18 and speaks of His incarnation. Thus, the former speaks of the Lord while in the state of physical death and the latter speaks of His incarnation prior to His resurrection.

Thus, 1 Peter 3:19 is speaking of the Lord while in the state of being physically dead prior to His resurrection while possessing a soul and a human spirit. Therefore, we have a contrast between states with regards to Jesus Christ, namely, state of being alive during His incarnation and the state of being physically dead.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:9, Paul asserts that Jesus Christ descended into the lower regions of the earth, which took place after His physical death on the cross and before His resurrection. He descended into "Hades" or as it is called in the Old Testament, "Sheol." He proclaimed His victory over sin and Satan at the cross to unregenerate humanity in Torments and to regenerate humanity in Paradise. The former remained in Torments because they rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior and were thus children of the devil. However, He released those who trusted in Him as their Savior and brought them to the throne room of God with Him when He ascended to the right hand of His heavenly Father.

In Ephesians 4:8, the first declarative statement in this verse completes the thought of the temporal participial clause in this verse and together they assert that the Lord Jesus Christ captured captivity when He ascended to the right hand of the Father. As we noted, those whom He captured were those sinners who had been enslaved or held as captives of the sin nature, Satan and his fellow evil spirits who under his authority rule his cosmic world system but were freed from this enslavement through faith in Jesus Christ. These justified sinners were not only church age believers but also Old Testament saints who looked forward in faith to the Messiah. Those believers who died before the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like the thief on the cross, were brought to heaven by Him along with the dead Old Testament saints (Lk. 23:43).

Ephesians 4:9 and 1 Peter 3:19 are not the only passages which speak of Jesus Christ descending into Hades or Sheol after dying physically and before His resurrection but also Acts 2:31 and Romans 10:7 do as well.

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man clearly attested to you by God with powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs that God performed among you through him, just as you yourselves know—23 this man, who was handed over by the predetermined plan and

foreknowledge of God, you executed by nailing him to a cross at the hands of Gentiles. 24 But God raised him up, having released him from the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be held in its power. 25 For David says about him, '*I saw the Lord always in front of me*, *for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken*. 26 *Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced; my body also will live in hope*, 27 *because you will not leave my soul in Hades*, *nor permit your Holy One to experience decay*. 28 *You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of joy with your presence*.'" (NET)

Romans 10:1 Spiritual brothers, indeed, the desire produced by my own heart and in addition my specific detailed request on behalf of them is always for their deliverance. 2 Because I testify concerning them that they possess a zeal for God, however by no means according to an experiential knowledge. 3 Because they have in the past rejected the righteousness originating from God the Father and continue to do so up to the present moment. In fact, because they have in the past zealously sought to establish their own and continue to do so up to the present moment, they never submitted to the righteousness originating from God the Father. 4 Because (faith in) Christ is, as an eternal spiritual truth, the purpose of the Law resulting in righteousness for the benefit of each and every member of the human race to those who at any time do exercise absolute confidence (in Christ). 5 Because Moses writes concerning this particular righteousness, which is based upon obedience to the Law (as constituting a source of justification): "The person who obeys them will cause himself to live by means of them." 6 However, the righteousness originating from and based on faith speaks in the following manner: "Do not think in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" This does imply bringing Christ down 7 or, "Who will descend into the abyss?" This does imply bringing Christ up from the dead ones. (Author's translation)

The classical Greek understanding of *abussos* (ἄβυσσος), "abyss" is as an adjective meaning "bottomless, unfathomed, without limits." There is no classical understanding of the word as a particular place or region, i.e., the abyss, which only takes place later. Outside of the New Testament it is common as a substantive only in later papyri. The word likely acquired the senses found in the Septuagint and Greek New Testament from the influence of the Akkadian word *absu* (or *apsu*). Similarity in concept and sound may have prompted the Greek speakers in the Hellenistic period to make the equation. *Absu* could refer to subterranean waters, the ocean or sea, the abode of the dead and demons. All of these senses are found in the Septuagint and New Testament.

In the Septuagint, *abussos* (ἄβυσσος) occurs 33 times in canonical material and as noted before almost always translates *t^{e}hom*. The word was used for the ocean

depths (Genesis 1:2) and subterranean waters (Deuteronomy 8:7; cf. Genesis 7:11; 8:2). The word was also used for the exceeding "depths" of God's justice (Psalm 36:6 [LXX 35:6]). As we also noted earlier, it was used in Psalm 71:20 [LXX 70:20] to translate the Hebrew noun *t^{e}hom*, which in this passage, clearly refers to the place of the dead underneath the earth rather than the sea itself.

Psalm 71:20, "You who have shown me many troubles and distresses will revive me again and will bring me up again from the depths of the earth."

Paul clearly employs this use of *abussos* (ἄβυσσος) in Romans 10:7 where it refers to the abode of the death underneath the earth into which Christ descended immediately after His physical death and rose from three days later. This interpretation is indicated by Paul's statement "**that is, to bring Christ up from the dead**," which follows the question "**Who will descend into the abyss**?" The "**abyss**" is a compartment of Hades/Sheol. "**Hades**" is the name given in the New Testament for the temporary quarters for the souls of the dead and "**Sheol**" is the name given in the Old Testament.

Further support for the interpretation that Jesus Christ descended into Hades or Sheol after dying physically and before His resurrection in order to proclaim His victory over sin and Satan at the cross to unregenerate humanity in Torments and to regenerate humanity in Paradise and to bring the latter to the throne room of heaven Revelation 1:18. This passage teaches that Jesus Christ has the keys to death and Hades, which serves to support the view that Jesus Christ went to Hades to release the Old Testament saints in Paradise after His physical death and before His resurrection and to keep in Torments unregenerate humanity who are physically dead.

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day when I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, 11 saying: "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches—to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea." 12 I turned to see whose voice was speaking to me, and when I did so, I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands was one *like a son of man*. He was dressed in a robe extending down to his feet and he wore a wide golden belt around his chest. 14 His head and hair were as white as wool, even as white as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame. 15 His feet were like polished bronze refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp double-edged sword extended out of his mouth. His face shone like the sun shining at full strength. 17 When I saw him I fell down at his feet as though I were dead, but he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid! I am the first and the last, 18 and the one who lives! I was dead, but look, now I am alive—forever and ever—and I hold the keys of death and of Hades! (NET)

"**And I have the keys of death and of Hades**" speaks of the fact that because Jesus Christ conquered death, He possesses the keys to both death and Hades. The reference to "**the keys**" refers to authority and power. In Scripture, a key is a sign of authority and power. Jesus Christ's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which constituted suffering the wrath of God for all of sinful humanity resolve the problem of physical death because His suffering dealt with the reason for physical death, namely sin. His resurrection conquered physical death for those who trust in Him as Savior because they are identified with Him in His resurrection body which guarantees the justified sinner a resurrection body and victory over physical death. He possesses the key to Hades because He has conquered and resolved the problem of physical death in the world.

Ephesians 4:10 is composed of the following: (1) emphatic declarative statement: *ho katabas autos estin kai ho anabas hyperanō pantōn tōn ouranōn* (ὁ καταβὰς αὐτός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ *ἀναβὰς* ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν), "**He, the very one who has descended is the one who also has ascended above each and every one of the heavens**." (Author's translation) (2) purpose clause: *hina plērōsē ta panta* (ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα), "**in order that He would enter into the state of bringing to completion each and every animate and inanimate object**."(Author's translation)

Therefore, the declarative statement emphatically asserts that the one who has descended is the same one who also has ascended above each and every one of the heavens. It is a solemn emphatic declarative statement because Paul is using the figure of asyndeton and refers to Jesus Christ descending to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection as well as His ascension to the right hand of His heavenly Father. which took place forty days after His resurrection.

So therefore, like Ephesians 4:9, Ephesians 4:10 is also speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ descending to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection and also ascending to the right hand of the Father forty days after His resurrection. Hoehner writes "These two verses are parenthetical in thought because the issue of the passage is the giving of gifts."[107]

We also noted that as was the case in Ephesians 4:9, the verb *katabainō* (καταβαίνω) here in Ephesians 4:10 means "to descend" since the word pertains to moving from a higher place to a lower one. In other words, it pertains to moving downward and lower to a physical location. In both verses, the referent of the third person singular form of this verb is of course, Jesus Christ. The location in which Jesus Christ descended is identified in Ephesians 4:9 by the prepositional phrase *eis ta katōtera merē tēs gēs* (εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς), "**into the lower regions, which are part of the earth**" (Author's translation). Therefore, this verb in both

[107] Hoehner, H. W. (1985). Ephesians. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 634). Victor Books.

verses expresses the idea of Jesus Christ "descending" into the lower regions of the earth.

The referent of the nominative masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**He…very one**" is of course the Lord Jesus Christ and emphasizes the Lord's identity and is the demonstrative force intensified. It functions as a nominative in simple apposition, which describes the Lord with emphasis and to mark a contrast between His descending to Hades and ascending to the right hand of His heavenly Father.

The use of the nominative first person singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) here in Ephesians 4:10 is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the subject. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

In context, the finite verb appears here in Ephesians 4:10 is the first articular nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *katabainō* (καταβαίνω), "**the one who has descended**." The intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) is used for emphasis and contrast. First, it emphasizes with the reader that Jesus Christ descended to Hades. Secondly, it is used to mark a contrast between Jesus Christ descended to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection and the Lord ascending to the right hand of the Father after His resurrection.

The third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) expresses the idea that Jesus Christ who descended to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection "exists in the state of being identical to" the one who ascended to the right hand of the Father after His resurrection with the implication they are one in the same person.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:8 and 9, we also noted that the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) here in Ephesians 4:10 refers to Jesus Christ ascending to His heavenly Father forty days after His resurrection. The participial conjugation of the verb *anabainō* (ἀναβαίνω) functions as the predicate nominative, which indicates that the word is making an assertion that Jesus Christ not only descended to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection, but He also ascended to the right hand of His heavenly Father forty days after His resurrection.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:10 and 3:15, the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός) here in Ephesians 4:10 is in the plural and means "heavens" referring to all three levels of heaven. The original language of Scripture teach that there are three levels of heaven. This multiplicity of heavens is indicated in Ephesians 4:10 and Hebrews 4:14 where our Lord at His Ascension is said to have "passed through the heavens" (accusative masculine plural noun *ouranos*). The first and second heaven are not specifically

mentioned but the third heaven is discussed in 2 Corinthians 12:2. Logically speaking, it is evident that there cannot be a third heaven without also a first and second heaven.

The first heaven is the earth's atmosphere which surrounds the earth (Mt. 6:26; 8:20; 16:2-3; 24:30; Mk. 4:32; 13:27; Lk. 8:5; 9:58; 12:56; 13:19; 17:24; Acts 1:10-11; 4:24; 10:11, 12; 11:6). The second heaven is the stellar universe or space which consists of a vast array of stars, moons, suns, galaxies and solar systems (Mt. 24:29; Mk. 1:10; 13:25; Lk. 11:16; 17:29; 21:26, 33; He. 11:12; R. 6:13-14). The third heaven was also created by the Lord Jesus Christ (Psa. 102:25; 115:15; 124:8; 134:3; Isa. 45:12; 51:13; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 12:1; John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:10). He will also be the Creator of the new heavens and new earth (Isa. 65:17).

The Scriptures teach that the third heaven is the abode of the Trinity (Gen. 14:19, 22; 23:3, 7; 1 Kings 8:30, 49; 2 Chron. 6:21, 30; Neh. 1:4-5; 2:4, 20; Psa. 11:4; 20:6; 33:14; 103:19; Isa. 63:.5; 66:1; Matt. 5:34; Luke 16:9; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 7:56; 2 Cor. 12:2; Heb. 2:10; Rev. 19:14).

The inhabitants of the third heaven: (1) The Trinity (2) Elect Angels (3) OT saints (4) The dead church age believers (5) Fallen Angels.

The articular genitive masculine plural form of the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός) is modified by the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), which pertains to not only the totality of something but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The articular form of the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός) is indicating the first predicate position of this adjective, which indicates the adjective is slightly more emphatic than the noun.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:21, the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός) here in Ephesians 4:10 is the object of the improper preposition *hyperanō* (ὑπεράνω), which marks the location to which Jesus Christ ascended after His resurrection. Namely, He ascended above all three levels of heaven when He ascended to the right hand of His heavenly Father.

This emphatic and solemn declarative statement in Ephesians 4:10, which asserts that Jesus Christ is the very one who has descended is identical to the one who has also ascended above each and every one of the heavens is followed by a *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause, which presents the purpose of the Lord's ascension. It states that the purpose of His ascension to the right hand of His heavenly Father was to bring to completion each and every animate and inanimate object in the sense redeeming them from the curse of sin and Satan.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) here in Ephesians 4:10 pertains to causing something to be brought to completion, or to complete an activity. In both verses, the referent of the masculine singular form of this verb being Jesus Christ. Therefore, in both verses, this verb speaks of Jesus Christ bringing to

completion every animate and inanimate object in creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, the articular accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) here in Ephesians 4:10 is the accusative direct object of this verb and pertains to the totality of inanimate and animate objects that are contained in the first, second and third heavens and the earth. In other words, this adjective pertains to the totality of animate and inanimate objects that are contained in creation, which would include all marine life, bird life, terrestrial life, human beings and angels.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) here in Ephesians 4:10 is used in a distributive sense meaning "each and every thing" emphasizing no exceptions. Thus, the distributive use of this adjective emphasizes that "the totality of" inanimate and animate objects that are contained in the three levels of heaven "without exception" being brought to completion by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In both instances, the word refers to the totality of animate and inanimate objects that are contained in the first, second and third heavens and the earth: (1) Stars, satellites, and planets that compose the stellar universe. (2) Earth's sun and moon. (3) Vegetation on the earth (4) Marine life (5) Bird life (6) Terrestrial life. (7) Human beings (8) Angels. This adjective would include the orderly arrangement of the heavens and the earth and all things in their complex order and composition as created by God, created in perfect order and subject to the laws God established to govern its operation (Matt. 13:35; John 21:25; Acts 17:24).

The aorist tense of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is an ingressive aorist, which emphasizes Jesus Christ's ascension to the right hand of His heavenly Father entered Him into the state of bringing to completion every animate and inanimate object in creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan.

Therefore, the *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause here in Ephesians 4:10 presents the purpose of the Lord's ascension and asserts that its purpose was to bring to completion each and every animate and inanimate object. This speaks of Jesus Christ redeeming all of creation from the curse of sin and Satan. In other words, by ascending to the right hand of the Father, Jesus Christ assumed sovereign rulership over every creature and all of creation. He also received the title deed to planet earth, which makes Him the rightful ruler of the earth. Consequently, at His Second Advent He will remove Satan and the members of his kingdom as rulers of the earth.

Thus, Jesus Christ will redeem all of creation from the curse of sin and Satan at His Second Advent, which will not only terminate the seventieth week and the Times of the Gentiles but also terminate Satan's rulership over the earth. At that time, He will destroy the Tribulational armies, have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:11-19), will imprison Satan and the members of his

kingdom for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3) and will establish His millennial reign on planet earth (Rev. 20:4-6).

At that time, the Lord and His armies will orbit the earth before landing on the Mount of Olives, which was the site of His Ascension (Acts. 1:9-11). There will be a great earthquake when our Lord's foot touches the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1-8) and will be a unique day having neither day nor night (Zech. 14:7). The Lord Jesus Christ describes the Tribulation period in detail and His Second Advent in Matthew 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28.

The "Second Advent" of Jesus Christ is taught in both the Old and New Testaments (Deuteronomy 30:3; Psalm 2:1-9; 24:7-10; 96:10-13; 110; Isaiah 9:6-7; 63:1-6; Jeremiah 23:1-8; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:18-27; Zechariah 12; 14:1-9; Matthew 19:28; 24:27-31; Mark 13:24-30; Luke 12:35-40; 17:24-37; 18:8; 21:25-28; Acts 1:10-11; 15:16-18; Romans 11:25-27; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Peter 3:3-4; Jude 14-15; Revelation 1:7-8; 2:25-28; 16:15; 19:11-21).

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ will usher His millennial reign when He and His bride, the church will rule over all creation for a thousand years. The Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ Himself will reign bodily in Jerusalem with His bride, the church for a thousand years as the King of the earth and Israel will be head of the nations. During the millennial reign of Christ, Satan and the members of his kingdom will be incarcerated for a thousand years. Israel will be regathered and the four unconditional covenants that the Lord established with the nation will be literally fulfilled. There will be perfect social, economic, environmental and political conditions during the millennial reign of Christ. During this time, God will make a display of the absolute authority of divine government through the rule of the Messiah.

Now, just as Paul speaks of Jesus Christ bringing each and every animate and inanimate object in their totality to completion in the sense that He would redeem them all from the curse of sin and Satan here in Ephesians 4:10, he also does so in Ephesians 1:23. In Ephesians 1:10, the apostle Paul speaks of Jesus Christ's millennial reign.

Ephesians 4:9-10 speaks of Jesus Christ's sovereign authority over every creature and all of creation. The term "sovereignty" connotes a situation in which a person, from his innate dignity, exercises supreme power, with no areas of his province outside his jurisdiction. As applied to God, the term "sovereignty" indicates His complete power over all of creation, so that He exercises His will absolutely, without any necessary conditioning by a finite will or wills.

Ephesians 4:11 begins a section in the Ephesian epistle, which ends in Ephesians 4:16. In verse 11, Paul presents a list of four communication gifts. The function of apostleship, prophecy and teaching is for the spiritual growth of the body of Christ while on the other hand, the function of the gift of evangelism is for the numerical

growth of the body of Christ. In verses 12-14, Paul presents the purpose of these gifts, namely, to provide capacity the members of the body of Christ to function in their spiritual gifts and also to provide spiritual nourishment in the form of sound doctrine to facilitate spiritual growth (vs. 12-13) and protection from false doctrine (vs. 14). Lastly, in verses 15-16, Paul addresses the subject of spiritual growth by practicing the teaching they received from the apostles, prophets and teacher by practicing the command to love one another as Christ loved the believer. He reiterates in verse 16 the importance of the function of these three gifts in relation to the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ. In this verse, he uses the ligament metaphor to describe these three communication gifts.

Now, Paul states in Ephesians 4:13 the ultimate purpose of these communication gifts is to promote unity in the body of Christ. This supports this author's contention that the purpose of Ephesians is to maintain unity experientially in the body of Christ with emphasis upon the Jewish and Gentile wings of the church maintaining this unity experientially by practicing the love of God when interacting with each other.

Like Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Peter 4:10-11, Ephesians 4:11-12 discusses spiritual grifts. However, unlike Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11 does not contain some sort of a list of spiritual gifts bestowed upon the body of Christ by the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, the emphasis in Ephesians 4:11-12 is the function of the communication gifts in the body of Christ whose function provides not only the capacity for the other gifts to function but also is instrumental in the spiritual growth of the body of Christ. The emphasis in Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12 is the diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ, whose function is to benefit the body itself. Lastly, the emphasis in 1 Peter 4:10-11 is the responsibility to employ one's gift to serve the body of Christ with the result of being a good steward with this gift which ultimately brings glory to God. Therefore, all these lists are not exhaustive but representative.

Ephesians 4:11 is a correlative clause, which presents the result of Paul's statements in Ephesians 4:8-10, which presents the basis for his assertion in Ephesians 4:7. In the latter Paul makes the assertion that to each member of the body of Christ, grace in the form of a spiritual gift was given according to the incomparable Christ's proportionate gracious giving. Verse 8 presents the inference from this statement in the form of a quotation from Psalm 68:18, which serves as the confirmation or as the basis for his assertion in verse 7. The quotation prophesies that the Divine Warrior, who is Jesus Christ, captured captives and generously gave gifts to certain members of the human race when He ascended to the highest place in creation, i.e., the right hand of the Father. Verse 9 is composed of a rhetorical question followed by an appositional clause, which together help to explain the quotation in verse 8. In fact, it explains the entire quotation from Psalm 68:18. Paul asks the meaning of the statement that "He ascended?" He answers this by stating

that “He also descended into the lower regions, which are part of the earth?” Verse 10 also explains the quotation by solemnly asserting that the one who has descended is the same one who also has ascended above each and every one of the heavens. The reference to descending in verses 9-10 refers to Jesus Christ descending to Hades after His physical death and before His resurrection. The reference to ascending refers to Jesus Christ ascending to the right hand of His heavenly Father, which took place forty days after His resurrection.

Now, in Ephesians 4:11, Paul uses the conjunction *kai* (καί) to introduce this correlative clause, which asserts that Jesus Christ Himself on the one hand generously gave to some in the body of Christ the gift of apostleship but on the other hand, He also graciously gave to some the gift of prophecy, and some the gift of evangelism and some the gift of teaching, which along the gift of leadership, constitutes the position of pastor in the church. This assertion presents the result of the contents of Ephesians 4:8-10. Therefore, this indicates that Jesus Christ gave these four communication spiritual gifts to men in the body of Christ “as a direct result of” ascending to the right hand of His heavenly Father ten days before the day of Pentecost. On that particular day, the Holy Spirit, who the Lord promised to His disciples they would receive from Him after He ascended to His Father, descended upon them and gave them spiritual gifts.

This correlative is formed by the particle of affirmation *men* (μέν) and the conjunction *de* (δέ), which is employed three times in Ephesians 4:11. The former functions as a particle of affirmation which presents the spiritual gift of apostleship, which Paul seeks to contrast with the spiritual gifts of prophecy, evangelism and teaching. On the other hand, the latter introduces these three spiritual gifts, which stand in contrast with the spiritual gift of apostleship. Therefore, these two words unite the giving of the spiritual gift of apostleship and the spiritual gifts of prophecy, evangelism and teaching because they all fall under the category of communication gifts.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:8, the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) here in Ephesians 4:11 means “to give generously ” since the word pertains in this context to giving someone something implying something of great value and a gift. It speaks of giving someone something as an expression of generosity. In context, it is used in relation to the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy, evangelism and teaching.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:10, the referent of the nominative masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) here in Ephesians 4:11 is the Lord Jesus Christ. This intensive personal pronoun emphasizes identity and is the demonstrative force intensified.

The use of the nominative first person singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) here in Ephesians 4:10 is unnecessary in Greek since the form of a finite verb in this language indicates the person, number and gender of the

subject. This is what makes Greek an "inflectional" language. When the personal pronoun is used therefore, it may serve to clarify the subject or contrast the subject with someone else or for emphasis.

Now, in Ephesians 4:11, the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) is used for emphasis and contrast. First, it emphasizes with the reader that Jesus Christ Himself as the subject performed the action of generously giving to some in the church the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy, evangelism and teaching. Secondly, it is used to mark a contrast between Jesus Christ and those who received these gifts from Him at the moment of justification by the power of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5, the noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) here in Ephesians 4:11 is employed as designation for the temporary spiritual gift assigned to the twelve men Jesus Christ sovereignly chose and delegated authority to exercise over the church. Here it refers to the spiritual gift of apostle. This gift is no longer extant since the church age believer who possessed this gift, namely the apostle John died in approximately 98 A.D.

In Ephesians 1:1, Paul uses this noun *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) to describe himself and the other eleven men whom Jesus Christ personally selected to be those who serve as His witnesses to His life, teaching, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. The twelve men who were selected by the Lord Jesus Christ to the office of apostle were Simon Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Simon the Canaanite, James, the son of Alphaeus, not the lesser, Thaddaeus, also called Jude, and Saul of Tarsus, also known as Paul. In Acts 1:26, Matthias was selected to be an apostle by lot to replace Judas Iscariot, however, this selection was not honored by God since he was not personally selected by the resurrected Christ as the other eleven men were, nor did he demonstrate any sign gifts.

Therefore, this word *apostolos* (ἀπόστολος) refers to the office of an apostle, which was given by the Lord Jesus Christ to only thirteen men. Paul replaced Judas Iscariot. The noun appears in the salutation of several of Paul's epistles, namely, Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1. However, it doesn't appear in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philippians and Philemon. Paul uses the word to establish that his authority is from the Lord Himself (Romans 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1). He uses it when his authority or teaching is being questioned or rejected by those to whom he is writing (1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians). The Thessalonians and Philippians were faithful to Paul's teaching and had a great friendship with Paul. Philemon was a personal note, thus there was no need of him to establish his authority with these churches and Philemon.

One of the requirements for holding the "office" of apostle was the experience of seeing the resurrected Christ as Paul had when defending his ministry in 1 Corinthians 9:1-2. Another requirement for holding the "office" of apostle was that

of possessing the "sign gifts" such as healing, which Paul demonstrated he had many times during the course of his ministry (Acts 14:10; 16:18; 19:11; 20:10; 28:8) or "tongues," which Paul also demonstrated he possessed (1 Corinthians 14:18).

The office and spiritual gift of apostleship was not appointed until after the resurrection and ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ (See Ephesians 4:1-16). Distribution of spiritual gifts was authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of His death, resurrection, ascension and session. However, the actual appointment of the spiritual gift of apostleship was made by God the Holy Spirit according 1 Corinthians 12:11.

The spiritual gift of apostleship functioned under two categories: (1) Writers of the New Testament (2) Establishment of local churches: (a) The clarification of mystery doctrine (b) The maintenance of a true systematic theology with dispensational emphasis (c) The training of pastors (d) Establishment of local church policy.

Paul was personally commissioned by the resurrected Christ to be the apostle to the Gentiles (See Acts 9:15; 22:21; Romans 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 1:15-16; 2:2, 7-9; Ephesians 3:1; First Timothy 2:7).

It is also important to understand that the apostles possessed the gift of prophecy, evangelism and teaching according to a comparison of Scripture with the Scripture. The apostle Paul and John prophesied in their writings with John's found primarily in the book of Revelation and Paul's found mainly in 1 Corinthians and in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. Peter also prophesied in 2 Peter 2-3. Paul possessed the gift of evangelism as manifested by the fact that he evangelized the Roman Empire (Rom. 15:14-33) and was a church planter which would require the gift of evangelism. Lastly, all the apostles taught as manifested by the epistles of Peter, Paul and John.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5, the noun *prophētēs* (προφήτης) here in Ephesians 4:11 refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet, which is no longer existent. It has been discontinued because it only existed during the pre-canon period of the church in order to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed (See 1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; 14:22; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11). The completed canon of the New Testament is God's final say to the human race in writing (Heb. 1:1-3). Thus, there is no need for this gift.

These New Testament prophets are also mentioned in Acts 11:27, 13:1, 15:32, 21:10, 1 Corinthians 12:28, 14:29, 32, 37 and Ephesians 4:11. Like the gift of apostleship, the gift of prophet was bestowed upon people at justification. The Spirit worked through those who possessed this gift when they communicated the gospel. The temporary spiritual gift of prophecy is the second spiritual gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11. Like the spiritual gift of apostle, this gift was temporary and is no longer extant today. The prophets were given to the church for

the purpose of communicating God's will, purpose and plan for the church age before the canon of Scripture was completed in 96 A.D.

Now that the canon of Scripture has been completed there is no longer a need for prophets. Everything that God desires to say to us today is found in the completed canon of Scripture. We now have the completed revelation from God now that the canon of Scripture is closed. God does not communicate to man in the church age through dreams or visions or through prophets because everything He desires to communicate to the church is found in the completed canon of Scripture (Hebrews 1:1-2).

Paul taught in Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5 that these first two spiritual gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11, namely, apostles and prophets, are foundational gifts to the church.

The noun *euangelistēs* (εὐαγγελιστής) pertains to the permanent spiritual gift of evangelism, which benefits the body of Christ but in the sense that the function of this gift results in sinners being declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, which results in the justified sinner being entered into union with His Son and identified with Him.

Unlike the gift of apostleship and prophecy, the gift of evangelism is permanent and continues to be exercised by members of the body of Christ who have been given this gift by the Spirit at justification. The function of this gift benefits unregenerate sinners in that it provides them the gospel and when they respond to the gospel by exercising faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, they are added to the body of Christ.

The function of this gift results in the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection on behalf of the sinner. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ delivers the sinner from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, the sin nature, personal sins, spiritual and physical death. Jesus Christ's death and resurrection provided the sinner a way to escape the wrath of a holy God. The good news for the sinner is that through faith in Jesus Christ they can receive the forgiveness of sins and be delivered from all things. Thus, it refers to the Christian who communicates the gospel to the non-Christian community.

The third spiritual gift mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 is also a communication gift just as the gifts of apostleship and prophet. Unlike the previous two, this spiritual gift is still in existence today and is for the benefit of the unbeliever and not for the believer. The spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is specifically designed for the believer. The spiritual gift of evangelism is specifically designed for the unbeliever. The man with the spiritual gift has the dynamic ability to communicate the gospel to the unbeliever. The evangelist must be under the authority of a pastor-teacher. He does not have authority over the pastor-teacher.

Now, it is important to understand that even though all believers have been given the responsibility to evangelize, not only believers have been given the gift of

evangelism, which is an assignment of position in the body of Christ. All believers have the capacity to evangelize, however, the gift of evangelism itself gives the person the ability to evangelize to a greater extent and power than those believers who don't possess this gift. Also, this particular gift would require those who possess it to have itinerate ministries in which they would travel from place to place in order to spread the gospel. This interpretation is supported by Acts chapter eight, which records Philip traveling from place to place proclaiming the gospel.

The noun *poimen* (ποιμήν) refers to someone in the body of Christ who is a leader. There are two spiritual gifts, which fall under the category of a pastor: (1) Teaching (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) (2) Leadership (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28). Thus, this word poimen (ποιμήν) signifies an office rather than a spiritual gift.

In Ephesians 4:11, the noun *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος) refers to the permanent spiritual gift of teaching, which benefits the members of the body of Christ. This gift is permanent meaning it has not been discontinued like the gifts of apostleship and prophecy. The function of this gift provides not only spiritual nourishment for the members of the body of Christ so that they can grow to spiritual maturity and function in their spiritual gifts but also protects them from false doctrine (Eph. 4:12-16). That the word is being used with reference to believers is indicated not only by the word's use in the New Testament, but also it is used exclusively by Paul in his writings of a gift given to the church (1 Corinthians 12:28, 29; Ephesians 4:11). The gift of teaching is mentioned in Romans 12:7 and 1 Corinthians 12:28.

In error, some expositors have interpreted the Granville Sharpe rule being in effect in the expression *tous poimenas kai didaskalous* (τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους) here in Ephesians 4:11. It is incorrect to do so because the rule only applies with personal, singular, and non-proper nouns.

The nouns *poimen* (ποιμήν) and *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος) are definitely linked together because of the articular construction of the former. This author believes that the latter is a subset of the former, which is an office. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the gift of leadership falls under the category of pastor because the concept of leadership fits perfectly with the metaphor of the pastor, i.e., the shepherd because the latter expresses the concept of leadership over others. Therefore, the conjunction *kai* (καί), which links these two nouns is epexegetical because it specifies the gift that Paul is referring to which falls under the category of pastor. This interpretation is indicated by the contents of 1 Corinthians 12:28.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has placed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, gifts of healing, helps, gifts of leadership, different kinds of tongues. (NET)

This verse makes clear that the teachers in Ephesians 4:11 along with the gift of leadership served as the pastors of the church in the apostolic period. The gift of

leadership is mentioned in Romans 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28. In other words, these two gifts were subsets of the pastor. The term "pastor" thus signifies an office. This is indicated in 1 Corinthians 12:28 by two factors. First, both verses have the same order, namely, the apostles are listed first followed by prophets and then teachers. However, unlike Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28 does not list the evangelists. Secondly, unlike Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Paul does not use the noun *poimen* (ποιμήν) in relation to the noun *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος).

Thus, the term *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος), "teachers" here in Ephesians 4:11 is synonymous with the terms *episkopoi* (ἐπίσκοποι), "overseers" and *presbyteroi* (πρεσβύτεροι), "elders," because both required the ability to teach. This is indicated by a comparison of Acts 20 with 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9. In Acts 20, the terms *episkopoi* (ἐπίσκοποι), "overseers" and *presbyteroi* (πρεσβύτεροι), "elders" are synonymous with each other because they are used interchangeably in Acts 20 and 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9 required that the overseer have the ability to teach.

There are two reasons why the term *poimenas* (ποιμένας), "pastors" is used with the noun *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος) in Ephesians 4:11 but not in 1 Corinthains12:28. First, Paul wants to distinguish the gift of teaching as possessing a higher rank than the gift of leadership. Secondly, in 1 Corinthians 12:28, Paul places the gift of leadership after the gift of teaching indicating that the latter possess a higher rank than the former.

Correspondingly, the reason why Paul employs the noun *poimen* (ποιμήν) before the noun *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος) in Ephesians 4:11 is that he is using the figure of hendiadys, which means that the conjunction *kai* (καί) is used to connect together these two nouns. This figure takes place when two nouns are used to express one idea or concept and it literally means "one by means of two" and takes place when the author uses two words but only one idea is intended. The two words are of the same parts of speech, i.e., two nouns, and are always joined together by the conjunction "and" and are also always in the same case. One of the two words expresses the thing, and the other intensifies it by being changed (if a noun) into an adjective of the superlative degree, which is, by this means, made especially emphatic. Therefore, the purpose of Paul employing this figure in Ephesians 4:11 is that he is seeking to identify these two nouns as expressing one concept, namely, to emphasize the spiritual authority of the gift of teaching is greater than the spiritual authority of the gift of leadership and thus possesses authority over the church like the gifts of apostleship and prophecy.

Ephesians 4:12 is composed of three prepositional phrases: (1) *pros ton katartismon tōn hagiōn* (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων), "**for the purpose of equipping the saints**" (Author's translation) (2) *eis ergon diakonias* (εἰς ἔργον διακονίας), "**for performing the work of service**" (Author's translation) (3) *eis oikodomēn tou sōmatos tou Christou* (εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**in**

order to ultimately build up the members of Christ's body" (Author's translation).

This author interprets these prepositional phrases as presenting a progression with one building upon the other. The first prepositional phrase *pros ton katartismon tōn hagiōn* (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων), "**for the purpose of equipping the saints**" (Author's translation) presents the purpose of the action of the third person singular aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), which appears in Ephesians 4:11. This would indicate that the first prepositional phrase presents the purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ giving spiritual gifts to certain members of the body of Christ. The second prepositional phrase *eis ergon diakonias* (εἰς ἔργον διακονίας), "**for performing the work of service**" (Author's translation) presents the purpose of the action of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) in verse 11 and the first prepositional phrase. Lastly, the third prepositional phrase *eis oikodomēn tou sōmatos tou Christou* (εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**in order to ultimately build up the members of Christ's body**" (Author's translation) presents the purpose of the action of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) in verse 11 and the first two prepositional phrases here in Ephesians 4:12, which preceded it.

Therefore, the following is the progression of the action of this verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) in verse 11 and these three prepositional phrases in verse 12. First, the Lord Jesus Christ generously gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ at the moment of justification through the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of equipping the saints. Secondly, the Lord generously gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for the purpose of equipping the saints for these saints being able to perform the work of service. Lastly, the Lord generously gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for the purpose of equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order that ultimately they would have the capacity to build each other up. Thus, the work of equipping the members of the body of Christ is the sole responsibility of the apostles, prophets and teachers. However, the work of the ministry and building up the body of Christ is the responsibility of every believer.

Notice, that the function of the gift of teaching equips the members of the body of Christ to use their gifts, which is not only made clear in the second prepositional phrase but also in the third prepositional phrase. Just as the work of service speaks of believers using their gifts to serve each other, so the building up of the body of Christ is to be accomplished by the members of the body of Christ employing their gifts to serve each other.

Thus, Paul is teaching in these two verses that those who possess the gift of apostleship, prophecy and teaching are not the only ones in the body of Christ who possesses a spiritual gift, which they are to employ to minister to their fellow believer, because all believers have been given a spiritual gift at the moment of

justification through the omnipotence of the Spirit. Like those who possess the gift of apostleship, prophecy and teaching, every believer is gifted and is required to employ their gift in order to build up spiritually their fellow members of the body of Christ. Paul makes this clear in Ephesians 4:16.

Ephesians 4:16 From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love. (NET)

However, Paul also teaches in Ephesians 4:11-16 that the function of these communication gifts were essential in order for the other gifts to function.

It is important for the reader to understand that in Ephesians 4:12, the gift of evangelism is not related to these three prepositional phrases in this verse. This is clearly indicated by the fact that the gift of evangelism was given to evangelize the non-Christian and for the numerical growth of the body of Christ. In other words, the function of this gift would add to the numerical growth of the Christian community. Secondly, these three prepositional phrases are all related to those who are already members of the body of Christ. The first prepositional phrase speaks of equipping the saints, which is a clear reference to believers. The second is the work of service, which is on behalf of the Christian community. The third is building up the body of Christ, which is again a clear reference to the Christian community. Lastly, the contents of Ephesians 4:11-16 addresses the spiritual growth of the body of Christ and not its numerical growth.

Furthermore, the reader must remember that the gift of apostleship is no longer extant since the death of the last apostle John in approximately 98 A.D. Also, the gift of prophecy is no longer extant as well because of the completion of the New Testament canon in approximately 96-98 A.D. when John penned the book of Revelation. Therefore, since the death of John and the completion of the book of Revelation, only the gift of teaching has been used by the Holy Spirit to equip the saints spiritually for performing the work of service and to build up spiritually the members of Christ's body.

Thus, the gift of teaching is the only extant communication gifts since the end of the first century A.D. It is also the most important gift because without the function of this gift, the other gifts cannot function because the function of the gift of teaching is employed by the Holy Spirit to provide spiritual nourishment and capacity to function in one's gift.

The Holy Spirit reveals the Father's will to the church age believer through the communication of the Word of God by the man with the gift of teaching. Through the communication of the Word of God by the man with the gift of teaching, the Holy Spirit communicates the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ's love for the believer, which was manifested in time when the Father sent His Son to the cross to suffer His wrath for the believer and non-believer. Through the communication of

the Word of God by the man with the gift of teaching, the Holy Spirit also communicates the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ's love for the believer, which was manifested in time when the Father through the Holy Spirit placed them in union with His Son and identified them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. Also, through the communication of the Word of God by the man with the gift of teaching, the Holy Spirit communicates the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He has loved the believer.

Therefore, by the Holy Spirit communicating the Father and the Son's love for the believer before and after their justification through the communication of the Word of God by the man with the gift of teaching, the believer receives the capacity to function in their gift. This is indicated by the fact that all spiritual gifts function through the practice of the Lord's command to love one another. Secondly, the believer receives the capacity to obey this command by exercising faith in the Spirit's teaching concerning the Father and the Son's love for them, which is received by the believer through the communication of the Spirit inspired Scriptures by the man with the gift of teaching.

Now, in the first prepositional phrase, the articular genitive masculine plural form of the noun adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**the saints**" describes all the members of the body of Christ who have been set apart through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification in order to order serve God exclusively. The baptism of the Spirit resulted in the church age believer being united with and identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. The articular construction of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος) is also monadic indicating that church age believers are a "unique" people on the earth because they are the first group of people in history who are in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him and members of His body and are His future bride.

Also, in the first prepositional phrase, the noun *katartismos* (καταρτισμός) speaks of the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching "equipping" in the sense of training the members of the body of Christ in the Word of God in order that they might function in their spiritual gift. It functions as an objective genitive, which indicates that the church age believer receives the action of being equipped to use their spiritual gift through the communication of the Spirit inspired Scriptures by the man with the gift of teaching.

The noun *katartismos* (καταρτισμός) is also the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which functions as a marker of purpose, which indicates the purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *pros ton katartismon tōn hagiōn* (πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων) indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching

to certain men in the body of Christ "for the purpose of" equipping the saints, i.e., the members of the body of Christ.

In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul instructs Timothy as to how he is to equip the saints.

Second Timothy 3:16 Each and every portion of Scripture does possess, as an eternal spiritual truth the characteristic of being God-breathed. Consequently, it does possess, as an eternal spiritual truth the characteristic of being useful for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for training which is related to righteousness. 17 The purpose of which is that the person belonging to God (the Father) would possess the characteristic of being competent, specifically, by equipping for every kind of action which is divine good in quality and character. (Author's translation)

Now, in the second prepositional phrase in Ephesians 4:12, the noun *ergon* (ἔργον), "**work**" pertains to actions performed by the church age believer while in fellowship with God and are produced by the Holy Spirit through them when they exercise faith in the Word of God, which the Holy Spirit inspired. This faith results in obedience to the will of the Father, which is revealed by the Spirit in the Word of God. It speaks of the works or actions that the Holy Spirit performs through the church age believer as a result of their faith in the Word of God, which results in obedience to the various commands and prohibitions in the Word of God, which are inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The noun *diakonia* (διακονία), "**service**" pertains to a position or role of service and is used in a general sense for Christian "service" of all kinds. It too functions as an objective genitive, which indicates that the Christian service receives the action of being performed through various activities by the church age believer.

The noun *ergon* (ἔργον) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which again functions as a marker of purpose, which means that it indicates the purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ for the purpose of equipping the saints. Therefore, this indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ in order to equip the saints "for the purpose of" performing the work of Christian service.

Therefore, this second prepositional phrase in Ephesians 4:12 refers to Christian service, which can be performed at home, or on your job and in your marriage. The reason is that Christian service is any action that the believer performs while he is in fellowship with God and obedient to the Word of God, which in turn enables the believer to perform the will of God. The believer can serve God anywhere, any place and anytime when he adheres to this principle and not just within the four walls of a church building.

Now, in Ephesians 4:12, the third and final prepositional phrase contains the noun *sōma* (σῶμα), which is used in a figurative sense to describe the church as being like

the human body in that it has diversity among its members but yet they possess a unity. The word refers to church age believers who are joined together as a corporate unit with the implication of each member having a distinctive function within this unit. The referent of this word is of course the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities emphasizing not only the diversity between the two but also the unity that exists between the two as a result of both being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Him and identifying them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. The articular construction of the noun *sōma* (σῶμα) is monadic, which expresses the uniqueness of this body, namely that they belong to the one and only Christ.

Like the human body, the church has diversity among its members (R. 12:4 f.; 1 C. 12:12 f.). Christ is said to be the head of the Body (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19) and each church age believer is a member of His body (Rm. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:27).

The head and body metaphor is one of eight metaphors used in the New Testament to describe the relationship between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) The last Adam and the New Creation (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 5:17a). (2) The Great Shepherd and the Sheep (Heb. 13:20). (3) The True Vine and the Branches (John 15:5a). (4) The Chief Cornerstone and the Stones in the building (Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:5-6). (5) The Great High Priest and members of the Royal Priesthood (Heb. 4:14a; 1 Pet. 2:9a). (6) The Groom and the Bride. (Our wedding occurs at the Second Advent) (Rev. 19:7). (7) The King of Kings and the Royal Family of God (Rev. 19:14-16).

Also, in the third prepositional phrase is the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), which denotes the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. The articular construction of this word speaks of the incomparability of Jesus of Nazareth in that He is true Messiah and contrast to those who claim they are but are not. The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) functions a possessive genitive, which expresses the idea that this body "belongs to" the one and only Christ, who is Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God.

The noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή) is used in a figurative sense of members of the body of Christ building each other up spiritually in the sense of facilitating their spiritual growth as individuals and as a corporate unit. The word should be translated in this word's cognate verbal form which is *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω) because the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *sōma* (σῶμα), "**body**" functions as objective genitive. This indicates that the body of Christ, namely the members of the Christian community receive the action of being built up spiritually.

Interestingly, Paul employs this verb *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω) in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and uses it in the same fashion as he does its cognate noun in Ephesians 4:12, namely, of believers "building up" spiritually each other.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore, each and every one of you continue to make it your habit of exhorting and encouraging one another. Consequently, <u>each one must continue to make it their habit of building up</u> the other just as each one of you are in fact continuing to make it your habit of doing. (Author's translation)

Now, here in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, the verb *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω) means "to build up" since the word pertains to make something nearer to completion conceived as constructing some further. It pertains to helping to improve the ability to function living responsibly and effectively.[108]

In this second command in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, the verb *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω) is expressing the idea of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community building each other up spiritually in the sense of helping each other through Paul's teaching in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 to become more mature spiritually or closer to spiritual maturity. It is also expressing the idea of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community building each other up spiritually through Paul's teaching in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-10 in the sense that each one of them continues to improve their ability to function living responsibly and effectively.

Now, here in Ephesians 4:12, the noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή) functions like its verbal cognate form *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω) and means "to build up" as it did in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 since the word pertains to make something nearer to completion conceived as constructing some further. It pertains to helping to improve the ability to function living responsibly and effectively.[109]

Therefore, the verbal form of the noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή), which is *oikodomeō* (οἰκοδομέω), expresses the same idea here in Ephesians 4:12 as it did in 1 Thessalonians 5:11. In both passage, Paul is speaking of members of the body of Christ building each other up spiritually. Therefore, as was the case with the verbal form in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, its cognate in Ephesians 4:12 expresses the idea of each member of the Christian community building each other up spiritually in the sense of helping each other through Paul's teaching in this epistle to become more mature spiritually or closer to spiritual maturity. It also expresses the idea of the recipients of Ephesians, who were Gentile Christians like the Thessalonian Christian community, building each other up spiritually through Paul's teaching, which appears in the Spirit inspired contents of this letter in the sense that each one of them continues to improve their ability to function living responsibly and effectively to please God the Father.

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We also noted that the noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of ultimate purpose, which means it presents the ultimate purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ giving the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ in order to equip the saints in order to perform the work of Christian service. Therefore, it expresses the idea that He gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ in order to equip the saints and for performing the work of Christian service "for the purpose of" building up spiritually the Christ's body, i.e., the members of the Christian community growing to spiritual maturity.

Therefore, as was the case in Ephesians 2:21, Ephesians 4:12 contains a mixed metaphor, namely the body and building metaphors. English speaking people do employ mixed metaphors too often; however, mixed metaphors were no problem in the ancient world in Paul's day and age.

Ephesians 4:13 is composed of four indefinite temporal clauses with the first being explicit and the last three being elliptical and thus implied. The first of these clauses is composed of the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes eis tēn henotēta tēs pisteōs* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως), "**until each one of us as a corporate unit attains to experiencing the unity produced by the one and only Christian faith**." The second is elliptical because the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes eis tēn henotēta* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα), "**until all of us without exception attains to experiencing the unity**" is omitted but implied. It would go before the expression *tēs epignōseōs tou huiou tou theou* (τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ), "**produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son**." The third is also elliptical because it omits the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες), "**until each one of us as a corporate unit attains**" though it is implied. It would go before the prepositional phrase *eis andra teleion* (εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον), "**to experiencing a mature man**." The fourth is also elliptical because it too omits the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες), "**until all of us without exception attains to**" though it is implied. It would go before the prepositional phrase *eis metron hēlikias tou plērōmatos tou Christou* (εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character**."

Only the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching are in view with the contents of Ephesians 4:12-13 because the function of these gifts is to benefit the church while on other hand, the gift of evangelism is to benefit the unregenerate. The gifts of apostleship and prophecy are no longer extant because the last apostle John died at the end of the first century and the New Testament canon closed at the end of the first century. Thus, since the end of the first century A.D. the gift of teaching alone

has been and continued to be used by the Lord to produce this unity experientially among the members of the body of Christ.

Therefore, the first indefinite temporal clause asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body "until each and every member of that body attains to the unity produced by obedience to the one and only Christian faith." The second asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body "until each member attains to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son." It corresponds to the first because not only is unity experienced between believers by obedience to the Christian faith but also an experiential knowledge of God's Son is accomplished by the same means. The third asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body "until each member attains to a mature man." The fourth and final indefinite temporal clause asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body "until each and every member of that body attains to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character." This fourth and final indefinite temporal clause actually explains in greater detail the third indefinite temporal clause in that it defines attaining to a mature man as to experience proportionately the full stature of Jesus Christ's holy character.

Now, the subjunctive mood of the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω) is employed with the improper preposition *mechri* (μέχρι) in order to form an indefinite temporal clause. This type of clause indicates future contingency from the perspective of the main verb, which is the third person singular aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**he gave**," which appears in Ephesians 4:11. The three prepositional phrases in Ephesians 4:12 are also related to this verb and are presenting the purpose of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching listed in Ephesians 4:11. These four indefinite temporal clauses are not only expressing a future contingency from the perspective of the Lord giving of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching but they are also presenting the result of the function of these gifts. Ephesians 4:12 teaches that the function of these gifts is to equip the saints in order that the saints would have the capacity to perform the work of Christian service in order to build up the members of the body of Christ.

In relation to the first indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that unity experientially produced by obedience to the Christian faith in the future is contingent upon the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching and will be the

result of the function of these gifts. In relation to the second indefinite temporal clause, he teaches the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son in the future is also contingent upon the function of these gifts and will be the result of the function of these gifts.

The first and second correspond to each other because experiencing unity and possessing an experiential knowledge of God's Son is contingent upon the Christian faith as it is communicated by those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Also, in order to possess an experiential knowledge of God's Son, the believer must learn and obey the Christian faith, which communicates to the believer the significance of the person of the incarnate Son of God as well as the significance of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

In relation to the third indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that individual members of the body of Christ attaining to a mature man in the future is also contingent upon the function of these three gifts and will be result of the function of these gifts. Lastly, in relation to the fourth indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that each member of the body of Christ attaining to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character in the future is contingent upon the function of these three gifts and will be result of the function of these gifts.

Now, there is another very important interpretative issue with the three prepositional phrases in Ephesians 4:13, which are: (1) *eis tēn henotēta tēs pisteōs kai tēs epignōseōs tou huiou tou theou* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ), "**until each one of us as a corporate unit attains to the unity produced by the one and only Christian faith correspondingly**." (2) *eis tēn henotēta…tēs epignōseōs tou huiou tou theou* (εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα…τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ), "**to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son**." (3) *eis andra teleion* (εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον), "**to a mature man**." (4) *eis metron hēlikias tou plērōmatos tou Christou* (εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character**."

Most expositors interpret the use of the preposition *eis* (εἰς) as a marker of purpose in each of these three instances it occurs in Ephesians 4:13. Specifically, that they mark the ultimate goal of the Lord Jesus Christ giving the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body. Therefore, this interpretation would indicate that the Lord gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body until each and every member of that body attains "to the ultimate purpose of" the unity produced by obedience to the one and only Christian faith. It would also indicate that the Lord gave these three

communication gifts for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body until each member attains "to the ultimate purpose of" the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son. Furthermore, this interpretation would indicate that the Lord gave these communication gifts for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body until each member attains "to the ultimate purpose of" being a mature man. Lastly, it would indicate that the Lord gave these gifts for equipping the saints for performing the work of service in order to build up the members of Christ's body until each and every member of that body attains "to the ultimate purpose of" experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character.

However, this author interprets the preposition *eis* (εἰς) as a marker of experiencing a particular state or condition in each of the three instances the word occurs in Ephesians 4:13. The first time this preposition was used, its object was the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης), "**the unity**" which expresses the idea of each member of the Christian community "existing in the state of" experiencing the unity, which is produced by their obedience to the Christian faith. The second time it was used its object was the noun *anēr* (ἀνήρ), "**man**" which expresses the idea of each member of the Christian community "existing in the state of" experiencing spiritual maturity or in other words, mature Christ-likeness. When the preposition is used a third and final time in this verse, its object is the noun *metron* (μέτρον), which expresses the idea of each member of the Christian community "existing in the state or" experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character.

This interpretation is supported by the fact that the subjunctive mood of the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω) is employed with the improper preposition *mechri* (μέχρι) in order to form an indefinite temporal clause. This type of clause indicates future contingency from the perspective of the main verb, which is the third person singular aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**he gave**," which appears in Ephesians 4:11. This verb is connected to the three prepositional phrases that compose Ephesians 4:12. Therefore, the four indefinite temporal clauses are not only expressing a future contingency from the perspective of the Lord giving of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching but they are also presenting the resultant state brought about by the function of these gifts. Therefore, each use of the preposition *eis* (εἰς) in Ephesians 4:13 could not be as a marker of an ultimate purpose. This is indicated by the fact that the indefinite temporal clause indicates that the accomplishment of unity and spiritual maturity are all contingent upon the function of these three gifts and will be resultant state of the function of these gifts. In fact, attaining to the unity produced by obedience to the Christian faith and possessing an experiential knowledge of God's Son as well as being spiritually

mature are also states or conditions. Also, in Ephesians 4:13, the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω) pertains to attaining or achieving a particular state or condition implying the reaching of a particular goal. Thus, this expresses the idea of members of the body of Christ "attaining to the state or condition of" experiencing the unity produced by obedience to the Christian faith. It also would express the idea of "attaining to the state or condition of" possessing an experiential knowledge of God's Son. It would express the idea of "attaining to the state or condition of" being spiritual mature. Lastly, purpose emphasizes the intention of the action or design while on the other hand, result emphasizes the end of the action or what the action accomplishes. This coincides with the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω), which pertains to attaining or achieving a particular state or condition implying the reaching of a particular goal. Thus, it is better to view the preposition *eis* (εἰς) as a marker of result in each instance that it occurs in Ephesians 4:13.

Now, in the first indefinite temporal clause, the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης) pertains to the quality of being united into one. As was the case in Ephesians 4:3, it is used here in Ephesians 4:13 with reference to the recipients of this epistle, who again were Gentile Christians in the Roman province of Asia and Jewish Christians. This is indicated by the first person plural person plural aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω), "**we attain**," which as was the case with every first person plural in the Ephesian epistle up to this point, the referent is both Gentile and Jewish church age believers with Paul representing the Jewish wing of the church.

Therefore, the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης), "**the unity**" is used with reference to the recipients of this epistle, who again were Gentile Christians in the Roman province of Asia, maintaining unity with Jewish church age believers experientially. This would be accomplished by their obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He loves them, which is the purpose of Ephesians. Specifically, it speaks of the Gentile Christian community maintaining unity experientially with the Jewish Christian community through the practice of the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He loves them, which is the purpose of Ephesians. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that Paul discusses at great length the relationship between the two races in Ephesians 2:11-22 as the new humanity and in Ephesians 3:2-13, which describes both as fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise.

The articular construction of the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης) is monadic, which expresses the "uniqueness" of the unity among Jewish and Gentile church age believers experientially in that it is produced by the obedience to the Christian faith, which is inspired by the Holy Spirit.

The articular form of the noun *pistis* (πίστις), "**the faith**" here in Ephesians 4:13 has three basic usages in the Greek New Testament. The first is the active usage meaning "faith." There is also a passive usage meaning "that which is believed, the body of faith, doctrine" (Gal. 1:23; 2 Pt. 1:5; 1 Tm. 1:19; 4:1, 6; 6:10; 2 Tm. 2:18; 4:7; Heb. 11). Lastly, the noun *pistis* is used as an attribute meaning "faithfulness, reliability" (Gal. 3:22; Titus 2:10; 2 Th. 1:4).

As was the case in Ephesians 4:5, the noun *pistis* (πίστις) here in Ephesians 4:13 is used in an objective passive sense for the Christian faith and specifically, it refers to the content of what Paul taught the churches or in other words it is another description of the gospel. The word pertains to that body of doctrine which the church believes, teaches and practices and considers orthodoxy. This word contains the figure of metonymy which indicates that the Christian faith is put for obedience to the Christian faith.

We can also say that this word *pistis* (πίστις) refers to the gospel originating from and about the Lord Jesus Christ and His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father, which provided eternal salvation for the entire human race. This is indicated by the fact that Christian doctrine is about Jesus Christ's the significance of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This gospel was communicated by the Spirit to the apostles and asserts that the Lord Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father delivered the entire human race from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and personal sins. It also asserts that this deliverance is received by the sinner through faith in Jesus Christ. Thus, the gospel message is "good news" for the sinner.

So therefore, the articular form of the noun *pistis* (πίστις), "**the one and only faith**" here in Ephesians 4:13 is synonymous with the articular form of the noun *euangelion*, "the gospel." This word means "the good news" and was used in secular literature. For instance, the Roman Emperor proclaimed his gospel in the first century A.D. Now, in the Greek New Testament, this word is used with reference to the content of teaching which Jesus and the apostles communicated to the world and the Christian community. It asserts that Christ died and rose from the dead for unregenerate sinners and that through faith in Him they could receive the gift of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins. Secondly, it also is used in relation to the believer and refers to the good news after the child of God's justification that they were identified with Christ in His death and resurrection. This good news also means that by appropriating their identification with Christ the child of God can experience victory over sin and Satan. Lastly, the reference to the gospel also speaks of the good news that the child of God will receive rewards from the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat for faithful service (cf. Col. 1:5, 23).

The articular construction of the noun *pistis* (πίστις) in Ephesians 4:13 is monadic, which indicates "the uniqueness" of the Christian faith or that which body of doctrine church age believes in and adheres to as well as teaches since unlike human teaching, the teaching of the Word of God is inspired by God the Holy Spirit.

The noun (πίστις) functions as a genitive of production, which expresses the idea that this Spirit inspired Christian faith "produces" unity among Jewish and Gentile church age believers experientially when they obey it.

The noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης), "**the unity**" is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of experiencing a particular state or condition. Therefore, this would express the idea of each member of the Christian community "existing in the state of" experiencing the unity, which is produced by their obedience to the Christian faith.

The verb *katantaō* (καταντάω) pertains to attaining or achieving a particular state or condition implying the reaching of a particular goal. It is used in a figurative sense of the members of the body of Christ, and in particular both Jewish and Gentile church age believers "attaining" to the state or condition of experiencing unity with each other. This unity is the result of obeying Paul's Spirit inspired doctrine, which constitutes the Christian faith or that body of doctrine the church teaches and practices.

The referent of the first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of the epistle, who we noted were Gentile church age believers with Paul representing the Jewish wing of the church.

The articular nominative masculine plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) functions as a substantive and its referent of this word is Paul and the recipients of the epistle and specifically, both Jewish and Gentile church age believers.

Now, in Ephesians 4:13, the expression *tēn henotēta tēs pisteōs* (τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως), "**the unity produced by obedience to the produced by the one and only Christian faith**" (Author's translation) is equivalent to the expression *tēn henotēta tou pneumatos* (τὴν ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος), "**the unity produced by the Spirit**" (Author's translation), which appears in Ephesians 4:3. This is indicated by the fact that the Christian faith is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Ephesians 4:1 Therefore, I myself, the prisoner because of the Lord's will, exhort and encourage each and every one of you as a corporate unit to live your lives in a manner worthy of your effectual calling with which each and every one of you as a corporate unit have been effectually called 2 with the fullest expression of that which characterizes humility resulting in that which characterizes gentleness. Specifically, by each and every one of you as a corporate unit continuing to make it your habit of tolerating one another with that which characterizes patience by means of the practice of divine love. 3 In other words, by all of you without exception continuing to cause yourselves to

make it a habit of making every effort to maintain the unity produced by the Spirit by means of the bond, which produces a peace, which is divine in quality and character. (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 4:3, the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης), "**the unity**" pertains to the quality of being united into one. In context, the word is used with reference to the recipients of this epistle, who again were Gentile Christians in the Roman province of Asia, maintaining unity with each other experientially. This would be accomplished by their obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He loves them, which is the purpose of Ephesians. Specifically, it speaks of the Gentile Christian community maintaining unity experientially with the Jewish Christian community through the practice of the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He loves them, which is the purpose of Ephesians. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that Paul discusses at great length the relationship between the two races in Ephesians 2:11-22 as the new humanity and in Ephesians 3:2-13, which describes both as fellow heirs, fellow members of the body of Christ and fellow partakers of the Messianic promise.

The articular construction of the noun *henotēs* (ἑνότης) is monadic, which expresses the "uniqueness" of the unity among Jewish and Gentile church age believers experientially. This is indicated by the fact that it is produced by the Holy Spirit when they obey the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command recorded in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He loved them.

The referent of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) is God the Holy Spirit and it functions as a genitive of production, which means that it "produces" the noun to which it stands related, which is *henotēs* (ἑνότης). Therefore, this construction indicates that this unity experientially among Jewish and Gentile church age believer is "produced by" the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which indicates "the uniqueness" of the Spirit distinguishing Him from other spirits in that He is God possessing the attributes of deity and is thus uncreated.

Now, the second indefinite temporal clause in Ephesians 4:13 is elliptical and speaks of each member of the Christian community attaining to an experiential knowledge of God's Son. It corresponds to the first indefinite temporal clause, which speaks of each member of the Christian community as a corporate unit attaining to the unity, which is produced by obedience to the Christian faith. They correspond to each other because both are the result of the Christian community obeying the Spirit inspired Christian faith. In other words, obedience to the Christian faith not only produces unity among the members of the Christian community but also an experiential knowledge of the Son of God.

Now, as was the case in Ephesians 1:17, the noun *epignōsis* (ἐπίγνωσις) here in Ephesians 4:13 means, "an experiential knowledge" since the word pertains to

possessing an experiential knowledge of someone or something and being affected by this encounter in that a person gains more practical wisdom and as a result matures in character. In Ephesians 1:17, the noun *epignōsis* (ἐπίγνωσις) speaks of recipients of the Ephesian epistle personally encountering the Father by exercising faith in Paul's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching and being affected by this encounter in that they gain a practical wisdom and more of the character of Christ. However, in Ephesians 4:13, the noun *epignōsis* (ἐπίγνωσις) refers to an "experiential knowledge" of the Lord Jesus Christ in the sense of personally encountering Him through the process of fellowship as He is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the pages of Scripture and prayer and being affected by this encounter with the Lord. Specifically, in Ephesians 3:14-21, Paul prayed that the recipients of this epistle would know experientially the four dimensions of Christ's love for them, which was manifested through His becoming a human being and fulfilling perfectly the Law for them and suffering for them at the cross the consequences of not fulfilling the Law perfectly.

As we also noted, the referent of the noun *huios* (υἱός), "**Son**" is of course Jesus Christ and is employed here as a title for His deity describing the relationship between Himself and the Father. The noun expresses three fundamental concepts regarding the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) His eternal relationship with the Father. (2) His appointment to the office of Savior and Messiah. (3) His divine essence. This word expresses the Lord Jesus Christ's eternality and that He is infinite and eternal God (John 1:1-2, 14; John 8:58; 10:30a; Col. 2:9a; Rev. 1:8) indicating His equality with the Father (Matthew 17:1-5; John 10:30, 37-38; 14:9; 17:5, 24-25; 20:30-31; Romans 1:1-4; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 1:3). The articular construction of the word is also monadic expressing the uniqueness of the Son in that He is the one and only Son of the Father.

The referent of the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) is of course, God the Father. The word functions as a genitive of relationship indicating a familial relationship between God the Father and God the Son. The articular construction of this word in the Greek New Testament commonly signifies the first member of the Trinity unless otherwise indicated by the context.

The third indefinite temporal clause is elliptical and speaks of each member of the Christian community attaining to a mature man. The noun *anēr* (ἀνήρ) is a gender and age specific term and is deliberately used here rather than *anthropos* (ἄνθρωπος), which is not gender and age specific, because the referent of this word is Christ-likeness and Christ was a man.

The adjective *teleios* (τέλειος) pertains to being at an advanced stage of spiritual development. This adjective speaks of a Christian being spiritually mature as a result of making it their habit of adhering to authoritative instruction of the gospel or sound doctrine. The word speaks of a Christian who has arrived at spiritual adulthood and

thus speaks of a Christian who has become like Jesus Christ in their thoughts, words and actions.

The noun *anēr* (ἀνήρ), "**man**" is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of experiencing a particular state or condition. Therefore, this would express the idea of each member of the Christian community "experiencing the state or condition of" spiritual maturity.

The fourth and final indefinite temporal clause is also elliptical and speaks of each member of the Christian community attainting to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character. As was the case in Ephesians 4:7, this author interprets the noun *metron* (μέτρον) here in Ephesians 4:13 as meaning "proportion, proportional, proportionate" since the word in both contexts pertains to making the parts of something harmonious or symmetrical.

In Ephesians 4:7, it is used in relation to spiritual gifts, which were given to each church age believer at the moment of the justification through the work of the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, this word is describing these spiritual gifts as "in proportion to" or "proportional" to the incomparable Christ's generous gift in the sense that they are made harmonious or symmetrical with each other. In other words, spiritual gifts in the body of Christ are marked by due proportion, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to each other or to the whole of the body of Christ. Therefore, this noun *metron* (μέτρον) emphasizes that each spiritual gift is marked by harmonious or symmetrical with the other spiritual gifts given to other members of the body of Christ.

However, here in Ephesians 4:13 it is used in relation to the person of Jesus Christ and is describing the character of members of the Christian community as "in proportion to" or "proportional to" or "proportionate to" the Lord Jesus Christ in the sense that the character of members of this community are made harmonious or symmetrical with the character of Jesus Christ. In other words, this noun *metron* (μέτρον) expresses the idea of the character of members of the Christian community being marked by due proportion to Christ, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to Christ. Therefore, this word emphasizes that the character of each member of the Christian community being marked by harmonious or symmetrical with the character of Jesus Christ.

The noun *hēlikia* (ἡλικία) means "stature" since the word pertains to the quality or status gained by growth, development or achievement. Therefore, it is used the stature of Jesus Christ's character, which is gained by the church age believer growth spiritually or developmentally or achievement by obedience to the Christian faith. This word functions as an epexegetical genitive, which indicates that when Paul speaks of the character of the members of the Christian community being in proportion to the character of Christ, he means that their character has achieved the stature of Christ's character.

The noun *plērōma* (πλήρωμα) pertains to the totality of something with emphasis upon completeness. It pertains to the state of possessing every necessary or normal part or component. It is used in relation to the character of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this word speaks of the church age believer possessing the character of Christ in its totality and completeness. This word functions as an attributed genitive which means that it ascribes the attribute of fullness to this stature of the one and only Christ's character. The articular construction of this noun *plērōma* (πλήρωμα) is monadic, which expresses the uniqueness of Jesus Christ's character.

In Ephesians 4:13, the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) contains the figure of metonymy which means that the person of Christ is put for His holy character. The articular construction of this word indicates that the referent of this word is in a class by himself and the only one deserving of the name since there were many individuals in the first century A.D. who claimed to be the Christ or were proclaimed to be the Christ. Thus, the articular construction of this word means that He is "the one and only Christ" or "the incomparable Christ" and speaks of the incomparability of Jesus of Nazareth in that He is true Messiah and contrast to those who claim they are but are not.

The noun *metron* (μέτρον) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which expresses the idea of each member of the Christian community "experiencing the state or condition" of possessing the full stature of the character of Jesus Christ.

To summarize of Ephesians 4:11-13, Paul teaches in Ephesians 4:11, the Lord Jesus Christ generously gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy, evangelism and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ at the moment of justification through the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit. The function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching is to communicate the Christian faith to the members of the body of Christ. These three gifts are designed to benefit the body of Christ in that the function of these gifts will result in the spiritual growth of the body when members of this body obey the Christian faith as communicated to them by those with these three communication gifts. On the other hand, the gift of evangelism benefit the unregenerate community and to provide numerical growth in the body of Christ.

Next, in Ephesians 4:12, Paul presents the purpose of these three communication gifts being given to the church. He teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ generously gave the spiritual gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to certain men in the body of Christ at the moment of justification through the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of equipping the saints. This equipping of the saints would involve communicating the Christian faith to them. This in turn would provide the saints with the capacity to perform the work of Christian service. The purpose is that the members of the body of Christ would be built up spiritually as a result of each of them serving through the function of their gifts.

Lastly, in Ephesians 4:13, Paul teaches that each member of the body of Christ attaining to the unity produced by obedience to the Christian faith in the future is contingent upon the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching and will be the result of the function of these gifts.

It is important to point out that in Ephesians 4:12 the equipping of the saints speaks of communicating the Christian faith to each member of the Christian community as a corporate unit in a public setting where all members are assembled together (cf. Acts 2:42-47). This provides the individual members the capacity to function in their gifts, which in turn profits spiritually the body of Christ as a corporate unit because the function of these gifts builds up spiritually the body of Christ individually and ultimately as a corporate unit. Ephesians 4:13 presents the future contingency of this taking place in that it will result in each member of the body of Christ attaining to the unity produced by obedience to the Christian faith. This speaks of each individual believer obeying the Christian faith which was taught them by those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

Secondly, Paul teaches that each member of the Christian community attaining to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son in the future is also contingent upon the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching and will be the result of the function of these gifts. This too is the result of each member obeying the Christian faith as taught to them by those with these three communication gifts.

Furthermore, the function of these three communication gifts present the future contingency in that it will result in each member of the Christian community attaining to a mature man, i.e., spiritual maturity. This too is the result of each member obeying the Christian faith as taught to them by those with these three communication gifts.

Lastly, the function of these three communication gifts present the future contingency in that it will result in each member of the Christian community attaining to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character. This defines specifically the meaning of attaining to a mature man. This too is the result of each member obeying the Christian faith as taught to them by those with these three communication gifts.

Therefore, the common denominator with the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching is the communication of the Christian faith. The latter is that doctrine or teaching which has been delivered to the church by the Holy Spirit and is believed by the church and practiced or obeyed by the church. Correspondingly, the common denominator of the future contingency and result of the function of these gifts is the communication of the Christian faith to the Christian community by those with these three communication gifts. Consequently, the unity experientially among the members of the body of Christ is based upon obedience to

the Christian faith as communicated by those with these three communication gifts. Correspondingly, the spiritual growth of the individual members of the Christian community is also based upon obedience to the Christian faith as communicated by those with these three communication gifts.

So therefore, the individual spiritual growth of believers and their spiritual growth in a corporate sense in the future is contingent upon and will be the result of the function of these three communication gifts. In fact, the individual spiritual growth of each individual believer, which is contingent upon obedience to the Christian faith which results in an experiential knowledge of God's Son, results in believers experiencing unity with each other. From the perspective of the individual believer, the function of each of these three communication gifts is to communicate the Christian faith to the members of the Christian community, which provides believers the capacity to serve in their gifts and each other, which in turn builds up the individual members of the body of Christ. It will also result in the spiritual growth of these individual members resulting in spiritual maturity or Christ-likeness if the believer remains faithful in obeying the Christian faith. From the perspective of the church as a corporate unit, the function of each of these three communication gifts is to communicate the Christian faith to the members of the Christian community whose obedience to the Christian faith results in believers experiencing unity when interacting with each other.

Therefore, it is also very important that the reader understand that this future contingency and resultant state implies that it is only a possibility that members of the body of Christ will experience unity when interacting with each other. Also, it implies that it is only a possibility that they will possess an experiential knowledge of God's Son individually. Lastly, it also implies that it is only a possibility that the individual members of the body of Christ will grow to spiritual maturity. These are all merely possibilities because these things becoming a reality are based upon the individual believer's response to the communication of the Christian faith by those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching or today, to the gift of teaching. In other words, believers can only experience unity with each other if they themselves obey the Christian faith. Correspondingly, they can only experience spiritual maturity if they obey the Christian faith.

This is why Paul in Ephesians 4:13 with these four indefinite temporal clauses mentions the believer's obedience to the Christian faith first because everything else he mentions in the last three indefinite temporal clauses are contingent upon the believer obeying the Christian faith. A comparison of Ephesians 4:3 and 13 would indicate that everything Paul mentions in these final three indefinite temporal clauses is contingent upon the believer obeying the Holy Spirit, who is the divine author of the Christian faith.

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One last problem needs to be addressed with regards to the content of Paul's teaching in Ephesians 4:13, namely, when Paul speaks of spiritual maturity in this verse, is speaking of this maturity in time and in an experiential sense? Or is he speaking of spiritual maturity in an eschatological sense and specifically in the future when the believer is in a resurrection body or in a resurrection body after receiving rewards at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church?

This author believes he is speaking of the believer attaining spiritual maturity in time. This is clearly indicated by the fact that there will be no need for spiritual gifts when believers are perfected in a resurrection body because in a resurrection body the believer is perfected and thus this would leave no more room for spiritual growth. Secondly, the contents of Ephesians 4:14 speak of the believer being able to reject false doctrine because they have received sound doctrine, i.e., the Christian faith from those who possess the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. There will be no possibility of the believer being deceived while in a resurrection body because again, in a resurrection body, they will be perfected and residing bodily in the presence of Jesus Christ Himself.

It also important that the reader understand that spiritual maturity is not equivalent to being made perfect in a resurrection body but rather is the maximum production of Christ-like character in the believer as a result of making it one's habit of learning and obeying the Word of God. No believer can achieved spiritual perfection while living in the devil's world and still possessing the old Adamic sin nature, which resides in the genetic structure of the physical body (Rom. 5:12-21; 6:6). The believer must strive for perfection (Phil. 3:1-16) but knowing that this will never come to pass until their physical death or when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture of the church.

Ephesians 4:14 is composed of the following: (1) *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause: *hina mēketi ōmen nēpioi* (ἵνα μηκέτι ὦμεν νήπιοι), "**In order that each of us as a corporate unit would no longer be children**." (Author's translation) (2) Attributive participial clause: *klydōnizomenoi kai peripheromenoi panti anemō tēs didaskalias* (κλυδωνιζόμενοι καὶ περιφερόμενοι παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας), "**Specifically, those who are tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place by means of every wind, that is teaching**." (Author's translation) (3) prepositional phrase: *en tē kybeia tōn anthrōpōn* (ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων), "**by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race**." (Author's translation) (4) prepositional phrase: *en panourgia* (ἐν πανουργίᾳ), "**because of craftiness**." (Author's translation) (5) prepositional phrase: *pros tēn methodeian tēs planēs* (πρὸς τὴν μεθοδείαν τῆς πλάνης), "**according to their program which is characterized by that which produces deception**." (Author's translation)

There is an interpretative problem with the *hina* (ἵνα) purpose clause: *hina mēketi ōmen nēpioi* (ἵνα μηκέτι ὦμεν νήπιοι), "**In order that each of us as a corporate unit would no longer be children**." (Author's translation). Some expositors argue that the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα) is employed with the subjunctive conjugation of the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω), "**we attain**" in order to form a result clause, which views the end of the action of the main verb and emphasizes the outcome or result of the action of the main verb rather than the "intention" as the purpose clause does.

Therefore, this would indicate that the *hina* (ἵνα) clause presents the result of the members of the body of Christ attaining to experiencing the unity produced by obedience to the one and only Christian faith. This would mean that the believer no longer being a child spiritually or in other spiritually immature is the result of the believer attaining to experiencing the unity produced by obedience to the Christian faith.

Furthermore, in Ephesians 4:13, the apostle Paul employs the figure of ellipsis three times in this passage. This means that he deliberately omits words, though they are implied from the context. First, he deliberately omits the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes eis tēn henotēta* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα), "**until all of us without exception attains to experiencing the unity**" before the expression *tēs epignōseōs tou huiou tou theou* (τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ), "**produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son**."

Therefore, this would express the idea of each member of the Christian community attaining to the unity, which is produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son. Secondly, Paul deliberately omits the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες), "**until each one of us as a corporate unit attains**" before the prepositional phrase *eis andra teleion* (εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον), "**to experiencing a mature man**." Therefore, this speaks of each member of the Christian community attaining to a mature man, i.e., spiritual maturity or Christ-likeness. Lastly, he deliberately omits the expression *mechri katantēsōmen hoi pantes* (μέχρι καταντήσωμεν οἱ πάντες), "**until all of us without exception attains**" before the prepositional phrase *eis metron hēlikias tou plērōmatos tou Christou* (εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**experiencing proportionate to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character**." Therefore, this speaks of each member of the Christian community attaining proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:14, the *hina* (ἵνα) clause not only presents the result of the members of the body of Christ attaining to experiencing the unity produced by obedience to the one and only Christian faith but it also presents the result of attaining to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son. It also would present the result of experiencing a mature man likewise and to attaining to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's

character. This would mean that the believer no longer being a child spiritually or in other spiritually immature is the result of the believer attaining to the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son. It would also indicate that the believer no longer being a child spiritually or in other spiritually immature is the result of experiencing a mature man and attaining to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character.

However, although, it is true that a believer will no longer be spiritually immature as a result of attaining spiritual maturity, the subjunctive mood of the verb *katantaō* (καταντάω) is employed with the improper preposition *mechri* (μέχρι) in order to form an indefinite temporal clause. In Ephesians 4:13, this construction indicates future contingency from the perspective of the main verb, which is the third person singular aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**he gave**," which appears in Ephesians 4:11. Therefore, this would indicate that Jewish and Gentile church age believers experiencing unity in the future is contingent upon the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching, which results in the communication of the Christian faith. It also presents the result of the function of these gifts. The three prepositional phrases in Ephesians 4:12 are also related to this verb and present the purpose of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching listed in Ephesians 4:11. These four indefinite temporal clauses are not only expressing a future contingency from the perspective of the Lord giving of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching but they are also presenting the result of the function of these gifts. As we noted, Ephesians 4:12 teaches that the function of these gifts is to equip the saints in order that the saints would have the capacity to perform the work of Christian service in order to build up the members of the body of Christ.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:14, this author interprets the conjunction *hina* (ἵνα) as being employed with the subjunctive conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί), "**we are…to be**" in order to form a purpose clause, which indicates the "intention" of the action of the main verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), which we noted appears in Ephesians 4:11. Therefore, this purpose clause indicates "the intention" of the action of the Lord Jesus Christ generously giving the four communication gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. As we noted, Ephesians 4:12 presents the first purpose for the Lord doing this, namely for the purpose of equipping the members of the body of Christ in order that they might perform the work of service and in turn build up the members of this body.

Now, here in Ephesians 4:14, we have the second purpose of the Lord giving these communication gifts. Namely, that the members of the body of Christ would no longer be spiritual children. Paul then describes being a spiritual child as being like a ship tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place. The means by which this takes place is described by Paul as every wind, that

is teaching. He then elaborates on this by asserting that it is by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race that the believer is unstable spiritually and lacking in direction. These unidentified members of the human race are false teachers according to what follows. Next, Paul presents the reason why these false teachers employ trickery to deceive members of the body of Christ. He asserts that it is because of their craftiness, which is according to their program which is characterized by that which produces deception.

So therefore, as many expositors have notice, Ephesians 4:12 presents the "positive" purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ generously giving these four communication gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. On the other hand, the contents of Ephesians 4:14 present the "negative" purpose for which the Lord gave these gifts.

In Ephesians 4:14, the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) pertains to possessing a certain characteristic, which is identified by the adjective *nēpios* (νήπιος), "**children**," which is used in a figurative sense of a Christian who is spiritually immature in contrast to one who is spiritually mature.

The referent of the first person plural form of this verb is Paul and the recipients of the epistle, who we noted were Gentile church age believers with Paul representing the Jewish wing of the church. In a broader sense, it speaks of the entire Christian community throughout the Roman Empire. This word is not only used to refer to the Christian community as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. Therefore, the first person plural form of this verb is viewing the members of the body of Christ not only as a corporate unit or community but also as individuals.

This *eimi* (εἰμί) is negated by the negative adverb of time *meketi* (μηκέτι), which means "no longer" since the word pertains to the extension of time up to a point but not beyond.[110]

The adjective *nēpios* (νήπιος), "**children**" functions as a predicate nominative, which means it is making an assertion of members of the Christian community, namely they would no longer possess the characteristic of being spiritually children who are spiritually immature.

The adjective *nēpios* (νήπιος), "**children**" presents a contrast with the adjective *teleios* (τέλειος), "**mature**," which appears in Ephesians 4:13, which speaks of a Christian being spiritually mature as a result of making it their habit of adhering to authoritative instruction from the gospel or sound doctrine. The word speaks of a Christian who has arrived at spiritual adulthood and thus speaks of a Christian who has become like Jesus Christ in their thoughts, words and actions.

The attributive participle clause *klydōnizomenoi kai peripheromenoi panti anemō tēs didaskalias* (κλυδωνιζόμενοι καὶ περιφερόμενοι παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας),

[110] Louw and Nida, 67.130

"**Specifically, those who are tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place by means of every wind, that is teaching**" (Author's translation) describes in detail a spiritual child or one who is spiritually immature. It contains a metaphor of being at sea and the damage that wind and waves can do to a ship in a storm.

The verb *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι) is used in a figurative sense to describe immature believers being unstable in their hearts because of accepting false doctrine as truth to live by. This verb describes in figurative terms a believer who fluctuates as to what they believe and accept as truth to live by and what they no longer believe and no longer accepted as truth to live by. The emphasis with this verb is "the action" of these spiritually immature Christians fluctuates between accepting sound doctrine as truth to live by and then rejecting it and accepting false doctrine as truth to the live by.

The participle conjugation of the verb *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι) functions as nominative of simple apposition, which means it describes in greater detail what Paul means when he speaks of believers being children spiritually. Namely that like a ship tossed back and forth by waves, they fluctuate in their souls as to what they believe and accept as truth to live by and what they no longer believe and no longer accepted as truth to live by.

The participle conjugation of the verb *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι) functions an attributive participle, which means it is describing in figurative terms for the reader what it means to be a spiritual child. Namely that like a ship tossed back and forth by waves, they fluctuate in their souls as to what they believe and accept as truth to live by and what they no longer believe and no longer accepted as truth to live by.

The verb *peripherō* (περιφέρω) is also used in a figurative sense of members of the Christian community rejecting sound doctrine as truth to live by and instead accepting false doctrine as truth to live by. Therefore, this word describes members of the Christian community as those who vacillate in the sense that they accept reject sound doctrine as truth to live by and instead accept false doctrine as truth to live by. The emphasis with this verb is "the place" the members of the Christian community end up as a result of accepting false doctrine as truth to live by.

The participle conjugation of the verb *peripherō* (περιφέρω) also functions an attributive participle, which means it is describing in figurative terms for the reader what it means to be a spiritual child. Namely that like a ship carried about from place to place, they vacillate between accepting sound doctrine as truth to live by and then turning away from it and accepting false doctrine as truth to live by.

The verbs *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι), "**tossed back and forth by waves**" and *peripherō* (περιφέρω), "**carried about from place to place**" are united by the conjunction *kai* (καί) in order to form the figure of hendiadys, which means that they are not referring to two different concepts but rather one. This figure would indicate

that the idea expressed by the verb *peripherō* (περιφέρω), "**carried about from place to place**" is intensifying or advancing upon the idea expressed by the verb *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι), "**tossed back and forth by waves**."

The latter emphasizes the "action" of the spiritually immature believer being adversely affected spiritually in their lives as a result of accepting false doctrine as truth to live by. On the other hand, the former emphasizes the "place" they end up spiritually as a result of being adversely affected spiritually as a result of accepting false doctrine as truth to live by. This "place" would be that which one has accepted as truth to live by. Therefore, the advancement and intensification is that the action expressed by the verb *peripherō* (περιφέρω), "**carried about**" emphasizes the result of the action expressed by the verb *klydōnizomai* (κλυδωνίζομαι), "**tossed back and forth by waves**." This would express the idea that the believer is tossed back and forth by waves so that they are carried about from place to place. This would mean that the believer is fluctuates or vacillates from accepting as sound doctrine as truth to live by to rejecting it and accepting false doctrine as truth to live by with the result is that they are out of fellowship with God and no longer doing His will.

The dative expression *panti anemō tēs didaskalias* (παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας), "**by means of every wind, that is teaching**" (Author's translation) It also contains the metaphor of being at sea and the damage that wind and waves can do to a ship in a storm. It presents the means which the spiritually immature believer is like a ship tossed back and forth waves and carried about from place to place. Namely it is by means every type of false teaching that this takes place.

The noun *anemos* (ἄνεμος), "**wind**" is used figuratively of different types of false doctrine, which are lies concocted by Satan and his kingdom which seek to deceive members of the human race from not worshipping Jesus Christ as their Savior and King and are promoted and propagated by false teachers. This noun is modified by the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**every**," which is used in a distributive sense expressing the idea of "every type" of false doctrine.

The noun *didaskalia* (διδασκαλία), "**teaching**" is used in an objective sense and means "doctrine, teaching" and is referring to the content of false teaching. The articular construction of this noun is generic, which means that the article distinguishes false doctrine originating from Satan's cosmic system from the sound doctrine which originates from the triune God. This noun functions as genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which indicates that the former is defining what is meant by the latter, namely, false doctrine or teaching.

The noun *anemos* (ἄνεμος), "**wind**" functions as a dative of means, which expresses the idea of a believer being tossed back and forth by waves, so that they are carried about from place to place "by means of" every type of false doctrine or teaching.

The prepositional phrase *en tē kybeia tōn anthrōpōn* (ἐν τῇ κυβείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων), "**by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race**" stands in apposition to the preceding expression *panti anemō tēs didaskalias* (παντὶ ἀνέμῳ τῆς διδασκαλίας), "**by means of every wind, that is teaching**." The former is making explicit the latter. Thus, the former identifies the teaching which makes the believer unstable and deviate from the will of God as being trickery.

The noun *kybeia* (κυβεία), "**trickery**" contains a gambling metaphor and describes the actions of those who teach false doctrine as characterized by trickery that results from craftiness. It describes the actions of these individuals as those whose teaching misrepresents God and His will and which misrepresentation is intended to take advantage of the believer person in some way. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which expresses the idea that this craftiness is "unique" to certain members of the human race who teach false doctrine, and which doctrine is composed of lies from Satan's cosmic system.

The plural form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is used with reference to certain members of the human race who teach false doctrine, and which doctrine is composed of lies from Satan's cosmic system. The articular construction of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is generic, which serves to distinguish those members of the human race who teach false doctrine from those who teach sound doctrine. The noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) functions as a genitive of production, which indicates that this trickery is "produced by" certain members of the human race who teach false doctrine, and which doctrine is composed of lies from Satan's cosmic system.

The noun *kybeia* (κυβεία) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means, which would indicate a believer is tossed back and forth spiritually so as to be carried from place to place "by means of" the trickery of those who teach false doctrine.

The prepositional phrase: *en panourgia* (ἐν πανουργίᾳ), "**because of craftiness**" (Author's translation) presents the reason why the teaching of a false teachers tricks the believer from doing the will of God and causes them to deviate from His will. It is because they are characterized by craftiness.

The noun *panourgian* (πανουργία) is used of the "crafty" manner in which certain members of the human race teach false doctrine. It is also the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which this time however functions as a marker of cause, which indicates the reason why the teaching of a false teachers tricks the believer from doing the will of God and causes them to deviate from His will, namely "because of" their craftiness.

The prepositional phrase: *pros tēn methodeian tēs planēs* (πρὸς τὴν μεθοδείαν τῆς πλάνης), "**according to their program which is characterized by that which produces deception**" (Author's translation) indicates that the false doctrine taught

by these crafty false teachers "corresponds to" or "according to" their evil program, which produces deception.

The noun *methodeia* (μεθοδεία) is used of "the program" or "scheme" to deceive the spiritually immature Christian, which is devised by certain members of the human race who teach false doctrine, and which doctrine is composed of lies from Satan's cosmic system. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which which expresses the idea that this program to deceive the spiritually immature Christian is "unique" to these deceptive teachers of false doctrine. The article also functions as a possessive personal pronoun expressing the idea that this program or scheme is the "possession" of these false teachers.

The noun *planē* (πλάνη) refers to the program of these false teachers, which produces deception because the false doctrine they are communicating to the spiritually immature Christian deceives them. The articular construction of this word emphasizes the character of this deception, which is evil. It functions as genitive of product, which expresses the idea that this evil methodology or program of these false teachers "produces" deception.

The noun *methodeia* (μεθοδεία) is the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which functions as a marker of a relation involving correspondence. Therefore, this would indicate that the false doctrine taught by these crafty false teachers, which they use to trick the believer from deviating from the will of the Father, "corresponds to" or "according to" their evil program, which produces deception.

So therefore, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:14 presents the second purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ gave the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. The gift of evangelism is excluded because the function of this gift to benefit the non-Christian community and increase numerically the membership of the body of Christ. Furthermore, only the gift of teaching is extant since the end of the first century A.D. because the gift of apostleship no longer exists because of the death of the twelve apostles. Also, the gift of prophecy was no longer needed because of the completed canon of the Greek New Testament at the end of the first century A.D.

In Ephesians 4:12, Paul asserts that the first reason for these three communications and the gift of teaching after the first century A.D. is to equip spiritually the members of the body of Christ in order that they would be able to perform the work of Christian service and to ultimately build the members of the body of Christ. This equipping involves communicating sound doctrine to the members of the body of Christ (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Then, in Ephesians 4:13, Paul employs four indefinite temporal clauses, which are not only expressing a future contingency from the perspective of the Lord giving of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching but they are also presenting the result of the function of these gifts. In relation to the first indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that unity experientially produced by obedience to the

Christian faith in the future is contingent upon the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching and will be the result of the function of these gifts. In relation to the second indefinite temporal clause, he teaches the unity produced by an experiential knowledge of God's Son in the future is also contingent upon the function of these gifts and will be the result of the function of these gifts.

As we noted, first and second correspond to each other because experiencing unity and possessing an experiential knowledge of God's Son is contingent upon the Christian faith as it is communicated by those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Also, in order to possess an experiential knowledge of God's Son, the believer must learn and obey the Christian faith, which communicates to the believer the significance of the person of the incarnate Son of God as well as the significance of His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

In relation to the third indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that individual members of the body of Christ attaining to a mature man in the future is also contingent upon the function of these three gifts and will be result of the function of these gifts. Lastly, in relation to the fourth indefinite temporal clause, Paul teaches that each member of the body of Christ attaining to experiencing proportionately to the full stature of the one and only Christ's character in the future is contingent upon the function of these three gifts and will be result of the function of these gifts.

Now, in Ephesians 4:14, Paul presents the second purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ gave the communication gifts to the church. He asserts that He gave these gifts in order that believers would no longer be spiritual children. He describes a spiritual child in figurative or metaphorical sense as one who like a ship is tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place. Then, he presents the means by which this takes in the life of the believer, namely, by means of every wind, that is, teaching and which teaching is false doctrine originating from the lies of Satan's cosmic system. Paul then elaborates on this means by asserting that a spiritually immature believer is like a ship tossed back and forth by waves by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race. The context that these unidentified members of the human race are false teachers. Thus, the trickery of these false teachers describe what Paul means by every wind of teaching. The apostle then identifies the reason for this false doctrine, namely because these false teachers are characterized by craftiness, which is according to their program, which itself is characterized by that which produces deception.

Therefore, the second purpose of the Lord giving the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching to the body of Christ with teaching the only gift extant today in the twenty-first century, is to protect the members of the Christian community from false doctrine and to stabilize their souls with sound doctrine and to give them direction in life and a purpose to accomplish their heavenly Father's will on earth.

So therefore, Ephesians 4:12 presents the "positive" purpose for which the Lord Jesus Christ generously giving these four communication gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. On the other hand, the contents of Ephesians 4:14 present the "negative" purpose for which the Lord gave these gifts.

Ephesians 4:15 is composed of the following: (1) Causal participial clause: *alētheuontes…en agapē* (ἀληθεύοντες...ἐν ἀγάπῃ), "**Instead, on the basis of each and every one of us as a corporate unit making it our habit of practicing the truth by means of the practice of divine-love**" (Author's translation) (2) Hortatory subjunctive clause: *auxēsōmen eis auton ta panta* (αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα), "**Let all of us without exception grow with respect to every area of our character into the state of being like Him**." (Author's translation) (3) Relative pronoun clause: *hos estin hē kephalē, Christos* (ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός), "**namely, Christ, who is the head**." (Author's translation)

In Ephesians 4:15, Paul is exhorting and encouraging the recipients of this epistle to join with him in growing to spiritual maturity, namely Christ-likeness. The basis for which this is to be accomplished is making it their lifestyle of practicing the truth by means of the practice of divine-love. This exhortation and encouragement to do this is presenting a contrast with the contents of Ephesians 4:14, which is a purpose clause, which indicates "the purpose" of the Lord Jesus Christ generously giving the four communication gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. As we noted, Ephesians 4:12 presents the first purpose for the Lord doing this, namely for the purpose of equipping the members of the body of Christ in order that they might perform the work of service and in turn build up the members of this body. Then, in Ephesians 4:14, we have the second purpose of the Lord giving these communication gifts. Namely, that the members of the body of Christ would no longer be spiritual children. Paul then describes being a spiritual child as being like a ship tossed back and forth by waves so as to be carried about from place to place. The means by which this takes place is described by Paul as every wind, that is teaching. He then elaborates on this by asserting that it is by means of the trickery produced by certain members of the human race that the believer is unstable spiritually and lacking in direction. These unidentified members of the human race are false teachers according to what follows. Paul then presents the reason why these false teachers employ trickery to deceive members of the body of Christ. He asserts that it is because of their craftiness, which is according to their program which is characterized by that which produces deception. So therefore, the exhortation in Ephesians 4:15 is presenting a contrast between a believer being a spiritual child whose spiritual growth is hindered because of accepting false doctrine as truth to live by and that of the believer practicing the Word of truth by obedience to the Lord's command to love another as He has loved them so that they grow up spiritually to become like Christ. This is a contrast because both statements address

the believer's response to the Word of God and in particular the Lord's command to love another and both are addressing the believer's conduct.

This causal participial clause in Ephesians 4:15 stands in the emphatic position of this exhortation in order to emphasis the basis and the means by which the exhortation will be accomplished in the lives of Paul and the recipients of this epistle.

The verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) is debated among scholars and expositors of Ephesians 4:15 because the word can not only mean "to speak the truth" but also "to be truthful, to be faithful to the truth, to live by the truth, to practice the truth." This author interprets the verb as meaning "to be truthful, to be faithful to the truth, to practice the truth" or "living one's life by means of truth."

This is indicated by several factors. First, the church age believer does not grow up spiritually to Christ-likeness by only speaking the truth to their fellow believer but also by their conduct which is the result of obeying the Word of truth. Secondly, the prepositional phrase *en agapē* (ἐν ἀγάπῃ) modifying this verb speaks of practicing the Lord Jesus Christ's command to love one another as He has loved the believer, and which command addresses the believer's conduct. Furthermore, in Ephesians 4:14, Paul describes a spiritual child as one who rejects the Word of God as truth to live by and accepts false doctrine as truth to live by. A believer does not reject false doctrine by merely speaking the truth but rather by practicing the truth. Therefore, the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) is a reference to the believer's conduct or behavior because the command to love one another addresses the believer's conduct and a spiritual child is a believer whose conduct is immature because of not obeying the command to love one another and thus is not practicing the Word of God. In context, Paul's concerned about the believer becoming like Jesus Christ with regards to their character, which involves not only the believer's speech but also their conduct. Lastly, the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:2 commands the recipients of this epistle to continue making it their habit of living their lives by means of obedience to the Lord's command to love another, and which command speaks of their lifestyle, which corresponds to Paul's emphasis in Ephesians 4:15. In both passages, obedience to the command to love one another is the means by which the recipients of this letter were to live their lives. Therefore, Paul wants these Gentile Christians to conduct their lives by means of obedience to this command, which will result in spiritual growth and Christ-like character.

In this casual participial clause, Paul employs the noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη), which we have noted many times in our study of Ephesians, does not refer to the function of human love but rather is a love which originates in the character and nature of the triune God. It is manifested in the life of the believer who is obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them. Therefore, this word speaks of "divine-love" because it originates in the essence of God (1 John 4:8) and is reproduced and reflected in the

life of the believer when they obey the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command to love one another as He loves the body of Christ. It also reproduced in the church age believer by the Holy Spirit when they exercise faith in the Spirit inspired contents of Scripture (Gal. 5:22-23). This post-justification faith provides the church age believer the capacity to practice the Lord Jesus Christ's command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love another as He loved them.

This noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη) contains the figure of metonymy, which means that divine love is put for the practice of the love of God by the believer as a result of obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them. It is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of means, which indicates that Paul and the recipients of this letter and ultimately all church age believers were to make it their habit of practicing the Word of God, which is truth "by means of the practice of divine love."

Ephesians 4:15 is the seventh time that Paul has employed the noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη) up to this point in the epistle (Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2). One of the major themes of Ephesians is the love of God. Both the attribute of each member of the Trinity and the Lord Jesus Christ's command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to the church that they are to love one another as He has loved them are referred to in this epistle. That the love of God is a major theme is indicated by the noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη) appears 10 times in Ephesians (Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2: 6:23), the verb *agapaō* (ἀγαπάω) 7 times (Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 28, 33; 6:24), the adjective *agapētos* (ἀγαπητός) twice (Eph. 5:1; 6:21).

Ephesians 4:15 is the fourth time in Ephesians that Paul has used the noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη) in relation to the recipients of this epistle obeying the Lord's command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them. He uses this word in order to affirm and commends that the recipients of this epistle were obeying this command (Eph. 1:15; 3:17; 4:3).

Now, the present tense of the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) in Ephesians 4:15 is a customary present, which expresses the idea of the believer "making it their habit of" or "regularly" practicing the truth of God's Word by practicing the love of God by means of obedience to the Lord's command to love another as He has loved in order to grow up to be like Christ.

The participle conjugation of this verb can be interpreted as a participle of means, which indicates the means by which the action of a finite verb is accomplished. This type of participle defines the action of the main verb. It makes more explicit what the author intended to convey with the verb. This type of participle usually follows the main verb. In our context, the main verb is the first person plural aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *auxanomai* (αὐξάνομαι), " **we will…grow up**" and the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) precedes it rather than follows it. Therefore, this

would express the idea that the believer will grow up to Christ-like character "by means of" practicing the truth by means of practicing divine-love.

However, this author interprets the participle conjugation of the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) as a functioning as a casual participle, which means that it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb. Normally, the participle of cause will precede the finite verb, which is the case here in Ephesians 4:15 with the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) preceding the verb *auxanomai* (αὐξάνομαι). Therefore, this would indicate that the participle conjugation of the verb *alētheuō* (ἀληθεύω) is presenting "the reason why" or "the basis upon which" the believer will grow up to Christ-like character. Therefore, this expresses the idea that the believer will grow up to Christ-like character "because" or "on the basis" that they are practicing the truth by means of practicing divine-love as a result of obeying the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved the believer.

The hortatory subjunctive clause or exhortation in Ephesians 4:15 contains the verb *auxanomai* (αὐξάνομαι) which is used in a figurative sense for the spiritual growth of the believer. Specifically, it speaks of the church age believer "growing" spiritually in the sense of becoming more and more like Christ with regard to their character. The referent of the first person plural form of this verb is of course Paul and the recipients of this epistle. The subjunctive mood of this verb is a hortatory subjunctive, which expresses the idea of the apostle Paul urging the recipients of this letter to unite with him in growing up spiritually to Christ-like character because of practicing the truth by means of practicing divine-love.

In this exhortation, we also noted that Paul employs the accusative masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός). The referent of this word is the holy character of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is indicated by the fact that this word agrees in gender (masculine), number (singular) with its nearest antecedent, which is the articular genitive masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), which appears in Ephesians 4:13. The proper name *Christos* (Χριστός) contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of Christ is put for His holy character. The intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of a change of state, which indicates the state of the believer's character being changed into the character of Christ. The basis for this is practicing the truth and the means by which this is accomplished is the practice the love of God as a result of obeying the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved the believer.

Also, in this exhortation, we have the articular accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), which pertains not only to the totality of an abstract concept but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exception. The referent of this word is every area of the Christian's character, which is to reflect the character of Jesus Christ whose character reflects perfectly the character of His heavenly Father

(John 1:18). The word "character" in this context pertains to the aggregate features and traits of a person. Since the believer's character is to reflect the character of Christ, the word pertains to the aggregate features and traits of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures assign to Jesus Christ the same divine essence as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit meaning that He possesses all the attributes of deity. The Scriptures teach that He is sovereign (Matthew 28:18a; Colossians 2:10b), that He is perfect righteousness (John 8:46a; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 2:21b) and justice (John 8:16a; 2 Tim. 4:8; Ps. 9:8; Deut. 32:4; Rev. 15:3b). Furthermore, the attribute of love is ascribed to Him (John 13:34; Rom. 5:8; Ephesians 3:19; 1 John 4:9-10) as well as eternal life (1 Tim. 1:17; 1 John 5:11), omniscience (Luke 11:17; John 2:24-25; 6:64; 21:17), omnipresence (Matthew 18:20; Prov. 15:3), omnipotence (John 1:3, 10; 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:23-24; Phil. 3:21; Hebrews 1:3; Rev. 1:8), immutability (Mal. 3:6; Hebrews 1:10-12; 13:8) and veracity (John 1:14; 14:6a; 1 John 3:16).

Of course, there are some divine attributes that the believer can never manifest such as omniscience, omnipresence, sovereignty and immutability. However, they can manifest the righteousness of God by obeying the command to love God with one's entire being and fellow human being as oneself, which fulfills one's obligation to both God and human beings. Righteousness is one's obligation to both God and one's fellow human being, which is accomplished through obedience to both of these commands. The believer can also manifest simultaneously God's justice by practicing the command to love one's neighbor as oneself. The believer can manifest the eternal life of God by personally encountering the triune God by obeying the Spirit inspired Scriptures since the Lord defined eternal life in John 17:3 as knowing the Father experientially, which is in fact personally encountering Him through experiencing fellowship with Him. Thus, like the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have a personal experiential knowledge of each other so the believer can possess an experiential knowledge of the triune God. However, there is a caveat, namely that the knowledge of each member of the Trinity for each is exhaustive. Such is not the case for the believer because they received the nature of God at justification but are not beings who are eternal by nature like the members of the Trinity. The believer can manifest the omnipotence of God by appropriating it by faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures. Lastly, the believer can manifest God's attribute of love by obeying the Lord's command to love one another.

The articular neuter plural form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) functions as an adverbial accusative of reference, which would express the idea of Paul and the recipients of this epistle uniting together in growing up to Christ-like character "with reference to" every area of their character because of practicing the truth by means of practicing divine-love.

Ephesians 4:15 is not the first time Paul addresses the subject of the believer growing up spiritually and becoming like Christ with regards to His character because he does so in Ephesians 4:13.

Now, in Ephesians 4:15, the relative pronoun clause, which completes the exhortation in this verse, contains the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) whose referent is of course Jesus Christ since He is the referent of the word's antecedent, which is the accusative masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός). It is further indicated by the nominative masculine singular form of the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), "**of Christ**," which functions as a nominative of simple apposition, which means that it stands in apposition to this relative pronoun. It identifies specifically for the reader who the referent is for this relative pronoun. This is indicated by the fact that both words agree in gender (masculine), number (singular) and case (nominative).

The noun *kephalē* (κεφαλή), "**the head**" is employed in a metaphorical or figurative sense and means "head" expressing the fact that Jesus Christ is the sovereign ruler over the church. This word *kephalē* is functioning as a predicate nominative indicating that it is making an assertion about Jesus Christ, namely that He is the ruler or head over the body, which is the church. The articular construction of this word is monadic meaning that there is only one head of the body, the church and that is Jesus Christ. So the article expresses the idea that Jesus Christ is in a class by Himself and is the one and only ruler of the church.

This is not the first time in Ephesians that Paul has described Jesus Christ as "the head" of the body, which is the church since he describes the Lord as such in Ephesians 1:22.

Now, in Ephesians 4:15, in this relative pronoun clause, the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) expresses the idea of Jesus Christ "existing in the state or condition" of being the head of the body, which is the church. The present tense of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί) is a gnomic present, which expresses the idea that Jesus Christ "as an eternal spiritual truth" exists in the state or condition of being the head of the body, which is the church.

The head metaphor to signify the rulership of Jesus Christ over the church is employed by Paul in several places in his writings (Eph. 4:15; 5:23; Col. 2:19). The body metaphor is employed often by Paul in his writings to describe the church's intimate and eternal union with Jesus Christ (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:15; 10:17; 12:12-13, 27; Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30; Col. 1:18a; 1:24; 2:19; 3:15).

The head and body metaphor is one of eight metaphors used in the New Testament to describe the relationship between the church and the Lord Jesus Christ: (1) The last Adam and the New Creation (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 5:17a). (2) The Great Shepherd and the Sheep (Heb. 13:20). (3) The True Vine and the Branches (John 15:5a). (4) The Chief Cornerstone and the Stones in the building (Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet.

2:5-6). (5) The Great High Priest and members of the Royal Priesthood (Heb. 4:14a; 1 Pet. 2:9a). (6) The Groom and the Bride. (Our wedding occurs at the Second Advent) (Rev. 19:7). (7) The King of Kings and the Royal Family of God (Rev. 19:14-16).

As he does in Ephesians 4:15, the apostle Paul teaches the Colossian Christian community in Colossians 1:18 and 2:19 that Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

Colossians 1:18 Furthermore, He Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being the head over His body, namely His church who, as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being the founder that is the firstborn from the dead ones. The divine purpose was accomplished so that He alone became the Preeminent One among each and every person with no exceptions. (Author's translation)

Not only does the apostle Paul mention the headship of Christ in Colossians 2:19 but he does so in relation to the spiritual growth of the Christian community.

Colossians 2:19 In fact, he absolutely never at any time existed in the state of being united with the Head from whom, each and every member of the body is, as an eternal spiritual truth being abundantly provided for as well as united experientially through the ligaments who act as tendons too. As an eternal spiritual truth, it grows spiritually with a growth which is produced by God the Father. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 4:16 continues the body metaphor from Ephesians 4:15 and the use of physiological terminology. This is the fourth time that Paul employs this metaphor to describe the church (cf. Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 4:4). Like the human body, the church has diversity among its members (R. 12:4 f.; 1 C. 12:12 f.). Christ is said to be the head of the Body (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19) and each church age believer is a member of His body (Rm. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:27).

The body image has already appeared several times.[111] In fact, Paul's comments here develop the ideas in 1:22–23. No other New Testament writer uses "body" metaphorically,[112] but for Paul it is a major term for explaining salvation, the church, and ethics.[113] Moreover, the language here is similar to the building language in 2:21–22. The building grows and the body is built up; in both people are joined together as a result of their connection to Christ (cf. also Col. 2:19). The body image conveys several ideas: (1) An intimate relation exists between Christ and those who believe in him. They are bound to him and draw from him resources for life. (2) Union with Christ joins people to each other. (3) Each person has responsibility within the body to fulfill his or her calling. (4) The body grows and is built up by the

[111] See 1:22–23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12; it will appear again in 5:23, 28, 30.
[112] With the possible exception of the Synoptic eucharistic sayings, depending on how one interprets them.
[113] Of Paul's ninety-one uses of "body," only four appear outside Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthian, Ephesians, and Colossians. While "head" is used of Christ in 1 Corinthians 11:3, only in Ephesians and Colossians is a Christological understanding of "head" brought into relation with "body."

activity of each part and the sustenance that comes from Christ. (5) Everything done in the body is done in the context of love."[114]

Ephesians 4:16 completes the second major section of chapter four and which section began in Ephesians 4:7. This section discusses the diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ. Specifically, it discusses the importance of the function of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching in relation to not only the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ but also in relation to providing them the capacity to function in their spiritual gifts. In fact, this section teaches that the believer's service to the body of Christ and the Lord Himself is in direct proportion to their spiritual growth.

Ephesians 4:16 is composed of two assertions: (1) *ex hou pan to sōma synarmologoumenon kai symbibazomenon dia pasēs haphēs tēs epichorēgias kat energeian* (ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον διὰ πάσης ἁφῆς τῆς ἐπιχορηγίας κατ ἐνέργειαν), "**From whom, each and every member of the body does get fitted together, yes does get united together through each and every ligament, which provide support for the purpose of working.**" (2) *en metrō henos hekastou merous tēn auxēsin tou sōmatos poieitai eis oikodomēn heautou en agapē* (ἐν μέτρῳ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου μέρους τὴν αὔξησιν τοῦ σώματος ποιεῖται εἰς οἰκοδομὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ), "**Simultaneously, in proportion to each individual part belonging to the body does cause itself to grow for the purpose of building one another up by means of the practice of divine-love**."

The first assertion is composed of the declarative statement *pan to sōma synarmologoumenon kai symbibazomenon dia pasēs haphēs tēs epichorēgias* (πᾶν τὸ σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον διὰ πάσης ἁφῆς τῆς ἐπιχορηγίας), "**each and every member of the body does get fitted together, yes does get united together through each and every ligament, which provide support**." It is modified by the prepositional phrases *ex hou* (ἐξ οὗ), "**from whom**" and *kat' energeian* (κατ' ἐνέργειαν), "**for the purpose of working**."

Therefore, the first assertion states that from Christ Himself as the source, each member of the body of Christ does get fitted, yes does get united together through the function of each ligament, which provides the members of this body with support, which is for the purpose of service and which service is Christian service. This support is the communication of the Word of God. These ligaments are those with the communication of gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. The function of the gift of evangelism benefits the members of unregenerate humanity. Therefore, this first assertion teaches that the function of the communication gifts is to enable the members of the body of Christ to serve each other and the Lord through the function of their spiritual gift. It teaches that members of the body of Christ are able

[114] Snodgrass, K. (1996). *Ephesians* (p. 207). Zondervan.

to identify their spiritual gift and function in this gift to serve each other as a result of the function of the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Their function is to provide the Word of God to the members of the body of Christ which is their spiritual food.

The prepositional phrase *ex hou* (ἐξ οὗ), "**from whom**" indicates that Jesus Christ is "the source from which" the members of the body of Christ grow spiritually. This prepositional phrase is the link between the contents of Ephesians 4:15 and the contents of Ephesians 4:16. It thus continues and develops the body metaphor begun in Ephesians 4:15. This prepositional phrase indicates that the person of Jesus Christ is not only source of spiritual growth of the individual members of the body of Christ and as a corporate unit but also in control of that growth just as the head of the human body controls the individual members of the human body.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the source of the spiritual growth of individual members of the body of Christ and consequently the spiritual growth of the body in a corporate sense because He delegated the communication gifts to communicate the Word of God to the members of the body of Christ. He is the source of growth because He is the living Word whose written Word has been put in writing with perfect accuracy through the human authors of Scripture by the Holy Spirit. Also, each member of the body of Christ has been given the new nature of Christ through regeneration at justification as well as the permanent indwelling of each member of the Trinity. Also, each member was placed in union with Jesus Christ and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification. This provides the members of the body of Christ deliverance from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature and Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins and spiritual and physical death in a positional sense at justification and in a perfective sense in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. They experience this deliverance by appropriating by faith this union and identification with Jesus Christ. Each member has access to God the Father in prayer and receives the answer to their prayers because of the merits of this union and identification. Therefore, truly Jesus Christ is the source of spiritual growth in each individual member of the body of Christ and the body as a whole.

J. S. Exell writes "The Church, as a body of parts, is dependent upon its representative Head for its order and resources. 1. Its laws and resources are from Him. The laws given by the Head to the Church are few and natural, proceeding from the unchangeable relations of man to man, and man to God. Love to God and love to man are the great moral laws which remain in the Church for ever, without declension or change, because they are essential to the relations of moral beings, and the moral universe could not exist without them. 2. From Him it receives its symmetrical proportion and harmony. The symmetry of the Church is the harmony

of all its parts with themselves, with the Divine economy of the universe, and with itself, in all times and places. This threefold symmetry it receives from its glorious Head, who is one and unchangeable. 3. From Him it receives its oneness. This gives the Church, through all times and places, unity of purpose and character. Its oneness is not in its feet, but in its Head. 4. From Him it receives light and life. As life and light are elements in importance and value above all others, so is Christ to the Church. As He is made by God the representative Head, He is made its light and life. 5. From Him it receives its beauty and attraction. A deformed head would destroy every possible beauty and attraction of the whole body. A noble head gives beauty and nobility to the whole. We look first at the head; we form our opinion of the whole from the character of the head. In its outward form the Church may appear mean and unattractive in some of its members, but the Head makes up for the whole. The Head is never out of sight; it is visible to all from all its members. 6. Its magnitude and universality are received from the Head. His greatness becomes that of the Church, by virtue of the relation existing between them. Where the Head is, the Church is represented. In the Head, the Church of earth and heaven are united; the spirit of the Head unites the present with the future and thus gives to the Church universality in time and space. 7. The Church is indebted for its hope and high destiny to its Head. The Head lives for the body. The exaltation of the Head will be that of the body also. The Head is above all human reach; and, in connection with its Head, the body will triumph over all foes and opposition. (*T. Hughes.*)"[115]

As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, 2:16, 4:4 and 4:12 the noun *sōma* (σῶμα) here in Ephesians 4:16 is used in a figurative sense to describe the church as being like the human body in that it has diversity among its members but yet they possess a unity. The word refers to church age believers who are joined together as a corporate unit with the implication of each member having a distinctive function within this unit. The referent of this word is of course the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities emphasizing not only the diversity between the two but also the unity that exists between the two as a result of both being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, the Holy Spirit placed them in union with Him and identifying them with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

The nominative neuter singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς) expresses the idea of the totality of the members of the body of Christ or in other words, it refers to them as a corporate unit. This word also is used in a distributive emphasizing no exceptions. Therefore, the distributive sense of this word emphasizes the individual members of the Jewish and Gentile Chirstian communities. Thus, this word indicates that Jesus Christ is not only the source of the spiritual growth of the church as a

[115] Exell, J. S. (n.d.). *The Biblical Illustrator: Ephesians* (pp. 402–403). Fleming H. Revell Company.

corporate unit but also the source of the spiritual growth of the individual members of this body of believers.

As was the case in Ephesians 2:21, the verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω) here in Ephesians 4:16 means "to be fitted together" since the word pertains to something being fitted or connected together to form a coherent whole. As was the case in Ephesians 2:21, here in Ephesians 4:16, the word is used in a figurative or metaphorical sense for the members of the body of Christ being fitted or connected inextricably tied together to form a coherent whole or corporate unit of people. However, unlike Ephesians 2:21, where the word was used in relation to the justification of the believer, here in Ephesians 4:16, the word is used in relation to the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ after their justification. Specifically, since this verb expresses the idea of members of the body of Christ "being fitted or inextricably connected together as a coherent whole and corporate unit" in the sense of these members being able to identify their spiritual gift. Thus, they are in the process of being able to identify their position and function in the body of Christ as a result of receiving teaching from those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Thus, this word emphasizes the "process" of being fitted together with other members of the body of Christ as they go through the "process" of being taught.

The participle conjugation of this verb functions as a nominative of simple apposition, which means that it is describing the referent of the latter, which we noted is the members of the body of Christ in their entirety, as being connected inextricably together in order to form a coherent whole or corporate unit after justification through every supporting ligament, which we will note is a reference ot the exercise of those who possess the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

The present tense of this verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω) is a gnomic present which expresses the idea that every member of the body of Christ "does as an eternal spiritual truth" get fitted together through the communication of the Word of God by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. The emphasis of the present tense here is not how often this takes place such as a customary present tense which signals a regularly occurring action or ongoing state or an iterative present used to describe a repeated activity or event. Rather, the emphasis is that this does happen and that this is always true that each member of the body of Christ "as an eternal spiritual truth does" get to be fitted together through the communication of the Word of God by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching

The passive voice of this verb indicates that each member of the body of Christ as the subject of this verb receives the action of being fitted inextricably together as a coherent whole and corporate unit by receiving the Word of God as communicated

to them by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

The participle conjugation of this verb functions as an attributive participle which means that it ascribes the attribute of members of the body of Christ being fitted inextricably together as a coherent whole and corporate unit as a result of receiving the Word of God as communicated to them by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

Harold Hoehner writes "The first participle συναρμολογούμενον, from συναρμολογέω, is used only here and 2:21. There it was discussed as a word that Paul coined by joining the prepositional prefix συν- either to the rare noun ἁρμός, referring to stones torn away from their 'joints' (or the "crevice" of a door); or to the rare verb ἁρμολογέω, meaning 'to join' or 'pile together,' as stones for a tomb. Hence, it would have the resultant meaning 'to join, fit together,' especially with reference to a construction made of stones. Today with mortar it is easy to fit stones together but in that day, with no mortar, the stones were cut and smoothed by an elaborate process so that they fit exactly with each other.[116] As the ancient masons used an elaborate process of fitting stones together, it is certain that God's grace carefully fits together persons with one another in order to bring inner unity that can allow them to grow together. The emphasis is on the skillful fitting of each member to the other, as opposed to being thrown together haphazardly."[117]

The verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) is used in a figurative sense and pertains to bringing a certain group of people together as a unit. The word is used of the body of Christ being brought together as a unit through the function of the communication gifts, which provide them their spiritual nourishment, namely the Word of God. Specifically, since the word pertains to "unifying" something together, this word describes the believer as being unified together with other members of the body of Christ as a result of being able to identify their spiritual gift. Thus, they are able to function in their position and using their spiritual gift for the benefit of the body of Christ as a result of the receiving teaching from those with the gift of teaching. This word emphasizes the "completed" process of believers being united to other believers.

As was the case with the verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω), the participle conjugation of the verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) functions as a nominative of simple apposition, which means that it is describing the referent of the latter, which we noted is the members of the body of Christ in their entirety, as being united together after justification through every supporting ligament, which is a reference to those who possess the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching exercising these gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ.

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[116] For a detailed study of this word, see Robinson, 260–63.
[117] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 569). Baker Academic.

Like the verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω), the present tense of this verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) is a gnomic present which expresses the idea of every member of the body of Christ "does as an eternal spiritual truth" get united together through the communication of the Word of God by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Again, the emphasis of the present tense here is not how often this takes place such as a customary present tense which signals a regularly occurring action or ongoing state or an iterative present used to describe a repeated activity or event. Rather, the emphasis is that this does happen and that this is always true that each member of the body of Christ "as an eternal spiritual truth does" get united together through the communication of the Word of God by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching

The passive voice of the verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) indicates that each member of the body of Christ as the subject of this verb receives the action of being united together as a result of being able to identify their spiritual gift and thus position and function in the body of Christ as a result of the receiving teaching from those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

The participle conjugation of this verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) functions as an attributive participle which means that it ascribes the attribute of members of the body of Christ being united together after justification as a result of receiving the Word of God as communicated to them by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

Harold Hoehner writes "The second participle συμβιβαζόμενον, from συμβιβάζω, literally means 'to bring or put together' and used metaphorically means 'to bring to terms, reconcile.'[118] It was used philosophically to make analytical comparisons and to draw conclusions[119] and is used to bring arguments together in order to demonstrate or prove something.[120] It appears ten times in the LXX (Exod 4:12, 15; 18:16; Lev 10:11; Deut 4:9; Judg 13:8 [B text]; Ps 32:8 [LXX 31:8]; Isa 40:13, 14; Theodotion Dan 9:22) translating four Hebrew words and always means 'to teach, instruct.' Teaching is a process of bringing together facts and arguments.[121] In the NT this word occurs seven times with various meanings, including 'to conclude, infer' (Acts 16:10); 'to prove, demonstrate' (Acts 9:22); 'to instruct' (Acts 19:33; 1 Cor 2:16 [quoting Isa 40:14]); and 'to unite, bring or knit together' (Col 2:2, 19). This last sense fits the present context and is parallel with Col 2:19 and is

[118] Herodotus 1.74; Thucydides 2.29.6; Plato *Protagoras* 337e.
[119] Plato *Hippias Minor* 369d; *Respublica* 6 §504a; Aristotle *Topica* 7.5 §155a.25; 8.11 §161b.37–38; *Sophistici Elenchi* 28 §181a.22.
[120] Aristotle *Topica* 7.5 §150a.36; 8.3 §154b.27; 8.11 §157b.37.
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979
[121] One should deduce that the LXX's use of the term means "directing" or "guiding," which can then be applied to the present passage, as does G. H. Whitaker, "The Building and the Body (Eph. ii.21 f., iv.16; Col. ii.19)," *Theology* 13 (December 1926): 335–36.

best translated 'held together' (nasb, tev, niv, nrsv) or 'intimately joined together.'[122] Individual believers are brought together much like a lawyer marshalls evidence together in a logical fashion so as to make a case clear or like a teacher who tightly argues in a logical sequence to demonstrate a theory. However, the union between believers is not only external in that they are redeemed and gifted by the same Lord but also internal in that they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit."[123]

The verbs *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω) and *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) are joined together by the conjunction *kai* (καί) in order to form the figure of hendiadys. Therefore, this indicates that the meaning of verb *sumbibazō* (συμβιβάζω) is intensifying and advancing upon the meaning of the verb *synarmologeō* (συναρμολογέω). The latter expresses the idea of members of the body of Christ "being fitted inextricably together as a coherent whole and corporate unit" in the sense of these members being able to identify their spiritual gift and thus position and function in the body of Christ as a result of the receiving teaching from those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. The former expresses the idea of believers being united together as a result of functioning in their spiritual gift and thus functioning in their position in the body of Christ as a result of the receiving teaching from those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. The former emphasizes the completed process of being joined together whereas the latter emphasizes an "ongoing" process.

The prepositional phrase *dia pasēs haphēs tēs epichorēgias* (διὰ πάσης ἁφῆς τῆς ἐπιχορηγίας), "**through each and every ligament, which provide support**" indicates that these communicators of the Word of God are the intermediate agency who Jesus Christ employs in order to produce growth in the individual members of His body, the church. The source of the spiritual growth of the body of Christ is Christ Himself. However, Christ effects this spiritual growth in the believer through the intermediate agency of those men with the gift of apostleship, teaching and prophecy.

The noun *haphē* (ἁφή) appears only twice in the Greek New Testament, here in Colossians 2:19 and also Ephesians 4:16. In both instances, the word means "ligament," which literally refers to the tough fibrous band of tissue in the human body which connects the articular extremities of bones or supporting an organ in place. In both instances, it is used metaphorically for the communicators of the Word of God to the church which would include those men with the spiritual gift of apostleship, teaching and prophecy.

NASB New American Standard Bible
TEV Today's English Version
NIV New International Version
NRSV New Revised Standard Version
[122] McGrath, " '*Syn*' Words in Saint Paul," 221.
[123] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (pp. 569–570). Baker Academic.

This interpretation is indicated by a couple factors. First of all, the Scriptures make clear that the believer's spiritual food is the Word of God and enables them to grow spiritually (cf. Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2). Secondly, Ephesians 4:11-14 teaches that the major function of these three gifts was to equip the saints for the work of service, to build them up spiritually, to produce unity among the members of the church. The exercise of these gifts was also to provide the church knowledge of the Son of God and to protect here individual members from false doctrine. Lastly, in Colossians 2:19, Paul asserts that from the head, Jesus Christ, the individual members of the church grow spiritually and are united experientially through the intermediate agency of the joints and ligaments of the body. Therefore, since the Christian grows spiritually by learning and obeying God's Word and the function of the gifts of apostleship, teaching and prophets provided the Word of God for the church and the ligaments and tendons of the body enable the growth of the body of Christ, these ligaments and tendons in Colossians 2:19 and Ephesians 4:16 are a reference to these communication gifts.

Therefore, the noun *haphē* (ἁφή) is a reference to the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching with the exception being the gift of evangelism which is designed to benefit the member of unregenerate humanity. Also, the gift of teaching is the only communication gift, which is extant today because the gift of apostleship disappeared after the death of the last apostle, John at the end of the first century A.D. Also, the gift of prophecy disappeared after the completion of the New Testament canon. This noun also contains the figure of metonymy, which means that these three communication gifts are put for their function.

Peter O'Brien addresses the interpretation of the identity of the "ligaments" in Ephesians 4:16, he writes "But to whom do the 'ligaments' refer? To those who are 'special ministers' (cf. v. 11) or all the members of the body? The answer, in part, turns on whether the phrase 'according to the due measure of each individual part' clarifies the preceding expression, *by every supporting ligament*, or makes an additional point with a broader reference to each member of the body. Is 'each ligament' to be identified with 'each individual part'? Or is the latter a broader reference to every member, while the ligaments point to a narrower group? Two main approaches are as follows:

(1) The usual interpretation is to understand 'according to the due measure of each individual part' as a clarification of *by every supporting ligament*, and to identify 'every ligament' with 'each individual part.' Accordingly, these ligaments are taken as representing all the members of the body, not 'special ministers' or officebearers. It is argued that the singular 'ligament' together with the addition of 'every' stresses the contribution that each part makes to the whole, while the phrase 'according to the due measure of each individual part', which is unique to Ephesians, also 'highlights the importance of the active contribution of each individual

member'.[124] Every member of the body is in view in both expressions, it is claimed, and this is consistent with the mention of joints and ligaments in Colossians 2:19. Accordingly, the spiritual gifts of each believer become the channel for focusing divine power in the life of the church.

(2) The alternative view is that *every supporting ligament* refers to 'particular ministers of the word' rather than ordinary church members. Lincoln, for example, claims that 'what is being highlighted is the role of the ministers in the whole body ruled and nourished by Christ and that, just as in v 11 the giving of Christ was embodied in particular persons, so … [in this phrase of] v 16 the growth from Christ is mediated by particular persons'.[125] The broader reference to every member then appears in the following line, 'according to the due measure of each individual part'. In this summarizing picture of v. 16, both gifted ministers and gifted members have a part to play in the body's growth. The former are represented by the ligaments which provide connections between the other parts of the body, while the latter have their distinct role to play in the well-being of the whole.

The second explanation is consistent with the movement of thought within the paragraph (vv. 7–16): first, grace is given to each believer in accordance with Christ's apportioning (v. 7). The focus then narrows to the 'special ministers,' whom the ascended Christ gives, together with their functions of ministry (vv. 8–12b), before widening out to the saints who build Christ's body (v. 12c) and 'us all' (v. 13) who reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. In this summarizing sentence of v. 16, the decisive role of Christ is once again asserted (v. 16a), while both special ministers (v. 16b) and all members (v. 16c) have a part to play.[126] The ministers are presented as the means of support or supply for the other parts of the body, and this is consistent with the earlier emphasis in the paragraph on the ministry of God's word and the role of teaching leaders (cf. vv. 8–12b)."[127]

Hoehner argues that the noun *haphē* (ἀφή) "is best rendered "contact" because this is the predominant meaning of the word in classical and LXX usage and makes the best sense in the present context."[128] However, this author believes that "ligament" best fits the immediate context because quite simply Paul is using a body metaphor. Thus, to render the word "point of contact" disregards the immediate context and thus does not reflect the contextual meaning of the word.

The noun *epichoregia* (ἐπιχορηγία) is used of those men with the gift of apostleship, prophecy and teaching who abundantly supply the Word of God for the spiritual growth of the members of the body of Christ.

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[124] C. E. Arnold, 'Jesus Christ,' 362.
[125] Lincoln, 263; cf. Schnackenburg, 173, 189–90.
[126] Note especially Schnackenburg, 189–90.
[127] O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (pp. 314–315). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
LXX *Septuaginta*. Edited by Alfred Rahlfs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979
[128] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (p. 573). Baker Academic.

The articular construction of this word is generic, which means that it is distinguishes those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching from those in the body of Christ who do not possess these gifts.

The noun *epichoregia* (ἐπιχορηγία) functions as a genitive of product, which expresses the idea that these ligaments, which are figurative or metaphorical reference to those in the body of Christ who possess the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching, "produces" or "provides" support for members of the body of Christ in the form of communicating the Word of God to them.

The prepositional phrase *kat' energeian* (κατ' ἐνέργειαν), "**for the purpose of working**" presents the purpose of the communicating gifts providing support in the form of the communication of the Word of God to members of the body of Christ. This indicates that the members of the body of Christ functioning in their spiritual gift and serving one another through the function of their gift as a result of being trained in the Word of God to do is "the purpose" of the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

The noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια) refers to members of the body of Christ "functioning" in their spiritual gift and serving one another through the function of their gift as a result of being trained in the Word of God to do so. It is also the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which also functions as a marker of purpose. Therefore, it marks serving through the function of one's spiritual gift as "the purpose" of the function of the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

Now, the second assertion in Ephesians 4:16 is composed of the declarative statement (ἑνὸς ἑκάστου μέρους τὴν αὔξησιν τοῦ σώματος ποιεῖται), "**each individual part belonging to the body does cause itself to grow**." It is modified by three prepositional phrases: (1) *en metrō* (ἐν μέτρῳ), "**Simultaneously, in proportion to**" (2) *eis oikodomēn heautou* (εἰς οἰκοδομὴν ἑαυτοῦ), "**for the purpose of building one another up**" (3) *en agapē* (ἐν ἀγάπῃ), "**by means of the practice of divine-love**."

Therefore, the second assertion occurs simultaneously with the first and thus corresponds to it and states that each individual part of the body of Christ does cause itself to grow for the purpose of building one another up by means of the practice of divine-love. Thus, it teaches that the members of the body of Christ receive the capacity to serve one another and the Lord because of the function of the communication gifts while simultaneously in direct proportion to each individual member of the body of Christ does cause itself to grow for the purpose of building one another up by means of the practice of divine-love.

The prepositional phrase *en metrō* (ἐν μέτρῳ), "**while in proportion to**" indicates that the proportion in which each member of the body of Christ serves one another through the function of their spiritual gift "occurs simultaneously with" each

member causing themselves to grow up spiritually for the purpose of building one another up spiritually by means of the practice of divine-love.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:7, this author interprets the noun *metron* (μέτρον) in Ephesians 4:16 as meaning "proportion, proportional" since the word in this context pertains to making the parts of something harmonious or symmetrical. As was the case in Ephesians 4:7, it is used in Ephesians 4:16 in relation to spiritual gifts, which were given to each church age believer at the moment of the justification through the work of the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Ephesians 4:16, the word is describing each member of the body of Christ working or functioning their spiritual gifts "in proportion to" or "proportional" to each member causing itself to grow spiritually. In other words, each member of the body of Christ working in the sense of functioning in their spiritual gifts is marked by due proportion, that is, they are marked by harmonious relation to each member of the body of Christ causing themselves to grow up spiritually. Therefore, this noun *metron* (μέτρον) emphasizes that the function of the various gifts in the body of Christ resulting in serving the body of Christ as marked by harmonious or symmetrical relation to each member of the body of Christ causing themselves to grow up spiritually.

In Ephesians 4:16, the noun *metron* (μέτρον) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of a point of time which is simultaneous to or overlaps with another point of time.[129] This would indicate that the proportion in which each member of the body of Christ serves each other through the function of their spiritual gift "occurs simultaneously with" each member causing themselves to grow up spiritually for the purpose of building one another up spiritually by means of the practice of divine-love.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:7, the adjective *hekastos* (ἕκαστος) here in Ephesians 4:16 means "each" since the word denotes each one of a totality in a distributive sense. The word emphasizes the idea of a single member of the body of Christ without emphasizing them as individuals or being a part of whole.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:7, it is modified here in Ephesians 4:16 by the adjective *heis* (εἷς), which means "one" referring to a single person since it pertains to one person in contrast to more than one. This word emphasizes the body of Christ as a corporate unit in contrast to them being individuals. It has an attributive relation to *hekastos* (ἕκαστος), "each."

The noun *meros* (μέρος) means "part" since the word in this context pertains to a portion from the whole of a natural object. In other words, it pertains to a part of something in contrast to the whole. Therefore, in Ephesians 4:16, the emphasis with this word is that the individual members of the body of Christ are "part" of a whole.

[129] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 632). United Bible Societies.

Therefore, the referent of the entire expression *henos hekastou merous* (ἑνὸς ἑκάστου μέρους) is the individual believers who are inextricably tied to each other through faith in Jesus Christ at justification and the baptism of the Spirit. This entire expression is put in the genitive case because it is modifying the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *sōma* (σῶμα), "**belonging to the body**."

As was the case when the word first appeared here in Ephesians 4:16, the noun *sōma* (σῶμα) has the same meaning and referent as it did earlier in the verse. This is indicated by the articular construction of the word, which is anaphoric.

The verb *poieō* (ποιέω) pertains to causing a particular state to take place, which in our particular context, is the spiritual growth of the Christian. The referent of the third person singular form of this verb is each individual member of the body of Christ.

The present tense of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is a gnomic present which indicates that the function of the communication gifts does "as an eternal spiritual truth" or "spiritual axiom" cause each member of the body of Christ to grow spiritually. The emphasis of the present tense here is not how often this takes place such as a customary present tense which signals a regularly occurring action or ongoing state or an iterative present used to describe a repeated activity or event. Rather, the emphasis is that this does happen and that this is always true that each member of the body of Christ "does as an eternal spiritual truth" cause itself to grow by receiving the Word of God provided by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching.

The middle voice of this verb *poieō* (ποιέω) is causative which would indicate that each individual part or member of the body of Christ does cause themselves to grow spiritually and thus causes the spiritual growth of the body of Christ in a corporate sense as well. It emphasizes the volitional responsibility of each member of the body of Christ for its own spiritual growth as an individual and by doing so, this will benefit the body of Christ in a corporate sense as well.

However, Paul asserts with the prepositional phrase *ex hou* (ἐξ οὗ), "**from whom**" at the beginning of Ephesians 4:16 that Jesus Christ Himself is the source of this growth. Of course, the Holy Spirit is also involved in the growth of the individual and the body as whole because the Lord Jesus Christ employs the Spirit to affect this growth when the believer obeys the Spirit inspired Scriptures. The Spirit causes spiritual growth in the believer by means of the Word of God, which those with the gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching communicate to the believer.

Thus, the middle voice of the verb *poieō* (ποιέω) emphasizes that each individual believer is volitionally responsible to respond by faith to the teaching of the Word of God by those with the communication gifts of apostleship, prophecy and teaching. Those who do respond in faith, which produces obedience to the various Spirit

command, prohibitions and requests in Scripture, will grow spiritually and consequently, the body of Christ as a corporate unit will grow as well.

Just as each individual member of the human body must function properly in order for the body to function properly as a whole, so each individual member of the body of Christ must function in their spiritual gift through the practice of God's love when interacting with each other for the proper functioning of the body of Christ as a whole. So therefore, Paul is not only speaking of the corporate growth of the body of Christ in Ephesians 4:16 but also the spiritual growth of its individual members since corporate growth is based upon individual growth. In fact, Paul makes clear that when he speaks of growth in Ephesians 4:11-16, he is speaking not only of corporate growth of the church but also the growth of each individual believer because he explicitly mentions in Ephesians 4:13 his desire for each of them to grow up to become like Christ in with regards to their character.

The implication is clear when members of the body of Christ do not function in their spiritual gift because they reject the Spirit inspired teaching of the Word of God by their teacher and thus do not practice the command to love one another and thus do not function in their spiritual gift and do not grow up spiritually, the body of Christ in a corporate sense suffers as well. This corresponds to Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:26 in which he teaches that when one member of the body of Christ suffers the whole body suffers. He also taught in 1 Corinthians 12:12-21 that each member of the body of Christ is dependent on their fellow members just like the members of the human body are dependent upon each other. Thus, for a believer not to grow spiritually and not function in their spiritual gift because they are not practicing the love of God when interacting with their fellow-believer causes the other members of the body of Christ to suffer as well.

This is what is hurting the church in America in the twenty-first century. The lack of accountability on the part of individual members of the body of Christ for not learning and applying God's Word as communicated by their Spirit gifted teachers and thus not functioning in their spiritual gifts because of not practicing the Lord's command to love one another as He has loved them has damaged and is damaging the church's individual and corporate growth and impact in America and in their communities. Also, those men in the body of Christ who have been given the gift of teaching and are not employing this gift by communicating the Word of God on a habitual basis are damaging the church's individual and corporate growth and impact in America. Many are leaving the ministry for unjustifiable reasons.

The prepositional phrase *eis oikodomēn heautou* (εἰς οἰκοδομὴν ἑαυτοῦ), "**for the purpose of building one another up**" presents the purpose of each member of the body Christ causing themselves to grow spiritually as a result of serving each other through the function of their spiritual gifts.

As was the case in Ephesians 4:12, the noun *oikodomē* (οἰκοδομή) is here in Ephesians 4:16 in a figurative sense of the act of bringing something closer to completion and is understood as if assisting in the construction of an incomplete building. Specifically, the word speaks of building up spiritually the members of the body of Christ in the sense of facilitating their spiritual growth as individuals and as a corporate unit.

The referent of the genitive neuter singular form of the reflexive pronoun *heautou* (ἑαυτοῦ) is the members of the body of Christ. It emphasizes the action of the members of the body of Christ building one another spiritually. It functions as an objective genitive, which expresses the idea of members of the body of Christ receiving the action of building up one another through the function of their gifts, which takes place when they practice the Lord's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved the believer.

This is the fourth time in the Ephesian epistle that the apostle Paul employs the prepositional phrase *en agapē* (ἐν ἀγάπῃ) for the practice of divine-love by the believer when they obey the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command to love one another as He has loved them (cf. Eph. 3:17; 4:2, 15). Here in Ephesians 4:16 this prepositional phrase indicates that the members of the body of Christ build one another up spiritually through the function of their spiritual gifts "by means of the practice of divine-love," which is accomplished by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them.

The noun *agapē* (ἀγάπη) does not refer to the function of human love but rather is a love which originates in the character and nature of the triune God. It is manifested in the life of the believer who is obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them. This word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that divine love is put for the practice of the love of God by the believer as a result of obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them.

Frank Thielman writes "First, Christ is the source of the church's 'bodily' growth. Just as in verses 7–11 the victorious Christ was the source of the gifts given to each believer for the church's edification, so here Christ is the one 'from whom' (ἐξ οὗ, *ex hou*) the growth of the body comes. Since Paul has just spoken of Christ as 'the head,' he probably thinks of the head of the body as the control center of the body's growth, a concept that would correspond to at least some ancient physiological thinking about the function of the brain (Lloyd 1973: 77; Dawes 1998: 129–33; *pace* Bedale 1956: 68). Christ, as the head of the body, 'produces' (ποιεῖται, *poieitai*) the

pace in respectful disagreement with

growth of the body. He does this 'for its own edification [οἰκοδομήν, *oikodomēn*].' Here the use of οἰκοδομή recalls both the use of this term in verse 12, where it leads into the figure of the church's growth into a mature man, and its use in 2:21, where the dwelling place of God, called an οἰκοδομή, 'grows' (αὔξει, *auxei*) as Jews and Gentiles are tightly 'joined together' (συναρμολογουμένη, *synarmologoumenē*) to form it. Here Christ is the head and therefore the source of this unity and growth, just as in 2:20–22 he is architecturally the most important stone in the οἰκοδομή, both guiding its construction and crowning its completion."[130]

Ephesians 4:16 echoes in many respects Colossians 2:19.

Colossians 2:19 In fact, he absolutely never at any time existed in the state of being united with the Head from whom, each and every member of the body is, as an eternal spiritual truth being abundantly provided for as well as united experientially through the ligaments who act as tendons too. As an eternal spiritual truth, it grows spiritually with a growth which is produced by God the Father. (Author's translation)

Romans 12:6-8

The apostle Paul in Romans 12:6a teaches that there is a diversity of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ according to God's grace.

Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, 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. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. 3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. 4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith. 7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

In Romans 12:6, not translated is the "sequential" use of the conjunction *de*, which introduces a statement that follows logically the previous statement.

[130] Thielman, F. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 286). Baker Academic.

In the apodosis of the comparative clause in Romans 12:5, Paul teaches because all Christians are one body in union with Christ, "thus logically" speaking they are members individually belonging to one another.

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

Now here in Romans 12:6, Paul continues to advance upon his statements from the previous comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5. In this verse, he teaches that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy.

Some contend that the conjunction *de* in Romans 12:6 introduces a statement that transitions from a discussion that emphasizes the importance of the Christian maintaining a humble attitude with regards to self and other members of the Christian community to a discussion regarding spiritual gifts and their function. Interpreting *de* as transitional would support the interpretation of the participle form of the verb *echo*, "**we have**" as functioning as an indicative. However, the participle functioning as an indicative is quite rare.

Furthermore, it is more likely that Paul in Romans 12:6 is continuing a progression of thought from Romans 12:1-5. In Romans 12:1, the apostle Paul appealed to his Christian readers in Rome on the basis of the merciful acts of the Father on their behalf to offer their bodies as a sacrifice-alive, holy, extremely pleasing to the Father, which their reasonable service to the Father.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I appeal to each and every one of you spiritual brothers and sisters on the basis of the merciful acts produced by God the Father to offer your bodies as a sacrifice-alive, holy, extremely pleasing and beneficial to God the Father, which is your reasonable service. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 12:2, Paul prohibited his Christian readers in Rome from being conformed to the standards of the cosmic system of Satan.

Romans 12:2a Consequently, do not conform your behavior in accordance with the standards of this age. (Author's translation)

He then issued a command on the heels of this prohibition to be transformed in their character into the image of Christ by the renewing of their minds. He teaches that this transformation of the believer's character into the image of Christ by renovating their mind accomplishes what the Father intended in that it provides the believer the capacity to discern what the will of God is with regards to any situation.

Romans 12:2b On the contrary, permit yourselves to be transformed by renovating your mind in order that each and every one of you may discern what is, as an eternal spiritual truth, God the Father's will, that which is good as well as extremely pleasing and in addition perfect. (Author's translation)

In Romans 12:3, Paul forbid his readers from thinking more highly of themselves than they were obligated to think.

Romans 12:3a In fact, by means of the spiritual gift, which was assigned to me for the benefit of myself and others I say for the benefit of each and every person, namely those who are at this particular time living among all of you not to think more highly of oneself than what one is, as an eternal spiritual truth, obligated to think. (Author's translation)

In contrast to this he commanded that they think properly about themselves, which is accomplished by obeying the command in Romans 12:2 to renovate one's mind. Thinking properly about themselves would be consistent with the objective standard that the Father distributed to each believer by which they can accurately and objectively form an opinion of themselves, namely justifying faith.

Romans 12:3b On the contrary, make it a habit to think so that you think properly about yourselves consistent with the objective standard God the Father distributed to each and every person without exception for their benefit, namely justifying faith. (Author's translation)

Then, in Romans 12:4-5, Paul teaches that the reason why it is essential that the believer maintain a humble attitude toward self is that like the human body has many members with differing functions, so they are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.

There two verses form a comparative clause, which compares the different parts of the human body that have various functions that benefit the body as a whole with the individuals who compose the Christian community that also have various functions that benefit the community as a whole.

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

The comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5 teaches that the Roman believers should obey his command in Romans 12:3 because just as the human body has many members with diverse functions so the Christian community is one body in union and identified with Christ and thus individually members of one another.

The implication is that Paul's readers need to maintain a humble attitude about themselves and avoid being arrogant because they need each other to function

effectively as a group since they have different functions which benefits the entire group just as the human body has different parts with different functions. Therefore, the implication of this is that maintaining a humble attitude is essential in order to serve the body of Christ.

Now, in Romans 12:6, he advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole.

Therefore, Romans 12:6a is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5 rather than a new sentence and a transition of thought as many commentators interpret this verse and many English translations do as well. Then, in Romans 12:6b-8, Paul goes a step further in the progression and identifies the various spiritual gifts and their function.

Romans 12:6a Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. (NASB95)

"**We have**" is the first person plural nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *echo*, which means, "to experience one what one possesses" which is identified as spiritual gifts as indicated by the accusative neuter plural form of the noun *charisma*, "**gifts**."

Romans 12:6-8 is notorious as being a difficult passage to interpret and translate. One of the difficulties with this passage is tied to a misunderstanding of the proper contextual meaning of the verb *echo* and how its participle form functions.

Nearly, all expositors and English translations consider Romans 12:6-8 elliptical and thus supply imperative verbs (NASB; RSV) or a series of them (KJV; NIV; TEV; REB; NJB). Ellipsis is not uncommon in the Greek New Testament, especially in the Pauline corpus. In fact, we have seen many elliptical constructions in Romans.

As we also noted earlier, the statement "**each of us is to exercise them accordingly**" in Romans 12:6 does not appear in the original text since the translators interpret Paul as using the figure of ellipsis meaning that this statement is implied. They believe that the qualifications for each gift listed in Romans 12:6b-8 reflect an underlying hortatory sense meaning that Paul is exhorting his readers to exercise these gifts.

Also, the majority interpret *echo* as denoting simply possession. However, the verb can often contain the idea of experiencing something (See A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition,

page 421; (See Dunn, James D.G., Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38b, Romans 9-16; page 726; Thomas Nelson, 1988).

That *echo* means 'to experience what one possesses" is indicated when Paul speaks of the seven spiritual gifts he lists in Romans 12:6b-8, he is emphasizing their function within the body of Christ and not merely that the Roman believers possess these gifts. You cannot experience the benefits of spiritual gifts without their function.

If *echo* means "experience what one possesses" as we contend, then this does away with the idea that the passage is elliptical since this meaning fits nicely with the first prepositional phrase in Romans 12:6, *kata ten analogian tes pisteos*, "**according to the proportion of faith**." Thus, the verb *echo* denotes that the Christian community possesses and experiences spiritual gifts: if the function of prophecy, according to the absolute standard, which is the Christian faith.

It also goes nicely with the remaining six prepositional phrases that have an instrumental force: *en te diakonia*, "**in his serving**" (verse 7), *en te didaskalia*, "**in his teaching**" (verse 7), *en te paraklesei*, "**in his exhortation**" (verse 8), *en haploteti*, "**with liberality**" (verse 8), *en spoude*, "**with diligence**" (verse 8) and *en hilarotet*, "**with cheerfulness**."

This indicates that the Christian community possesses and experiences these spiritual gifts: if service, by means of service, or if a teacher, by means of teaching, or if exhortation, by means of exhorting, if giving or sharing, with simplicity, if leadership, with diligence, if one who gives grace, with cheerfulness.

Therefore, the verb *echo* does have some idea of possession, but it also contains the idea of experiencing something as well. Thus, it means "to experience what one possesses" indicating that the Christian community experiences spiritual gifts because they possess them. Thus, spiritual gifts are not merely possessions but are to be exercised and are manifested through activities that benefit the entire community.

The participle form of the verb *echo* is a "result" participle, which is used to indicate the actual outcome or result of the action of the main verb. The main verb appears in Romans 12:5 and is the first person plural present active indicative form of the verb *eimi*, which was deliberately omitted by Paul due to his use of the figure of ellipsis and which we will translate "**we are, as an eternal spiritual truth**."

Romans 12:4 Because in fact, just as in one body, we, as a physiological fact, possess many members however all the members, as a physiological fact, by no means possess the same function 5 so in the same way, we, the many, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist as one body in union with Christ, thus logically are, as an eternal spiritual truth, members individually belonging to one another. (Author's translation)

The participle of result will "follow" in word order the main verb, which is the case here. Therefore, as a participle of "result," *echo* indicates that Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome are a corporate unit, analogous to the members of the human body individually belonging to one another "with the result" that they all possess and experience spiritual gifts.

Some interpret this participle as functioning as an indicative and thus standing alone in a declarative sense in the sentence. However, this use of the participle is quite rare. Also, the conjunction *de* in Romans 12:6 is continuing the discussion of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5. In Romans 12:6, Paul advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, "thus logically" speaking they experience spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole. Therefore, the participle is not indicative since Romans 12:6 is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5.

The first person plural form of the verb refers Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome who are all sinners who have been declared justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The word functions a "nominative subject" meaning that the subject produces the action of the verb. The subject in our passage is embedded in the verb and refers to Paul and his fellow Christians in Rome as a corporate unit. They produce the action of the verb of possessing and experiencing spiritual gifts.

The present tense is a "gnomic present," which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. It does not say that something "is" happening but rather that something "does" happen. This indicates that every church age believer "does" possess and experience a spiritual gift.

The active voice of the verb is "stative" emphasizes that Paul and his fellow Christians throughout the world "exist in the state of" possessing and experiencing spiritual gifts.

"**Gifts**" is the accusative neuter plural form of the noun *charisma*, which refers to the various spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit distributed to each believer the moment they were declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone.

In Ephesians 4:7-10, the apostle Paul teaches the Ephesians that spiritual gifts are the direct result of Christ's ascension.

Grace refers to the fact that at the moment of conversion the Lord Jesus Christ authorized the Holy Spirit to assign each individual believer a position and function in His body by distributing to each believer one spiritual gift.

As we mentioned earlier, spiritual gifts are assignments of position in the body of Christ just like a football team has different positions and just as the successful function of each position on the team produces unity and victory so the successful function of each spiritual gift in the body of Christ will produce unity and victory.

Spiritual gifts were given to us so that we can serve our fellow believer. Just as the physical body is composed of different members with each member having a different function from the other members so the body of Christ is composed of different members with each member having a different function from the other members. Just as the proper function of the physical body needs each individual member to perform its specific function so the proper function of the body of Christ needs each individual member to perform its specific function by operating in their spiritual gift. Just as a car operates on gas so the believer's spiritual gift operates on God's love. The believer discovers for himself and manifests to others his spiritual gift by loving God and his fellow believer.

Therefore, in Romans 12:6, the noun *charisma* is used of the various spiritual gifts that the Lord Jesus Christ authorizes the Holy Spirit to distribute to each church age believer for the purpose of serving the body of Christ and bringing glory to the Father.

Romans 12:6a Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly. (NASB95)

"**That differ**" is the accusative neuter plural form of the adjective *diaphoros*, which is modifying the noun *charisma*, "**gifts**" and describes the spiritual gifts that each believer receives at the moment of being declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone as being "diverse."

"**According to grace**" is composed of the preposition *kata*, "**according to**" and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *charis*, "**grace**."

The noun *charis* refers to God's grace policy towards the justified sinner from which they receive their spiritual gift. This word denotes the sum total of unmerited benefits, both temporal and spiritual, imparted to the justified sinner through the function of the sum total of divine attributes of each member of the Trinity as a result of the sinner making the non-meritorious decision to trust in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior.

The preposition *kata* with the accusative noun *charis*, "**grace**" denotes conformity to a particular standard or policy. Therefore, *kata* specifies that the Christian community possesses and experiences a diversity of spiritual gifts in accordance with God's grace policy. We will translate *kata*, "**according to the grace**."

"**Given to us**" is composed of the articular accusative feminine singular aorist passive participle form of the verb *didomi*, "**given**" and the dative first person plural form of the *hemeis*, "**to us**."

The verb means "to give, bestow" referring to the justified sinner receiving unmerited blessings on the basis of the object of his faith, Jesus Christ.

The aorist tense of the verb *didomi* is a "constative" aorist describing in summary fashion the justified sinner receiving grace, i.e., unmerited blessings from God the moment they were declared justified through faith alone in Christ alone. The passive voice means that the sinner who trusts in Jesus Christ as their Savior as the subject receives the action of being given grace.

The dative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *hemeis* refers to those sinners including the apostle Paul who have been declared justified by God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have received the grace of God in the form of unmerited blessings, which includes a spiritual gift. The word is used in a distributive sense meaning "each and every one of us" emphasizing that there are no exceptions. The word functions as a "dative of advantage" meaning that the gift of the Holy Spirit is "for the benefit of" those sinners who have been declared justified by God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:6 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith. 7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

The apostle Paul in Romans 12:6b-8 lists seven different spiritual gifts that are within the body of Christ. He places them into two groups with one group containing four and the second three. The first three gifts are introduced by the conjunction *eite*, "**if…if**." However, the last three have no introductory particle.

"**If…if**" is the conjunction *eite*, which appears four times in Romans 12:6b-8, once in Romans 12:6, twice in Romans 12:7 and once in Romans 12:8 and is used in a copulative sense to present a list of seven spiritual gifts. This construction can be translated "if…if" or "whether…or." We will choose the latter.

"**Prophecy**" is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *propheteia*, which refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet. This gift is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church age to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed.

The word is used for this spiritual gift in 1 Corinthians 12:10, 13:2 and 14:22. The gift of prophecy is referred to by the word *prophetes*, "prophet" in Ephesians 2:20, 3:5 and 4:11.

In Romans 12:6, the noun *propheteia* refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet.

"**According to the proportion of his faith**" is composed of the preposition *kata*, "**according to**" and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun

analogia, "**the proportion**" and the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *pistis*, "**of his faith**."

The noun *analogia* means "standard" and functions much like the noun *metron* in Romans 12:3, which we translated "**objective standard**." It means "standard" and is used with the noun *pistis*, "**faith**," which refers to the Christian faith or in other words that body of doctrine held by the Christian church. This would also include the gospel since the gospel refers not only in Scripture to the good news proclamation to the unsaved but also to the good news that the Christian has died and been raised with Christ.

The noun *analogia* means that the spiritual gift of prophecy in the first century apostolic church was to function according to the "standard" of the Christian faith or that body of doctrine that Christians held universally. Therefore, the spiritual gift of prophesy was to be exercised according to the standard of the Christian faith, i.e., the Word of God or the body of Christian doctrine.

The articular construction of the word is monadic indicating that this standard is unique in that it is that body of doctrine universally received from the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles.

In Romans 12:6, the noun *pistis* is used in a passive sense referring to the body of Christian doctrine or the Christian faith. Therefore, Paul is teaching that the spiritual gift of prophesy was to function in agreement with that body of Christian doctrine or Christian faith. The articular construction indicates that this body of doctrine is unique to Christianity or the Christian community. The word also functions as an epexegetical genitive or genitive of definition meaning that it is defining or explaining the noun *analogia*, "**the standard**" that it stands in apposition to.

The preposition *kata* with the accusative noun *pistis*, "**faith**" denotes conformity to a particular standard or policy. Therefore, *kata* specifies that the spiritual gift of prophesy was to function in the Christian community "according to" the standard, which is the Christian faith, i.e., Christian doctrine or in other words, the Word of God.

This prepositional phrase indicates that the content of what the Christian with the spiritual gift of prophesy communicated to the Christian community was to be in agreement with Christian faith, i.e., the Word of God. In other words, it could never contradict the Word of God, or the revelation already universally received by the Christian church in the first century through the apostles. Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 14:29-33 that the church was to pass judgment on the message of the prophet. Of course, they were to do so by comparing the prophetic message with their Old Testament Scriptures and the revelation already received universally by the Christian church. This would determine if the prophet's message were from God.

The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit inside the Corinthian believers would bear witness to the prophet's message if it were from God or not.

In the Old Testament, an inspired prophet could be identified using the tests for prophets in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:14-22.

In the first century, apostolic church an inspired prophet could be identified by those who had the gift of distinguishing of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:10).

The apostle John warned his readers about false prophets. In 1 John 4:1-6, he teaches that the believer can discern the false teachers from Satan's cosmic system by their viewpoint or attitude towards the Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you recall, the comparative clause in Romans 12:4-5 teaches that the Roman believers should obey his command in Romans 12:3 because just as the human body has many members with diverse functions so the Christian community is one body in union and identified with Christ and thus individually members of one another. The implication is that Paul's readers need to maintain a humble attitude about themselves and avoid being arrogant because they need each other to function effectively as a group since they have different functions which benefits the entire group just as the human body has different parts with different functions. Therefore, the implication of this is that maintaining a humble attitude is essential in order to serve the body of Christ.

Now, in Romans 12:6, he advances upon the idea by teaching that because all Christians are one body in union with Christ and thus logically members individually belonging to one another, thus logically speaking they possess spiritual gifts that differ from each other according to God's grace policy. It is logical because just as the human body has different members with different functions that contribute to the proper function of the body as a whole so the Christian community has different members with different functions or spiritual gifts that contribute to the proper function of the Christian community as a whole. Therefore, Romans 12:6a is a continuation of the body metaphor in Romans 12:4-5 rather than a new sentence and a transition of thought as many commentators interpret this verse and many English translations do as well. Then, in Romans 12:6b-8, Paul goes a step further in the progression and identifies the various spiritual gifts and their function.

In Romans 12:6, Paul teaches that the Christian community possesses and experiences diverse spiritual gifts that were given for the benefit of the body of Christ in accordance with God's grace policy. He also teaches that these spiritual gifts were given for the benefit of each and every member of the body of Christ indicating that not only were they a benefit for those who possessed these gifts but also for those who benefited from their function. Then, he presents the first of seven spiritual gifts by noting the temporary spiritual gift of prophecy, which was to function according to the absolute standard, which is the Christian faith or that body of doctrine held universally held by the Christian community.

Romans 12:7 If service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching. (NASB95)

"**Service**" is the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *diakonia*, which refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of service and is synonymous with "**helps**" in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and "**whoever serves**" in 1 Peter 4:11.

The gift of service or helps expresses itself in a variety of ways that aid the church and its members. Often individuals who hold the office of deacon have this gift. This word does not refer to a deacon since being a deacon is not a spiritual gift since it was not a gift from the Holy Spirit. Rather, the office of deacon was established by the apostles to meet a need in the first century apostolic church in Jerusalem and they were elected by the Jerusalem congregation according to Acts 6:1-6. Thus, *diakonia* in Romans 12:7 cannot possibly refer to being a deacon as a spiritual gift since spiritual gifts are assigned by the Holy Spirit as authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The gift of service or helps is manifested in a multitude of ways in the sense that it can be manifested through cleaning the church building or the homes of those who are in need or are incapacitated. It is manifested by those who maintain the upkeep of the church building by performing carpentry work, electrical work or mowing the lawn of the church building or those who are in need and are incapacitated. Construction work can manifest this gift by the construction of a church building.

This gift can manifest itself in cooking by providing meals for the body of Christ at funerals, weddings or pot-lucks or food for families who have lost loved ones. It can manifest itself in the publications department of a ministry whether editing the pastor's books or producing them.

The gift can involve maintaining the website of your church or taking care of the computers of the pastor and the church. This gift manifests itself through financial or accounting work by keeping the books of the church and overseeing its finances. The gift of service or helps is manifested through helping out in the prep-school by teaching the children.

The Bible does not teach that women have the gift of teaching but only men as we will see when we study the verb *didasko*. However, women do manifest the gift of helps or service by serving in the prep-school and teaching children or immature Christian women with regards to how to love their husbands and children the way the Bible prescribes (See Titus 2:3). Therefore, we can see that this gift is absolutely essential for the body of Christ since its function encompasses a wide range of activities unlike the gift of pastor-teacher, which functions through studying and teaching or the evangelist, communicating the gospel to the unsaved.

"**In his serving**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**in**" and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *diakonia*, "**his serving**."

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *diakonia* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *echo*, "**as a result we, as an eternal spiritual truth, do possess and experience**" is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of service, i.e., helps is experienced by the body of Christ (those who are its beneficiaries and by those who have the gift) "by means of" serving.

"**He who teaches**" is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *didasko*, which means, "to teach, to educate, to train, to impart information in a public assembly."

In Romans 12:7, the verb *didasko* refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of teaching or communicating the Word of God to the congregation. This involves the responsibility of being devoted to studying and teaching the Word of God (1 Timothy 4:11; 6:2; 2 Timothy 2:15, 24; Ezra 7:10). It also involves being devoted to prayer (Acts 6:1-6) and to exemplify the Christian way of life (1 Timothy 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:7). The noun *didaskalos*, "**teachers**" is used to signify this gift of teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and in Ephesians 4:11.

In Romans 12:7, the noun *didaskalia* refers to the activity or function of the spiritual gift of teaching the Word of God. The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *didaskalia* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *didasko*, "**the one whose function it is to teach**" is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of teacher is manifested "by means of" teaching the Word of God.

Romans 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NASB95)

"**He who exhorts**" is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *parakaleo*, which means "to encourage" and refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of encouraging members of the body of Christ to live in a manner worthy of their calling, to grow up to become like Christ.

This gift manifests itself in the person who gives advice to other members of the body of Christ that is consistent with Scripture and under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. It manifests itself by encouraging other believers to live according to the Word of God and can involve not only encouraging but also warning other believers in a humble and loving way when they are going astray from doing the will of God.

This spiritual gift can involve comforting those members of the body of Christ who have lost loved ones or are experiencing suffering whether emotionally or physically. It can manifest itself through helping and giving support to a weaker, or immature believer when they are having problems with a certain temptation or difficult trial that they are facing.

This spiritual gift can involve helping those members of the body of Christ deal with a particular burden that is too heavy to bear alone. It can manifest itself by simply being available to another believer when they need someone to talk to so as to encourage them when they are depressed, frustrated or grieving.

The spiritual gift of encouraging can also manifest itself by helping other members of the body of Christ understand and apply that which is taught by the pastor-teacher.

Though all believers are commanded to encourage one another according to 1 Thessalonians 4:18 and 5:11, the spiritual gift of encouraging functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to encourage one another.

To encourage another believer demands that one knows the Word of God and how to apply God's will in any given situation.

"**In his exhortation**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**in**" and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *paraklesis*, "**his exhortation**."

The noun *paraklesis* refers to the activity or function of the spiritual gift of encouraging other members of the body of Christ. The preposition *en* functions as a marker of means and the noun *paraklesis* as a dative instrumental of means indicating the means by which the action of the verb *parakaleo*, "**the one whose function it is to encourage**" is accomplished. This indicates that the function of the spiritual gift of encouragement is manifested "by means of" encouraging members of the body of Christ.

"**He who gives**" is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *metadidomi*, which refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of giving, which involves distributing one's own money to others and is to be done with simplicity, i.e., with no thought of return or gain for self in any way.

Though all believers are commanded to give to one another (Matthew 5:42; 10:8) the spiritual gift of giving functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to give to one another.

This gift is not given to wealthy believers only but rather it is given to believers regardless of their social or economic status. The believer who exercises this gift properly will enjoy giving of himself and his possessions and will do so without a desire for thanks or recognition. The one who exercises this gift properly will not give because of a sense of duty or obligation or for approbation but simply because they enjoy giving, it brings them great joy and happiness to give either material or financial aid to members of the body of Christ.

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All believers are commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ to give (Matthew 5:42; 10:8; Luke 6:30, 38). The apostle taught that the church age believer is to contribute to the needs of the royal family of God (Romans 12:13).

"**With liberality**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**with**" and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *haplotes*, "**liberality**."

The noun *haplotes* does not denote "simplicity" here but rather "sincerity." The word deals with the issue of "pure motives" since Paul is not concerned so much with how much is given through the function of this gift but rather the manner in which this gift functions. The person who possesses this gift is to exercise it with pure motives or in other words with sincerity.

In Romans 12:8, the preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *haplotes* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *metadidomi*, "**the one whose function it is to give**" is accomplished. This indicates that the spiritual gift of giving is to function "with sincerity" or purity of motives. This is not an instrumental of means since the word *haplotes* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging.

Also, this prepositional phrase *en haploteti* can be translated adverbially as "sincerely," which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of giving is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

"**He who leads**" is the articular nominative masculine singular present middle participle form of the verb *proistemi*, which in the middle voice means "to devote oneself to the exercise or function of leadership" and refers to the function of the permanent spiritual gift of leadership. It is permanent in that it was not discontinued with the completion of the canon of Scripture as was the case with the gift of prophecy.

This gift is identified by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28 as "**administrations**" which translates the noun *kubernesis*.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. (NASB95)

The noun *kubernesis* is related to the verb *kubernao*, which means "to steer a ship." It is used figuratively in classical Greek of statesmen meaning "the government of states" and of deity meaning "divine governance." It is used three times in the Septuagint of wise counsel or direction and appears only once in the Greek New Testament and means "administration."

In 1 Corinthians 12:28, this word refers to the spiritual gift of leadership and those men who help the pastor-teacher lead and administrate the affairs of the church.

Those individuals who possess this gift of leadership, along with the pastor-teachers, help compose the leadership of the local church. These individuals often hold the office of deacon, which remember is not a spiritual gift since it was established by the apostles and those who were deacons were elected by the Jerusalem congregation according to Acts 6:1-6.

The spiritual gift of leadership does not signify an ecclesiastical office but rather is a gift that manifests itself in leading the local assembly in various ways. Those individuals with this gift are often found in the board of directors of local churches.

Like the gift of teaching, only men have been given the gift of leadership by the Holy Spirit since Paul teaches in 1 Timothy 2:12-14 that a woman is prohibited from exercising authority over men because of the divine order and because Eve was deceived, and Adam was not.

Now, like the pastor-teacher, those believers with the gift of leadership are to adhere to the principles of leadership taught by the Lord Jesus Christ, namely, humility.

"**With diligence**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**with**" and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *spoude*, "**diligence**."

The noun *spoude* means "diligence," which denotes constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken. Therefore, the man with the spiritual gift of leadership is to exercise his gift with diligence in the sense that he is to be constantly and earnestly devoted to working hard on behalf of the body of Christ to lead them. The word denotes that the man with the gift of leadership is to be zealous in going about the task of leading the body of Christ.

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *spoude* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *proistemi*, "**the one who devotes himself to exercising leadership**" is accomplished. This indicates that the man with the spiritual gift of leadership is to exercise this gift "with diligence."

This is not an instrumental of means since the word *spoude* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging. Also, this prepositional phrase *en spoude* can be translated adverbially as "diligently," which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of leadership is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

"**He who shows mercy**" is the articular nominative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *eleeo*, which refers to the permanent gift of compassion. It should be called the gift of compassion rather than mercy because the latter has the connotation of withholding judgment whereas the former connotes the intense desire to act to alleviate the pain and suffering of another or remove its cause (1 John 3:16-17). This gift has been given to both men and women in the body of

Christ and is a permanent gift in that unlike the gift of prophecy it was not discontinued with the completion of the canon of Scripture.

Though all believers are commanded to be compassionate towards one another according to Ephesians 4:32 and 1 John 3:16-17, the spiritual gift of compassion functions or manifests itself in a manner that goes beyond what is normally exercised by Christians who obey the command to encourage one another.

Like all spiritual gifts, the exercise of the gift of compassion is for the benefit of the body of Christ. Specifically, it is directed towards those in the body of Christ who are suffering, whether physically, emotionally or spiritually. It can involve feeding the hungry in the body of Christ and caring for those who are sick in the body of Christ as well as caring for the elderly and the disabled.

Like the function of all spiritual gifts, the gift of compassion is an expression of God's love that is manifested in the body of Christ. As is the case with the gifts of service (aka helps), encouraging, giving, leadership, those with the gift of compassion are often those who hold the office of deacon. This gift does not appear in the list in 1 Corinthians 12.

"**With cheerfulness**" is composed of the preposition *en*, "**with**" and the articular dative feminine singular form of the noun *hilarotes*, "**cheerfulness**."

This is the only place in the Greek New Testament where the noun *hilarotes* appears. It refers to a cheerful attitude when exercising the gift of compassion as opposed to an attitude of considering it a great burden to exercise compassion to those in need in the body of Christ.

The preposition *en* functions as a marker of manner and the noun *hilarotes* as a dative instrumental of manner indicating the manner by which the action of the verb *eleeo*, "**the one whose function it is to demonstrate compassion**" is accomplished. This indicates that the man or woman with the spiritual gift of compassion is to exercise this gift "with cheerfulness."

This is not an instrumental of means since the word *hilarotes* is an abstract noun whereas as an instrumental of means employs a concrete noun as we saw with the gifts of serving, teaching and encouraging. Also, this prepositional phrase *en hilaroteti* can be translated adverbially as "cheerfully," which is a further indication that this prepositional phrase signifies the manner in which the spiritual gift of compassion is to function rather than the means by which it is to function.

1 Corinthians 12

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can

say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (NASB95)

Bob Deffinbaugh writes "We will be greatly helped in understanding Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts if we pause to reflect on the Corinthians' problems in this area. We know the Corinthians are proud and arrogant (1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 4:7-13, 18-21; 5:2; 8:1; 2 Corinthians 10). From what Paul has to say in chapters 12-14 (see 12:21), we can be quite certain some of the Corinthians' pride lay in the possession of certain gifts or the following of some with those esteemed gifts. We do know the Corinthians prize certain gifts and disdain others. This resulted in many seeking to obtain gifts God had not given them and those possessing certain 'lowly' gifts feeling they had no contribution to make at all. Those possessing the visible, verbal gifts seem intent upon showing these gifts off in the church meeting (see 14:26ff.). Those with the 'best' gifts feel independently self-sufficient and do not sense their dependence on less visible members of the body (12:21). Paul has some well-chosen words for these carnal Corinthians about the relationship between spirituality and spiritual gifts, words which knock the props out from under their pride and self-sufficiency."[131]

In 1 Corinthians 12:7, "**manifestation**" refers to the fact that every believer receives *one* spiritual gift since the word is in the singular (See 1 Peter 4:10). This verse is teaching that each individual member of the body of Christ has a single "**manifestation**" of the Spirit in order to benefit the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. (NASB95)

The various gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and 28 are also mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 and Romans 12:6-8.

"**Word of wisdom**" is a temporary gift that was needed during the pre-canon period of the church and proclaims that Jesus Christ crucified is the wisdom of God, which is superior to the wisdom of men (See 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; Colossians 2:3).

"**Word of knowledge**" is a temporary gift that was needed during the pre-canon period of the church and proclaims specific revelation from God and reveals great

[131] True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 268; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999.

knowledge or insight regarding the person of Christ and the plan of God (See Colossians 2:3).

"**Faith**" is the ability to have trust in the Lord in a great crisis beyond that exercised by most Christians in a crisis (See Matthew 17:20; 1 Corinthians 13:2).

"**Healings**" was also a temporary spiritual gift given to the apostles to establish their authority as being from God (Acts 3:7; 5:16; 9:34; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 28:8).

"**Miracles**" was a temporary "sign" gift that was given to the apostles to establish their authority as coming from God and was an instrument used to draw the unsaved to hear the message of the gospel.

"**Distinguishing of spirits**" is the ability to distinguish between true and false sources of supernatural revelation when it was being given in oral form and was essential before the canon of Scripture was completed for there were those who claimed to bring revelation from God who were not true prophets.

"**Tongues**" was a temporary spiritual "sign" gift designed to evangelize the Jews in Gentile languages during the pre-canon period of the church age (See Isaiah 28:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:21-22; 1 Corinthians 1:22).

"**Interpretation of tongues**" was also a temporary gift that was used to interpret the message that was communicated in a foreign language to the unsaved.

1 Corinthians 12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? 17 If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. 19 If they were all one member, where would the body be? 20 But now there are many members, but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body, which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, 24 whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored,

all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. (NASB95)

"**The less presentable members**" and those "**we deem less honorable**" refers to those parts of the body which are clothed or not seen by the naked eye because of being inside the human body.

A.F. Johnson writes "These verses can be obscure unless we realize Paul is referring to the bodily parts that have to do with procreation (male organ and female vagina) and nurture (female breasts). These parts, though treated with modesty and covered, are in reality *indispensable,* while the more dispensable parts of the body (such as limbs and hands) we often display openly."[132]Bob Deffinbaugh writes "Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 12:22-24 surely come as a slap in the face to the status-seeking saints at Corinth. He turns their value system upside-down. The body illustrates what he is teaching. Those members of the body which are of the least importance are those to which we devote the most attention and effort. We paint our toenails, put rings on our ears (men, too!) and noses! We put rings and jewelry on our fingers. But the truth is we can live without ears (or hearing), eyes (or seeing), fingers, hands, legs, and toes. The least needed members of our body are the ones which are most visible and to which the most 'glory' is given. And yet, they are the lesser gifts. Those gifts which are most visible, most vocal, most glorified in the Corinthian church are, in reality, the least important gifts. These Corinthians have been storing up sand in their safety deposit boxes and using gold for stepping stones. As the body illustrates, just the reverse is also true. The most important gifts, like the most important organs, are those which are not visible or spectacular, those of which we are the least conscious. You cannot see my spleen, my kidneys, my liver, or my heart, but I cannot live without them. They do not get a lot of attention. I have never seen 'pancreas powder' or 'heart highlighter.' I do not have to glorify these organs. They do not need any compensation. They are, in truth, the most vital members of my body, whether I see them or not and whether others value them or not."[133]

A.F. Johnson writes "Contemporary churches and Christian organizations and institutions need to pay close attention to this teaching of Paul. Often the tendency is to showcase the most 'successful' Christians who have won achievement awards, excelled in gaining wealth, or risen to prominent positions in government, entertainment or book publishing. These members often are appointed as church leaders or college trustees. Instead, without ignoring these 'parts,' we should look for those who have less visibility yet have displayed unusual faithfulness, especially through suffering and loss, who have given away great wealth, are self-effacing, have showed restraint in material possessions, exhibited downward mobility in

[132] Johnson, A. F. (2004). *1 Corinthians* (Vol. 7, p. 233). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
[133] True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 281; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999.

seeking to serve Christ, and are filled with the fruit of the Spirit despite relative obscurity. These and others like them should be our main showcase examples in the church."[134]

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way. (NASB95)

Notice that Paul ranks the gift of apostleship as being first in importance and this is followed by the gift of prophecy and then the gift of teaching. The reason why Paul teaches that these three communication gifts have greater priority than the other gifts is because the exercise of these three communication gifts equips the saints for the work of service and builds up the body of Christ spiritually according to his teaching in Ephesians 4:11-12. In other words, the exercise of these three communication gifts enables the other gifts in the body of Christ to function.

Ephesians 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature, which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, 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; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. (NASB95)

Now, one cannot say that the other gifts such as helps, mercy, giving and the others are not important because these three communication gifts receive their value because of the existence of these other gifts. Again, all the gifts need each other to function properly in the body of Christ as Paul teaches in First Corinthians 12.

Ronal Trail writes "The ranking does not refer to relative importance but rather to a kind of precedence of one over others growing out of the role of establishing and building up of the church."[135]

Wiersbe writes "In this paragraph, Paul pointed out that there is a 'priority list' for the gifts, that some have more significance than others. But this fact does not

[134] Johnson, A. F. (2004). *1 Corinthians* (Vol. 7, p. 234). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
[135] Trail, R. (2008). *An Exegetical Summary of 1 Corinthians 10–16* (2nd ed., p. 159). Dallas, TX: SIL International.

contradict the lesson already shared—that each gift is important and each individual believer is important. Even in the human body, there are some parts that we can do without, even though their absence might handicap us a bit. The Apostles and prophets, of course, appeared first on the scene because they had a foundational ministry (Eph. 2:20). Teachers were needed to help establish believers in the faith. The other gifts were needed from time to time to help individual believers and to build the church."[136]

Constable writes "The ranking of these gifted individuals is evidently in the order of the importance of their ministries. When Paul said earlier that all the members were essential (v. 21), he did not mean that some did not have a more crucial function to perform than others. He did not mention this distinction there, because he wanted each member to appreciate the essential necessity of all the other members. In another sense, however, some gifts are more important than others (v. 31; 14:1)."[137]

D.K. Lowery writes "The fact that Paul assigned ordinal numbers (**first … second … third**) to the first three gifts suggests that these may have been relegated to a lesser role by the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 12:21–24). Those three kinds of gifted members—**apostles … prophets … teachers**—probably were rated lower than those who had the more spectacular gift of tongues. But the first three gifts may have been **greater** (v. 31) because of their extensive value to the whole body of Christ. This may be why he listed them first and then said that the church should **eagerly desire** (v. 31) the exercise of those **gifts** in the assembly (cf. 14:1–5). Gifted apostles, prophets, and teachers characteristically ministered to a *whole* church, and so would engender unity and mutual edification. The gift of **tongues**, on the other hand, suited the Corinthian penchant for self-expression and the pursuit of personal freedom. This self-centeredness also afflicted the church in other areas (e.g., eating sacrificial foods, women in worship, celebration of the Lord's Supper). Love for others was an essential need in the Corinthian church, and to that fundamental attribute Paul then turned to pay eloquent tribute."[138]

"**Apostles**" is the unique and temporary spiritual gift which held maximum authority in the church and was sovereignly delegated by the Lord Jesus Christ.

"**Prophecy**" refers to the exercise of the temporary or discontinued spiritual gift of being a prophet, which is no longer existent since it existed during the pre-canon period of the church to fill the void until the New Testament canon had been completed (See 1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2; 14:22; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11).

Wiersbe writes "*Prophets* were New Testament spokesmen for God whose messages came immediately from God by the Spirit. Their ministry was to edify,

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[136] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 610). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
[137] Notes on 1 Corinthians; page 161; 2016 Edition; Published by Sonic Light: http://www.soniclight.com/
[138] Lowery, D. K. (1985). 1 Corinthians. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 534). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

encourage, and comfort (1 Cor. 14:3). Their messages were tested by the listeners to determine whether they were truly from God (1 Cor. 14:29; 1 Thes. 5:19–21). Ephesians 2:20 makes it clear that apostles and prophets worked together to lay the foundation of the church, and we may assume that they were no longer needed once that foundation was completed."[139]

"**Teachers**" refers to the permanent spiritual gift of teaching or communicating the Word of God to the congregation.

"**Miracles**" was a temporary "sign" gift that was given to the apostles to establish their authority as coming from God and was an instrument used to draw the unsaved to hear the message of the gospel.

"**Healings**" was also a temporary spiritual gift given to the apostles to establish their authority as being from God (Acts 3:7; 5:16; 9:34; 14:10; 16:18; 19:12; 28:8).

"**Helps**" is synonymous with "service" in Romans 12:7 and is a permanent spiritual gift and expresses itself in a variety of ways that aid the church and its members and often individuals who hold the office of deacon have this gift.

"**Administrations**" is synonymous with the gift of "leadership" that appears in Romans 12:8 and is a permanent gift and provides the recipient the ability to administrate the affairs of the church and those with this gift often hold the office of deacon or some type of administrative capacity in a church.

"**Tongues**" was a temporary spiritual "sign" gift designed to evangelize the Jews in Gentile languages during the pre-canon period of the church age (See Isaiah 28:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:21-22; 1 Corinthians 1:22).

1 Corinthians 12:4-31 indicates several things about each individual member of the body of Christ: (1) Every believer has a freely-given grace gift given by the Spirit for serving the body of Christ. (2) Every believer is important. (3) Every believer is gifted. (4) Every believer is a servant of the body of Christ. (5) The purpose of God's gift is not the elevation of the individual, but rather the health of the whole body. (6) All do not receive the same gift. (7) We need each other.

Deffinbaugh writes "Too many people attend church to have their 'needs met.' Too many people leave churches, complaining that the church has not met their needs. The church is to build up itself in love, but the goal of the church is to live out the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, to His glory. We, the church, are the body of Christ. This means we, as the church, are to carry on His ministry in the world today. The church ministers to itself, to build itself up so that it may carry out its mission, and that mission is living out Christ in a fallen world. We have become so preoccupied with the church's ministry to us as individuals that we have failed to concentrate on the church's mission to the world, and our obligation to sacrifice ourselves in ministry to and through the church to the world. The question is not,

[139] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 608). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

'What is the church doing for me?' The question is, 'What can I contribute to the church to participate in its fulfillment of its mission and calling?'"[140]

1 Peter 4:10-11

The apostle Peter teaches in 1 Peter 4:10 that each and every believer in the church age has received only one spiritual gift at the moment of their conversion. This gift he teaches is to be employed by the believer in serving their fellow members of the body of Christ.

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (NASB95)

Principles from 1 Peter 4:10: (1) The word "**gift**" is the Greek word, *charisma*, which means "a gift of grace, a free gift." It is especially used of special spiritual abilities given by the Spirit for God to enable Christians to serve the body of Christ. (2) All believers have one spiritual gift. At the point of justification, when we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, we become members of the body of Christ by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit who places us into union with Christ. According to the analogy portrayed in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, each believer becomes a gifted member, like an arm, or a foot, or an eye with ability and a function to perform. This is a matter of grace and the sovereign work and choice of the Spirit, never our merit or works (1 Corinthians 12:4, 11, 18). (3) Our gifts are to be viewed as a stewardship for which we are responsible as "**good** (Greek: *kalos*, noble, praiseworthy, useful) **stewards**." (4) Peter also teaches us gifts are given for "**serving one another**." They are for the common good of the body of Christ as an expression of love (1 Corinthians 13) and never for personal gain or selfish agendas (1 Corinthians 12-14).

The apostle Paul defines the common good by such things as edification (building up the body of Christ), exhortation, consolation, and instruction, attaining unto a mature man in Christ, etc. (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:3-5, 17, 19, 26, 31; Ephesians 4:11-16).

1 Peter 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength, which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (NASB95)

Principles from 1 Peter 4:11: (1) For those who serve in other ways, Peter teaches that they must do so by the strength, which God richly supplies, rather than in their own strength (see 1 Corinthians 15:10; Colossians 1:29). All stewards need to be

[140] True Spirituality: A Study in 1 Corinthians; page 284; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1999.

serving out of the source and sphere of fellowship with God and dependence on Him (John 15). (2) With the words, "**to whom belongs the glory and dominion, …**" Peter reminds us that no matter what is done, the purpose or ultimate goal is God's glory and dominion (rule) through the Lord Jesus. This forms a fundamental principle and a warning that should guide the whole of the Christian's life and ministry as a steward of the various aspects of God's grace.

Due to our innate self-centered tendencies, it is far too easy to serve from selfish agendas—to be accepted by others, or for praise, position, or prestige. This was one of the problems that Paul addressed with the church at Corinth. Some of the Corinthians were using their gifts, especially the more spectacular or showy gifts like tongues, for personal gain. Paul said, "**One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself**; …" (1 Corinthians 14:4a). In other words, they were using this gift for selfish purposes.

Though the one who speaks in a tongue does not understand what he is saying (vs. 14), they are still edified personally by the emotion and satisfaction of the experience. Clearly, his primary motive is not according to the excellent way of love for others (1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13; 14:4b, 12) and, therefore, it cannot truly be designed to glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

For the proper functioning of spiritual gifts, we must cease thinking individualistically and begin to think corporately. We cannot look at ourselves as an island, independent of all others. We must see ourselves as a member of the body of Christ, with certain gifts or special enablements which equip us to carry out functions necessary to the equipping and ministry of the body.

There is individuality within the body, because there are many members, all with a different role to play. But there is no room for individualism, for we are inter-dependent as members of one body. We must rely on other members of the body just as they must rely on us. While we have been individually chosen, called, and justified, we have been joined to a body, the body of Christ. We must therefore think and act as members of this body.

Spiritual gifts are one of the means by which the body of Christ is sustained and through which the life of our Lord is manifested. Thinking straight necessitates thinking corporately.

Hindrances to good stewardship of our gifts: (1) The belief God only calls preachers, evangelists, missionaries, etc. (2) Fear that we will fail, we will be persecuted, or that we don't know how. (3) Personal agendas in ministry for various reasons of covetousness—position, power, praise, applause. (4) Apathy, lack of devotion to the Lord and the body of Christ. (5) A wrong view of the church as an organization rather than an organism.

Stewardship and One's Spiritual Gift

Each and every church age believer will give an account to the Lord Jesus Christ at the Bema Seat Evaluation of the church to determine if they were faithful stewards with the time, talent, treasure and truth which God gave them. The Christian will give an account to the Lord or in other words, they will be held responsible by the Lord for their service, which involves a four-fold stewardship: (1) Time: Were they profitable in how they used their time on earth that the Lord gave them? (2) Talent: Were they profitable in how they used their spiritual gift the Lord gave them? (3) Truth: Were they profitable in how they used the truth the Lord gave them? (4) Treasure: Were they profitable in how they used their finances that the Lord gave them?

Church age believers are to be good stewards with their talent (they are to operate in their spiritual gifts) and treasure (they are to financially support each other when necessary) and truth (they are to apply the Word of God in their relationships with each other).

Time: **Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.**

Talent: **1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

Treasure: **Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure -- pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.**

Truth: **Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.**

At the Bema Seat, the believer's service, as expressed through their stewardship in these four areas, will be evaluated by the Lord Jesus Christ to determine if they were a faithful and profitable steward in these four areas or not (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10). If they were a faithful and profitable servant and steward with their time, spiritual gift, truth and finances that were given to them by the Lord as trusts, they will receive a reward from the Lord and if they were not, they will not receive a reward.

In Romans 14:11, Paul cites Isaiah 45:23 to affirm the certainty that each and every Christian must present himself to the Lord Jesus Christ at His Bema Seat in order to have their works evaluated by the Lord to determine if they merit rewards

or not. Not only will their works be evaluated but also the Lord will determine if the church age believer was a faithful steward or not with his or her spiritual gift.

Filling of the Spirit

The Christian way of life or in other words, the church age believer's spiritual life is based upon the filling of the Spirit that is unique to the church age since the command to be filled with the Spirit is never found in the Old Testament. It is one of the seven ministries of the Holy Spirit performs on behalf of the church age believer at the moment of justification. At that moment, every believer is filled with the Spirit, but they lose it by committing any known mental, verbal or overt act of sin. However, it is recovered by confessing any known sin to the Father (1 John 1:9) and is maintained by obedience to the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God, which He has inspired. Therefore, it is "dynamic" whereas the indwelling of the Spirit is "static" meaning it never changes due to sin. Every believer in the church age is commanded to be filled with the Spirit, or as we will note, they are to permit the Holy Spirit to influence their soul (Ephesians 5:18).

The filling of the Spirit takes place when the believer is obeying the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God. It is not an emotion (though it will result in emotions such as joy; Gal. 5:22) but rather, it is the mental state of the believer who does not have any unconfessed sin in their stream of consciousness and is applying the Word to their thought process. The filling of the Spirit takes place in the soul of the believer when they allow God the Holy Spirit to influence their soul, which He does, when the believer obeys the Spirit inspired Scriptures.

The filling of the Spirit is the operational power of God the Holy Spirit, which empowers the believer to execute the will of God the Father. It enables the believer to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ meaning to become like Him experientially in His death and resurrection. It enables the believer to become like Jesus Christ in thought, word and action or in other words, it gives the believer the ability to acquire experientially the character of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is necessary for the believer to allow themselves to be influenced by the Spirit in order that they may walk by the Spirit. Walking by the Spirit is actively choosing to conduct oneself by means of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit and walking by the Spirit are two sides of the same coin. You cannot walk by the Spirit unless you are filled with the Spirit since the filling of the Spirit is directly related to the believer's mental attitude whereas walking by the Spirit is directly related to how the believer conducts themself or in other words, how they speak and act. A person's words and actions are governed by their mental attitude and volition. Therefore, a

believer cannot walk by the Spirit if they are not first filled or influenced by the Spirit.

The filling of the Spirit is directly related to being a doer of the Word of God since only believers who are obedient to the Spirit inspired Scriptures are filled with or influenced by the Spirit since the Spirit speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God, which He has inspired (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Therefore, the believer who is applying the Word of God is filled with the Spirit or more accurately is influenced by means of the Spirit. The Spirit takes the doctrines of Christ, i.e., the Word of God and makes them understandable to the believer. The Spirit does not act independently of the mind of Christ, i.e., the Word of God (John 16:13-15; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16). Therefore, the believer who is influenced by means of the Spirit is a doer of the Word. The Spirit of God and the Word of God work in concert with one another on behalf of the believer who has no unconfessed sin in their stream of consciousness and is applying the Word of God to their thought process.

The filling of the Spirit is the only means of spirituality in the church age. Spirituality is the filling of the Spirit. It is an absolute meaning that you are either filled with the Spirit or you are living in carnality or in other words, you are governed by the old sin nature and thus out of fellowship with God. The filling of the Spirit is the only means of having fellowship with God (John 4:23-24). It is the only means by which the Holy Spirit reproduces Christ-like character in the believer. The filling of the Spirit is the only means by which the believer can execute the plan of God. The filling of the Spirit is a power option meaning that the believer has to choose whether or not to allow God the Holy Spirit to fully influence their soul.

Ephesians 5:18

Ephesians 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit. (NET)

"**And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery**" is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *kai* (καί), "**And**" (2) negative particle *me* (μή), "**not**" (3) second person plural present passive imperative conjugation of the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι), "**do get drunk**" (4) dative masculine singular form of the noun *oinos* (οἶνος), "**wine**" (5) preposition *en* (ἐν), which is not translated (6) dative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**which**" (7) third person singular present active indicative conjugation of the verb *eimi* (εἰμί), "**is**" (8) nominative feminine singular form of the noun *asōtia* (ἀσωτία), " **debauchery**."

We begin our study of Ephesians 5:18 by noting the apostle Paul's use of the conjunction *kai* (καί), which functions as a marker of result because the contents of this verse present the result of the contents of Ephesians 5:17.

The noun *oinos* (οἶνος) means "wine" since the word pertains to a fermented beverage made from the juice of grapes. There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever that non-alcoholic or pasteurized wine was used in ancient times and especially in the first century when Paul wrote Ephesians.

The verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is the passive form of *methyskō* (μεθύσκω) and is related to *methuō* (μεθύω), "to drink to intoxication." Both the active and passive forms appear in classical and Greek of the Septuagint (LXX), but only the passive appears in the New Testament. The passive form appears in the writings of Herodotus and Xenophon. The passive form means "to get drunk, to become intoxicated." It is an inceptive or ingressive verb marking the process of entering into the state of being drunk with wine or intoxication. The word only appears three times in the New Testament (Lk. 12:45; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:7). All three passages warn about the dangers of drunkenness.

In Ephesians 5:18, the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) means "to be drunk, inebriated, intoxicated with alcohol."

The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is the recipients of this letter, who were noted many times in our study of Ephesians, were members of the Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. The word is not only referring to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals because the second person plural form of this verb is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The meaning of the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), which denies any idea of the recipients of this letter being intoxicated by means of the excessive intake of wine.

The noun *oinos* (οἶνος) functions as a dative of means, which takes place when the dative substantive is used to indicate the means or instrument by which the verbal action is accomplished. Therefore, this would indicate that the recipients of this letter were not to be intoxicated "by means of wine."

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is a customary present imperative, which is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of "make this your habit," "train yourself in this, discipline yourself." This is the use of the present imperative in general precepts. Therefore, in Ephesians 5:18, the present imperative conjugation of the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) expresses the idea of the recipients of this letter "continuing to make it their habit of" not being intoxicated by means of wine.

The passive voice of this verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is a causative or permissive passive, which like its middle counterpart, implies consent, permission,

or cause of the action of the verb on the part of the subject.[141] Therefore, this indicates that the recipients of this letter were not "to permit themselves" to be drunk by means of the excessive intake of wine.

The referent of the dative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is the dative masculine singular form of the noun *oinos* (οἶνος), "**wine**." It is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of cause, which indicates that excessive intake of wine is "the basis" or "the reason" for the prohibition forbidding the recipients of this letter from being intoxicated by the excessive intake of wine.

The noun *asōtia* (ἀσωτία) pertains to behavior which shows lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action.[142] It refers to conduct, which shows a lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action, thus it means senseless actions.

The verb *eimi* (εἰμί) pertains to possessing certain characteristics, whether inherent or transitory.[143]

The referent of the third person singular form of this verb being drunk by the excessive intake of wine.

The noun *asōtia* (ἀσωτία) functions as a predicate nominative, which means that it is making an assertion about the subject, which is being drunk by the excessive intake of wine. Therefore, this word identifies the characteristic of being drunk by the excessive intake of wine as "non-sensical behavior."

The present tense of this verb *eimi* (εἰμί) is a customary present or stative present, which indicates that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. Therefore, this would express the idea of being drunk by the excessive intake of wine "exists in the state of" being non-sensical behavior.

The present tense of this verb verb *eimi* (εἰμί) is also a gnomic present, which is used of a general timeless fact indicating an eternal spiritual truth or spiritual axiom. Therefore, it expresses the idea that being drunk by the excessive intake of wine "as an eternal spiritual truth" is characterized as non-sensical behavior.

The active voice of this verb is also a stative active, which indicates that the subject exist in the state indicated by the verb. Therefore, this would indicate that being drunk by the excessive intake of wine "exists in the state of" being as characterized as non-sensical behavior.

The indicative mood of this verb is declarative presenting this Paul assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

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[141] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 440). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.
[142] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 752). United Bible Societies.
[143] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 148). United Bible Societies.

"**But be filled by the Spirit**" is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά), "**but**" (2) second person plural present passive imperative conjugation of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω), "**be filled**" (3) preposition *en* (ἐν), "**by**" (4) dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**."

The strong adversative conjunction *alla* (ἀλλά) introduces a command, which presents a strong emphatic contrast with the previous prohibition.

The *ple* stem of the verb *plēroō* carries the idea of "full, complete." *Pleres* and its derivatives are found in Greek literature from Aeschylus onwards.

Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon gives the word an 8-fold definition: (1) "to fill full of" (2) "to fill with" (3) "to impregnate" (4) "to make full or complete" (5) "to render, to pay in full" (6) "to fulfill" (7) "to be fulfilled" (8) "to fill up."[144]

Gerhard Delling gives a five-fold definition for the verb's use in classical literature: (1) "to fill, to become full" (2) "to satisfy, to appease" (3) "to bring to the right measure, to balance, to make complete, to round off, to pay in full" (4) "to fulfill promises, to come to fulfillment" (5) "to fulfill duties."[145]

In both secular Greek and Biblical Greek, *pleroo* carries the idea of attaining a standard of measurement or reaching the saturation point or level of containment. The idea of totality or fullness is always present in the verb. Thus, the word means "to fill something completely" or "to complete a measure."

Plēroō means literally to fill a vessel, so that the result can be described as *pleres* or *pleroma* and can be applied to: (1) The manning of a ship. (2) Fulfilling a wish. (3) Hearing a prayer. (4) Stilling wrath and anger. (5) Satisfying a desire. (6) Meeting an obligation. (7) Carrying out work.

It has the further sense of bringing to full measure, delivering a reward or tribute, filling a gap, enlarging. It is used in a temporal sense in the passive of expiring, coming to an end, e.g., a full year (*pleres*), a full number (*pleroma*) of years.

Plēroō is found 103 times in the Septuagint and is used ordinarily for the Hebrew word *melo*, "to fill." As in classical Greek, *plēroō* denotes the action of "filling" something. It is used in an adverbial capacity to denote something as "ultimate, total." The idea of fulfillment is used in reference to the Word of the Lord. *Plēroō* is used frequently in connection with expressions of time: (1) "to make a time full" (2) "in the sense of expiring" (3) "coming to an end." The idea implies a definite amount of time that must inevitably come to an end because nature (e.g., Gen. 25:24), a vow (Num. 6:5), the law (Lev. 8:33) or God's word (cf. the 70 years in Jer. 25:12; 2 Chron. 36:21) decree or determine it.

The verb *plēroō* appears 86 times in the Greek New Testament. Delling gives the New Testament usage of *plēroō* a five-fold definition: (1) "to fill with a content," passively "to be filled with something" (2) "to fulfill a demand or claim" (3) "to fill

[144] pages 1419-1420
[145] Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 6, pages 286-287

up completely a specific measure" (4) "to complete, to fulfill" (5) "to bring to full or supreme measure or completion."

Reneir Schippers states that *plēroō* and its cognates in the New Testament were related to the following: (1) Fulfillment of OT Scripture. (2) Fulfillment of time. (3) Fulfillment of God's will. (4) Being Filled with the Spirit. (6) The Fullness of Christ. (7) The filling up of the measure of sin. (8) Filling a need. (9) Complete joy.[146]

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised: (1) to fill, make full, fill up (2) to fill up a deficiency (3) to pervade (4) to pervade with an influence, to influence fully, possess fully (5) to complete, perfect (6) to bring to an end (7) to perform fully, discharge (8) to consummate (9) to realize, accomplish, fulfill (10) to set forth fully (11) passive of time, to be fulfilled, come to an end, be fully arrived (12) of prophecy, to receive fulfillment.[147]

Louw and Nida give *plēroō* a seven-fold definition in the New Testament: (1) "to cause something to become full-to fill" (59.37) (2) "to make something total or complete-to make complete, to complete the number of" (59.33) (3) "to finish an activity after having done everything involved-to finish, to complete" (68.26) (4) "to provide for by supplying a complete amount-to provide for completely, to supply fully" (35.33) (5) "to relate fully the content of a message-to proclaim, to tell fully, to proclaim completely" (33.199) (6) "to give the true or complete meaning to something-to give the true meaning to, to provide the real significance of" (33.144) (7) "to cause to happen, with the implication of fulfilling some purpose-to cause to happen, to make happen, to fulfill" (13.106).[148]

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition: (1) to make full, fill (full) (a) of things (b) of persons (2) to complete a period of time, fill (up), complete (3) to bring to completion that which was already begun, complete, finish (4) to bring to a designed end, fulfill (5) to bring to completion an activity in which one has been involved from its beginning, complete, finish (6) complete.[149]

Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament lists the following meanings for *plēroō*: (1) literally, with an idea of totality make full, fill (up) completely; passive become full, be filled with; figuratively, as filling something or someone with intangible things or qualities fill; mostly passive be full of, become filled with (a) with the genitive of the thing (b) with the dative of the thing (c) with the accusative of the thing (d) absolutely be well-supplied (2) of a set span of time complete, reach an end, fill up; only passive in the NT be fulfilled (3) of foreknown laws, promises, prophecies, predictions, purposes, fulfill (a) active bring to fulfillment, give true

[146] The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, volume 1, pages 736-741
[147] page 329
[148] Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains
[149] Pages 827-829

meaning to (b) predominately passive be fulfilled (4) as fulfilling commandments, duties, demands; in the NT only with reference to the will of God carry out, perform, accomplish (5) as bringing an activity to completion finish, bring to an end, complete.[150]

Ephesians 5:18 is the fourth and final time that the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) occurs in the Ephesian letter (Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:10). In Ephesians 1:23, the verb is used of Lord Jesus Christ for His own glory bringing to completion all of creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan. In Ephesians 3:19, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) expresses the idea that by the recipients of this epistle causing themselves to know Jesus Christ's love for them experientially, they would cause themselves to experience the fullness of God, i.e., the fullness or totality of the Father's love for them. As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) in Ephesians 4:10 speaks of Jesus Christ bringing to completion every animate and inanimate object in creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan. This will take place at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ and His subsequent millennial reign, which will restore mankind to the rulership of the earth and dispossess Satan and the members of his kingdom as the present rulers of the earth.

Now, here in Ephesians 5:18, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) means, "to be influenced." The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is the recipients of this letter, who were noted many times in our study of Ephesians, were members of the Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. The word is not only referring to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals because the second person plural form of this verb is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, 17, 2:18, 22, 3:5, 16, 4:3, 4 and 30, the referent of the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) in Ephesians 5:18 is the Holy Spirit. The word contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for His teaching, which is communicated by Paul in this epistle.

Harold Hoehner writes "Some commentators think that the 'spirit' here refers not to the Holy Spirit but to the human spirit, and thus we are to be filled in spirit.[151] However, this is unlikely.[152] What would it mean to fill a human spirit? With what would it be filled? Would it result in what is expressed in the next verses? It is interesting to note that those commentators who hold to this view have difficulty in explaining the nature of the filling. They ultimately think that the human spirit has to be related to the Holy Spirit, for the human spirit left on its own inclines toward evil. Consequently, Westcott, who holds this view, states, 'It is assumed that the

[150] Page 317
[151] Alford, 3:134?; Abbott, 161–62; Westcott, 81; Lenski, 618–19; Joüon, "Notes philologiques sur quelques versets de l'Épître aux Éphésiens," 461; also marginal reading in RV and ASV.
[152] Schnackenburg, 237 n. 16; Best, 508.

Spirit of God can alone satisfy the spirit of man.'[153] Although he takes the referent as the human spirit, in the end he comes to the same conclusion. In addition, the writer to Ephesians uses the term 'spirit' thirteen other times (1:13, 17; 2:2, 18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 23, 30; 6:17, 18) and each time it refers to a spirit outside of a person. Once it refers to the spirit of the devil or his emissaries (2:2) but the other twelve times it refers to the Spirit of God (1:17; 4:3, 23 are disputed but these have been discussed). Thus, it is natural to assume that the 'spirit' here refers to the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, two other times in the NT (Luke 1:15; Acts 2:13–18) the use of wine is contrasted with πνεῦμα, 'spirit,' and in both instances the 'spirit' refers to the Holy Spirit. Moreover, if it had reference to the human spirit, the noun would have been 'modified by a possessive pronoun or at least an article.'[154] Therefore, in the present verse it seems likely that the writer is making reference to the Holy Spirit."[155]

The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions here as a marker of means, which indicates that the Spirit inspired contents of Paul's teaching in this letter, is "the means by which" the recipients of this letter were to be influenced.

Harold Hoehner writes "Many suggest that the content of the filling is ἐν πνεύματι, translated 'be filled with the Spirit.'[156] However, normally verbs of filling take a genitive of content (e.g., πληρόω + genitive in Acts 2:28; 13:52; Rom 15:13, 14; πίμπλημι + genitive in Luke 1:41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8; 9:17; 13:9). Moreover, nowhere in the NT does πληρόω followed by ἐν plus the dative indicate content.[157] Some commentators translate ἐν as 'with' in order to combine the thoughts of 'in' and 'by,' thus indicating that the Holy Spirit is not only the instrument by which believers are filled but also the sphere in which they are filled.[158] This is an attempt to have it both ways, but it is imprecise, and implies more than the text conveys. It seems best to translate ἐν πνεύματι with an instrumental sense, 'by the Spirit' or 'by means of the Spirit.'[159] This is analogous to 4:30 where the preposition with the relative pronoun (ἐν ᾧ) is translated 'the Spirit … by whom you were sealed.' Furthermore, other passages where ἐν πνεύματι is used (e.g., 1 Cor 12:3, 13; Rom 15:16) can be translated 'by.'"[160]

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[153] Westcott, 81.
[154] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 215.
[155] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (pp. 702–703). Baker Academic.
[156] Chrysostom *Eph* 5:18 (*PG* 62:129); Aquinas, chap. 5, lec. 7, vv. 18–21 (213); Hodge, 302–3; Eadie, 398; Moule, 135–36; Robinson, 121, 203–4; Schlier, 245–46; Hendriksen, 239–40; Mitton, 190; Barth, 582; Bruce, 379–80; Lincoln, 344–45; Snodgrass, 289–90; Liefeld, 134–38; Easley, "The Pauline Usage of *Pneumati* as a Reference to the Spirit of God," 307; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "What Does It Mean to Be Filled with the Spirit? A Biblical Investigation," *JETS* 40 (June 1997): 231–35; Carsten Peter Thiede, "Der Brief an die Epheser. 43. Teil: Kapitel 5,17–20," *Fundamentum* 21, no. 4 (2000): 16–17.
[157] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 374–75, cf. also 93 n. 62, 94, 170–71; Abbott, 161–62.
[158] Alford, 3:134; Ellicott, 124; Schnackenburg, 237. The idea of sphere is seen in Rom 8:9 where Paul states that the believer is not "in" the flesh but "in" the Spirit, meaning that the believer's sphere of influence is the Spirit rather than the flesh (cf. Oepke, "ἐν," *TDNT* 2 [1964]: 540–41). Masson thinks "by the Spirit" is too precise and "in the Spirit" is too vague. He proposes "seek the fullness which the Spirit gives" (Masson, 209 n. 3). Cf. also Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 721–22 and n. 196. Leggett translates ἐν as "with" to indicate that "the Spirit is both the agent and substance of that filling" ("Be Filled with the Spirit: Ephesians 5:18," 11). This is unlikely as discussed above.
[159] Moule, *Idiom Book*, 76, 77; Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 93 n. 62, 94, 171, 375; Meyer, 285; Abbott, 161–62; Salmond, 362.
[160] Hoehner, H. W. (2002). *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (pp. 703–704). Baker Academic.

Therefore, in Ephesians 5:18, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) speaks of the recipients of this epistle "being influenced" by means of the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the word influence: (1) Capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (2) Action or process of producing effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (3) A person or thing that exerts influence.

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is a customary present imperative, which is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of "make this your habit," "train yourself in this, discipline yourself." This is the use of the present imperative in general precepts. Therefore, the customary present imperative conjugation of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) here in Ephesians 5:18 expresses the idea of the recipients of this letter "continuing to make it their habit of" being influenced by the Holy Spirit and specifically by the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians.

The passive voice of this verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is a causative or permissive passive, which indicates that the recipients of this letter were "to cause" or "permit" the Spirit to influence them.

Ephesians 5:15 Therefore, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of paying careful attention to the manner in which each and every one of you make it your habit of conducting your lives. Each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to not make it your habit of conducting your lives in an unwise manner. On the contrary, each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of conducting your lives in a wise manner 16 by continuing to make it your habit of taking full advantage of your opportunity for your own benefit because these days are characterized by evil. 17 For this reason, each and every one of must continue to make it your habit of not conducting your lives as foolish individuals. On the contrary, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of conducting your lives as wise individuals by comprehending for the purpose of personal application what constitutes the Lord's will (for the manner in which each one of you as a corporate unit are to continue making it your habit of conducting your life). 18 Consequently, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not permitting yourselves to be drunk by means of the excessive intake of wine because this is non-sensical behavior. On the contrary, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of permitting yourselves to be influenced by means of the Spirit's teaching. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 5:18 is composed of the following: (1) prohibition *mē methyskesthe oinō* (μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἴνῳ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not permitting yourselves to be drunk by means of the excessive intake of wine.** (Author's translation) (2) casual clause: *en hō estin asōtia* (ἐν ᾧ ἐστιν ἀσωτία), "**because this is non-sensical behavior**" (Author's translation) (3) command: *plērousthe en pneumati* (πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of permitting yourselves to be influenced by means of the Spirit's teaching.** (Author's translation)

Therefore, the reader can see that in Ephesians 5:18, the apostle Paul issues the recipients of this letter a prohibition, which required that they continue make it their habit of not permitting themselves to be drunk by means of the excessive intake of wine. The reason for this prohibition is that this type of behavior is non-sensical. This prohibition is followed by a command, which required that they continue to make it their habit of permitting themselves to be influenced by means of the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians. This would be accomplished by the recipients of this letter exercising faith in the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians, which would enable them to obey the various commands and prohibitions issued by Paul in this letter.

There is a strong emphatic contrast between the prohibition and command in Ephesians 5:18, namely, an emphatic contrast between the recipients of this letter being drunk with wine and that of being influenced by the Spirit.

Clinton Arnold writes "Paul juxtaposes the state of drunkenness with the condition of being filled and influenced by God's Spirit. In spite of the fact that the distillation process for alcohol had not yet been invented, there was an enormous problem with drunkenness through overindulgence of naturally fermented beverages."[161]

This prohibition in Ephesians 5:18 presents the result of the contents of Ephesians 5:17, which begins with a prohibition, which required that the recipients of this letter continue to make it their habit of not conducting their lives as foolish individuals. An elliptical command follows it and required that they continue to make it their habit of conducting their lives as wise individuals. This command presents a strong emphatic contrast with the prohibition. The participial clause, which modifies this elliptical command, presents the means by which both the prohibition and the elliptical command were to be accomplished Namely, by comprehending for the purpose of personal application what constitutes the Lord's will for the manner in which they were to continue making it their habit of conducting their lives.

[161] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 348). Zondervan.

Therefore, a comparison of Ephesians 5:17 and 18 indicates that the recipients of this epistle must continue to make it their habit of not permitting themselves to be drunk with wine but rather continue to make it their habit of permitting themselves to be influenced by the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians, which will "result" in the recipients of this letter not conducting their lives as unwise individuals but rather as wise individuals. This would be accomplished by comprehending for the purpose of personal application what constitutes the Lord's will for the manner in which they were to continue making it their habit of conducting their lives. In other words, obeying the prohibition and command in Ephesians 5:18 is the "direct result of" obeying the prohibition and command in Ephesians 5:17. Or, we could simply say that not being drunk by the excessive intake of wine but rather being influenced by the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians will be "the result" or "direct consequence of" of conducting one's life as a wise individual rather than an unwise individual. The latter is accomplished by obeying Paul's Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions recorded in Ephesians. Therefore, correspondingly, if the believer is influenced by the Spirit inspired contents of Paul's teaching in Ephesians, then this will result in the believer conducting their life in a wise manner. In other words, the prohibition and command in Ephesians 5:17 is the "direct result" or "consequence" of the believer obeying the command in Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by the Spirit inspired contents of this letter.

This interpretation is indicated by two factors. First, the contents of Ephesians 5:17 were inspired by the Holy Spirit as well as the entire contents of this epistle. Secondly, to be influenced by the Spirit is the result of exercising faith in the Spirit inspired contents of Scripture and thus this is the case with chapters 1-3 in this epistle. This post-justification faith appropriates the Spirit's omnipotence, which in turn enables the believer to obey the Spirit inspired prohibition and command in Ephesians 5:17. In fact, the believer is influenced by the Spirit when they exercise faith in the Spirit inspired contents of chapters 1-3 in this epistle, which appropriate the Spirit's omnipotence, which in turn enables them to obey the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions recorded in Ephesians chapters 4-6, which present the application of the contents of Ephesians chapters 1-3.

Now, in Ephesians 5:18, the prohibition, which begins this verse contains the noun *oinos* (οἶνος), which pertains to a fermented beverage made from the juice of grapes. There is absolutely no evidence whatsoever that non-alcoholic or pasteurized wine was used in ancient times and especially in the first century when Paul wrote Ephesians.

Darrell Bock writes "Sometimes there is discussion about how much alcohol ancient wine possessed compared with wine today. The argument is that wine was more diluted then, but a key thing this exhortation shows is that ancient wine still

could get people drunk and take control of them so that they did destructive things."[162]

The verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) means "to be drunk, inebriated, intoxicated with alcohol." The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is the recipients of this letter, who were noted many times in our study of Ephesians, were members of the Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. The word is not only referring to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals because the second person plural form of this verb is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. The meaning of the verb is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), which denies any idea of the recipients of this letter being intoxicated by means of the excessive intake of wine. The noun *oinos* (οἶνος) functions as a dative of means, which would indicate that the recipients of this letter were not to be intoxicated "by means of wine."

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is a customary present imperative, which expresses the idea of the recipients of this letter "continuing to make it their habit of" not being intoxicated by means of wine. It has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. However, it does contain the idea of "continuing" because the contents of Ephesians 1:15 affirm that the recipients of this epistle were exercising faith in Paul's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching as well as practicing the love of God when interacting with each other. In fact, the contents of Ephesians 4:20-24 also affirm they were already being obedient to Paul's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching recorded in this epistle. Therefore, the present imperative conjugation of this verb expresses the idea that the recipients of this letter must "continue to make it their habit" of not being intoxicated by means of the excessive intake of wine.

The passive voice of this verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is a causative or permissive passive, which indicates that the recipients of this letter were not "to permit themselves" to be drunk by means of the excessive intake of wine.

This causal clause in Ephesians 5:18 contains the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) whose referent is the noun *oinos* (οἶνος), "**wine**." It is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of cause, which indicates that excessive intake of wine is "the basis" or "the reason" for the prohibition forbidding the recipients of this letter from being intoxicated by the excessive intake of wine. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ) expresses the idea that the recipients of this letter must continue to make it their habit of not being intoxicated by the excessive intake of wine "because this" is characterized as non-sensical behavior.

The noun *asōtia* (ἀσωτία) refers to conduct, which shows a lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action, thus it means senseless actions. In some

[162] Bock, D. L. (2019). *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (E. J. Schnabel, Ed.; Vol. 10, p. 163). Inter-Varsity Press.

languages this word may be rendered as "what one does without being able to think about it," or "what one does when the mind is absent." We would say that it is "non-sensical behavior." Or we could simply say "reckless behavior." Or we could simply say "a waste," or "stupidity."

The verb *eimi* (εἰμί) pertains to possessing certain characteristics, whether inherent or transitory.[163] The referent of the third person singular form of this verb being drunk by the excessive intake of wine. The noun *asōtia* (ἀσωτία) functions as a predicate nominative, which means that it is making an assertion that the characteristic of being drunk by the excessive intake of wine is "non-sensical behavior."

Gary Everett writes "A person under the influence of alcohol loses his inhibitions. If he gets angry easily, he exceeds in anger. If he is promiscuous, then he becomes very promiscuous. If he loves to talk, he will become talkative. Alcohol allows a person to indulge in his fleshly passions beyond his normal ability to control his behavior."[164]

R. C. H. Lenski writes "The perplexity of some commentators regarding the occurrence of an admonition against drunkenness in the middle of this paragraph can thus easily be cleared up. The intoxication of drink is not introduced as a mere foil to spiritual exhilaration. It is a concrete example of worldly folly in wicked days and a sample of how fools make themselves utterly incapable of wisdom, sound judgment, and real understanding. They dull and drug even their physical brain and wickedly add to the wickedness of the days in which they live."[165]

Max Anders writes "Ephesus was a center of pagan worship and ritual. The Ephesian culture worshiped Baccus, the god of wine and drunken orgies. They believed that to commune with their god and to be led by him, they had to be drunk. In this drunken state, they could determine the will of their god and determine how best to serve and obey him.

Paul was talking about how to commune with the God of heaven, how to live for him, how to serve and obey him, how to determine his will. It was natural for him to draw the contrast between how the god of Ephesus is served and how the God of heaven is served. With the God of heaven, you do not get drunk with wine. Rather, you are filled with the Spirit. Being drunk with wine leads to the sexual sins and immorality of darkness described above. By being filled with the Spirit, you can determine God's will and serve him faithfully in moral living."[166]

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[163] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 148). United Bible Societies.
[164] Everett, G. H. (2011). *The Epistle of Ephesians* (p. 131). Gary Everett.
[165] Lenski, R. C. H. (1937). *The interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians* (p. 617). Lutheran Book Concern.
[166] Anders, M. (1999). *Galatians-Colossians* (Vol. 8, p. 172). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Francis Foulkes writes "A particular and indeed prominent manifestation of the folly of the old life is drunkenness. Right down the ages, as literature from the earliest period onwards bears testimony, people have sought to rise above their cares and gain a sense of exhilaration and gaiety through intoxicants. Scripture never demands total abstinence from intoxicants (except for those who had taken special vows). That must be a question left to the individual conscience, but the Bible often speaks against drunkenness. It was a danger in the church of New Testament days, even among those who might be chosen as leaders, as 1 Timothy 3:3, 8 and Titus 1:7 and 2:3 show."[167]

Constantine Campbell writes "The previous verse has underscored the importance of understanding the Lord's will, so drunkenness is to be avoided since it impairs cognitive function. This is why it 'leads to reckless living.'[168] When cognitive function is impaired, people are less likely to act with care and more prone to act recklessly. The command stands in contrast to the Roman penchant for banquets, which were often characterized by drunkenness and debauchery.[169] Moreover, some Greco-Roman religions regarded drunkenness as the means of achieving union with a god. Indeed, the cult of Dionysus, which was well-known within Ephesus, embraced the vine as their cultic symbol.[170] Drunkenness was also a widespread problem regardless of religious cults or Roman banquets, and warnings against such indulgence were already present within Judaism, as expressed by Ben Sira (Sir 9:9; 31:12–32:13; second century BC) and Philo (*On Drunkenness* 6, 11–12; first-century AD).[171]"[172]

Many commentators have wrestled with this prohibition in Ephesians 5:18. Specifically, they wrestled with the fact that Paul issued this prohibition at this point in the letter. However, as is the case in the twenty-first century, the abuse of alcohol was quite prevalent in the first century A.D. As was the case for the members of the Gentile Christian community in the first century, drunkenness in the twenty-first century for members of the Christian community in the twenty-first century is one of the major ways a believer can conduct their life as an unwise individual, which Paul prohibits believers from doing in Ephesians 5:17.

The recipients of this letter who were Gentile Christians living in the various cities and communities in the Roman province of Asia were very familiar with the abuse of alcohol prior to becoming Christians. It was a major problem in the first century A.D. as it is now in the twenty-first century. Thus, the reason for this prohibition against drunkenness here in Ephesians 5:18.

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[167] Foulkes, F. (1989). *Ephesians: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 10, p. 155). InterVarsity Press.
[168] Cohick, 336.
[169] Cohick, 336.
[170] Arnold, 348; Cleon Rogers, "The Dionysian Background of Ephesians 5:18," *BSac* 136 (1979): 249–57.
[171] Arnold, 349.
[172] Campbell, C. R. (2023). *The Letter to the Ephesians* (D. A. Carson, Ed.; p. 237). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

The Gentile Christians of the early church lived in the Roman Empire and were raised as pagans worshipping the Greek and Roman pantheon of gods. One of these gods was called Dionysus. He was also called Bacchus or in Rome, Liber. Dionysus was the god of fruitfulness and vegetation, especially known as a god of wine and ecstasy. The worship of Dionysus flourished long in Asia Minor. Ephesus was located on the western coast of Asia Minor or what is now Turkey. The worship of Dionysus flourished particularly well in Phrygia and Lydia. The cult of Dionysus was closely associated with that of numerous Asiatic deities. The followers of Dionysus included spirits of fertility, such as the satyrs and in his ritual the male phallus was prominent. As the god of the vine, Dionysus or Bacchus, he was thought to communicate his power to his devotees through the intoxicating influence of wine, stimulating them to orgiastic excesses, wild dancing and music, and sexual promiscuity. They worshipped booze and sex. Sounds like many of our towns and cities in America. The Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia were very much exposed to this cult and it was a part of their pagan background. The worship of booze and sex is still around here in the 21st century. It is a part of our hedonistic western culture. Therefore, the apostle Paul by employing this verb *methyskomai* (μεθύσκομαι) is addressing an area of weakness of the recipients of this letter and specifically an area that they were quite familiar with prior to becoming Christians.

Benjamin Merkle writes "What prompted Paul to give such a specific prohibition? Several suggestions have been offered: (1) Paul heard that the Ephesian believers were engaging in such behavior, probably during the celebration of the Lord's Supper; (2) Paul's prohibition is directed against the cult of Dionysius, the god of wine; (3) Paul is contrasting the behavior of the world (drunkenness being quite common) with the lifestyle expected of Christians; and (4) the prohibition against drunkenness provides a suitable contrast with the focal command to be filled by the Spirit (see For Further Study). Based on the emphasis on the command to be filled (elaborated by five ptcs.), the last option is preferable, although drunkenness was also a common problem in the ancient world."[173]

Grant Osborne writes "The first command, 'Do not get drunk with wine,' seems out of place in verses 15–21. There have been various explanations. Some believe this relates to the pagan world of Paul's day, in which people participated in drunken orgies as part of the worship of the Greek god Dionysus. Or perhaps Paul's words reflect a problem in the eucharistic celebration similar to the one he describes in 1 Corinthians 11:20–22, or with the agape feast, similar to the discussions of 2 Peter 2:13 and Jude 12. The problem with all of these suggestions is the lack of evidence in the text for any such specific problem. It is more likely that Paul is addressing a

[173] Merkle, B. L. (2016). *Ephesians* (A. J. Köstenberger & R. W. Yarbrough, Eds.; p. 174). B&H Academic.

general problem, similar to his admonitions against sexual libertinism, greed, and so on in this section. Drunkenness was as big a problem in the ancient world, as it is today, and Proverbs frequently addressed the issue (Prov 20:1; 21:17; 23:30, 31; 31:4). Moreover, getting drunk led to dropping inhibitions, which in turn often led to debauchery of all kinds and to a wasted, empty life.

Still, it would have been unusual for Paul to single out this specific problem with a prohibition like this. Certainly, the issue of drunkenness within the church would have been reason enough for his concern, but I think there is more. At Pentecost some of the bystanders surmised that the seemingly excessive excitement and joy of the Spirit-filled disciples was the result of 'too much wine' (Acts 2:13). Paul might in this instance be using a parable of Pentecost—saying, in effect: When you are filled with joy and singing (as in 5:19, below), may it be that it is the Spirit—and not the spirits—at work!"[174]

In Ephesians 5:18, the command in this verse contains the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω), which has appeared three times already in the Ephesian epistle (1:23; 3:19; 4:10). In Ephesians 1:23, the verb is used in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ bringing to completion all of creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan. In Ephesians 3:19, it expresses the idea of the recipients of this epistle causing themselves to experience the fullness of God, i.e., the fullness or totality of the Father's love for them by knowing Jesus Christ's love for them experientially. As was the case in Ephesians 1:23, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) in Ephesians 4:10 pertains to causing something to be brought to completion, or to complete an activity. In both verses, this verb speaks of Jesus Christ bringing to completion every animate and inanimate object in creation in the sense of redeeming it from the curse of sin and Satan.

Now, in Ephesians 5:18, the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) literally means "to be filled," however it is clearly being used in a figurative sense. The referent of the second person plural form of this verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is the recipients of this letter, who were noted many times in our study of Ephesians, were members of the Gentile Christian community living throughout the Roman province of Asia. The word is not only referring to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals because the second person plural form of this verb is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, 17, 2:18, 22, 3:5, 16, 4:3, 4 and 30, the referent of the dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) in Ephesians 5:18 is the Holy Spirit. The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit is put for His teaching, which is communicated by Paul in this epistle. The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) is the object of

[174] Osborne, G. R. (2017). *Ephesians: Verse by Verse* (pp. 180–181). Lexham Press.

the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions here as a marker of means, which indicates that the Spirit inspired contents of Paul's teaching in this letter, is "the means by which" the recipients of this letter were to be influenced. Therefore, the prepositional phrase *en pneumati* (ἐν πνεύματι) indicates that the Spirit inspired apostolic teaching of the apostle Paul in the Ephesian letter is "the means by which" the recipients of this letter were to make it their habit of permitting themselves to be influenced.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the word influence: (1) Capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (2) Action or process of producing effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (3) A person or thing that exerts influence.

Consequently, if we were to paraphrase Webster's definition of the word "influence," we would say that Paul wants the recipients of this letter to permit the teaching presented in the contents of Ephesians (intangible means), which inspired by the Holy Spirit and a manifestation of His omnipotence (Person), to produce Christ-like character (effects) in them. This would be accomplished by the believer exercising faith in Paul's Spirit inspired teaching in the Ephesian letter, which would appropriate the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, which would then enable them to obey the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions issued by Paul in this letter.

The word "influence" is a more accurate term to use in English when translating this word rather than words such as "possessed, controlled," or "filled." "Filled" would be used of liquids, which is not the case here in Ephesians 5:18. "Possessed" denotes ownership, which is not the sense here. "Controlled" has the connotation of someone doing something against your will, which is not the meaning of this verb here in Ephesians 5:18. Rather, the passive voice of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is a permissive passive which expresses the idea of "permitting oneself to be influenced" by the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians.

The specific meaning of the filling metaphor in this verse is best understood as "to be under the influence of" because of the way that Paul contrasts *wine* with *Spirit.* Christians are not to be filled with (under the influence of the power of) wine, but they are to be filled with (under the influence of the power of) the Holy Spirit. Paul is teaching that the dominant influence in our lives ought to be the Holy Spirit and specifically the application of the Spirit's teaching in Scripture, which He inspired and makes understandable to the believer who exercises faith in this teaching.

Larry Dean Pettegrew writes "The word *control*, although often used as the meaning of filling, might be too strong. *Control* often has the connotation in our culture of something like total control over a puppet. It suggests either all or nothing. But this connotation is more than the metaphor implies. Wine does not control a person as though he were a puppet or a robot. Neither does the Holy Spirit. Just as

there are increasing degrees of influence of wine on a person, so there should be increasing degrees of the influence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian.

Paul's use of the filling metaphor is slightly different than that of Luke. Luke uses the adjective *full of* to mean 'characterized by.' Paul uses the verb to mean 'to keep on being under the influence of the Spirit.' Still, the durative idea of the influence of the Spirit of God on the Christian is the same with Paul as it is with Luke. The believer must continue to be under the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit (Paul) so that he will be characterized by the Spirit's influence (Luke). The two concepts work hand in hand; they are parallel ways to describe genuine spirituality."[175]

Now, in Ephesians 5:18, the present imperative conjugation of the verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is a customary present imperative, which expresses the idea of the recipients of this letter "continuing to make it their habit of" being fully influenced by the Holy Spirit. It has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. However, it too does contain the idea of "continuing" because the contents of Ephesians 1:15 affirm that the recipients of this epistle were exercising faith in Paul's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching as well as practicing the love of God when interacting with each other. In fact, the contents of Ephesians 4:17-5:16 also affirm they were already being obedient to Paul's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching recorded in this epistle. Therefore, the present imperative conjugation of this verb expresses the idea that the recipients of this letter must "continue to make it their habit" of being influenced by the Spirit.

The force of the customary present imperative is simply "to continue to make if your habit" and is a command for action to be continued, action that may or may not have already been going on. It is often a character building command to the effect of "make this your habit," "train yourself in this," etc. The command in Ephesians 5:18 is a character building command meaning that Paul wants to build the character of Christ in the recipients of this letter in that he wants them to "make it their habit" being influenced by the Spirit because that will build the character of Christ in them, which is the Father's will.

The passive voice of this verb *plēroō* (πληρόω) is a causative or permissive passive, which indicates that the recipients of this letter were "to cause" or "permit" the Spirit to influence them and specifically, to permit the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians to influence them. Thus, the permissive passive voice of this verb emphasizes the volitional responsibility of the believer to be influenced by the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians, which would require them to exercise faith in this teaching, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, which enables the believer to obey the various prohibitions and commands in this letter.

[175] Pettegrew, L. (2013). *The New Covenant Ministry of the Holy Spirit* (Second Edition, p. 204). Kress Biblical Resources.

That the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) in Ephesians 5:18 contains the figure of metonymy is indicated by two factors.

The first is that the Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 3:7; 2 Pet. 1:20-21; Rev. 2:7, 111, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 14:13) and thus, the inspired the contents of Paul's apostolic teaching in Ephesians.

Secondly, the commands to be influenced by the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul in Colossians 3:16 are synonymous since each bears the same results: fellowship with the Father (cf. Eph. 5:19-20; Col. 3:16). If one looks carefully at the results of obeying both of these commands, one can see that they are synonymous since they both produce psalms and hymns, spiritual songs, singing and thanksgiving to God. This makes sense because we already established that the Spirit inspired the Word of God and thus speaks to the Christian through the Word. The commands, "be influenced by the Spirit" and "let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you," are therefore synonymous because the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God regarding the Father's character and nature and His will for the believer's life.

Colossians 3:16 The teaching originating from and about the one and only Christ must continue to exist in a state of dwelling abundantly among each and every one of you. Each of you must execute this command by continuing to make it your habit of providing instruction, specifically by providing instruction for one another with regards to proper conduct. Each of you must provide this instruction by means of a wisdom which is absolute, by means of psalms, hymns, spiritual songs. Each of you must execute the command by continuing to make it your habit of singing with gratitude with your entire being for the benefit of God the Father. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul solemnly issues the Colossians another command which addresses their relationship with each other with regards to the teaching originating from and about Jesus Christ. This command required that the teaching originating from and about the one and only Christ must continue to exist in a state of dwelling richly or abundantly among each of them. Colossians 1:3-5 and 2:5 affirm the Colossians were already obeying this command. Thus, Paul is performing preventative maintenance by issuing this solemn command.

This teaching of Christ refers of course to the divine revelation that was communicated through the apostolic teaching which was communicated to the believers in Colossae by Epaphras and is now recorded in the New Testament. Specifically, it refers to the apostolic teaching communicated by Epaphras to the Colossian church which originated from and was about Jesus Christ and was communicated to the church through the apostles by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Notice this teaching originates from and is about Jesus Christ. The teaching originating from Christ would of course be a reference to His teaching to love one another as He loves. But also, notice, it is about Christ as well. This is a reference to the doctrines pertaining to the person and work of Jesus Christ on the cross. It also refers to the teaching about the Colossians' union and identification with Christ. This interpretation is supported by Paul's teaching in Colossians 1:15-20 and 2:9-10, in which he instructs the Colossians regarding the person of Christ and specifically that He is the God-Man and the Creator and Sovereign over all of creation and every creature and Head of the church or ruler of the church. In Colossians 1:13-14, he teaches that the Colossians were redeemed by Christ and have the forgiveness of sins as a result. Then, in Colossians 2:14-15, Paul teaches the Colossians that Christ reconciled them to a holy God by means of His death on the cross which also defeated Satan. In Colossians 2:11-12 and 3:1-4, Paul exhorts the Colossians that they must continue appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. He reminds them in Colossians 1:27 that they are indwelt by Christ.

Notice, this author's translation of the prepositional phrase ἐν ὑμῖν is not "in" or "within" you but rather "among" each of you. Some interpreters argue for the former viewing the individual application based upon the parallelism with the phrase ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, "in your hearts" in Colossians 3:15. However, the participles and the prepositional phrases which follow this command in Colossians 3:16 clearly emphasize the worship of the Colossians as a corporate unit. He wants the Colossians to put the teaching originating from Christ and that which is about the person and work of Christ to be front and center with regards to their corporate meetings to worship Christ.

Then, in Colossians 3:16 Paul defines for the Colossians how this teaching originating from and about the one and only Christ was to continue to exist in a state of dwelling richly among each of the Colossians. This teaching was to dwell richly among them by each of them providing each other with instruction in the gospel. This instruction refers to providing authoritative instruction in the Word of God in an informal setting since it is not referring to the function of the pastor-teacher like Epaphras nor is it describing the function of the pastor or Paul's function as a communicator of the gospel as in Colossians 1:28. Rather, Paul is addressing the function of the Colossians amongst each other (cf. Heb. 5:12).

Paul wants the teaching of the one and only Christ to continue to exist in a state of dwelling richly among each of the Colossians by each of them providing each other with instruction in the gospel with regard to proper Christian conduct. In other words, they were to hold each other accountable for their behavior and their guide and judge would be the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul then identifies for the Colossians the means by which they were to continue to make it their habit of instructing each other and specifically instructing each other with regards to proper Christian conduct, namely they were to do so by means of a wisdom which is absolute. This absolute wisdom he asserts is to be the means by which they were to provide instruction and specifically provide instruction for one another with regards to proper conduct. Therefore, the apostle Paul is commanding these faithful believers in Colossae that they must continue to make it their habit of providing instruction and specifically instruction with regards to proper Christian conduct by means of a wisdom which is absolute or free from imperfection. Applying and obeying the teaching originating from Christ regarding their union and identification with Him will give the Colossians a wisdom which is free from imperfection and this was to be the means by which they were to instruct each other with regards to proper Christian behavior.

This wisdom speaks of God's wisdom, which refers to the person, work, life and teaching of His Son Jesus Christ and is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the gospel. It refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, Paul teaches in First Corinthians 1:24 that Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God. This absolute wisdom speaks of the application of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the sense of the Colossians appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. It is also applying Christ's teaching to love one another as He has loved them and is loving them. The gospel of Jesus Christ is absolute in the sense that it is free from imperfection because the person, work, life and teaching of Jesus Christ were perfect because He is the sinless God-Man.

The apostle proceeds to identify "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" as the other means by which the Colossians were to continue to make it their habit of providing instruction and specifically instruction for one another regarding proper Christian conduct.

"**Psalms**" pertain to a musical composition containing words of a spiritual nature praising God. Usually, the word refers to one of the 150 psalms in the Hebrew Scriptures.

"**Hymns**" pertain to a musical composition containing words of a spiritual nature praising God. However, unlike psalms, these hymns do not refer to the Psalms of the Old Testament.

"**Spiritual songs**" pertain to piece of music sung accompanied by some kind of musical instrument which praises or thanks God. In other words, it speaks of a melodic pattern with verbal content which thanks or praises God. These songs are to be "spiritual" in that they must be produced by the Holy Spirit's teaching in the Word of God. In other words, their verbal content is provided by the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God which He has inspired.

Therefore, in Colossians 3:16, Paul is teaching here that the Colossian Christian community was to employ music to instruct each other. Thus, music was an essential and important means by which the gospel of Jesus Christ was communicated to the church in the first century apostolic church. However, Paul makes clear that this music must be Scripture based since he wants the Colossians to instruct each other with the Old Testament Psalms as well as hymns and songs which are inspired by the Word of God. Notice, they must be spiritual songs or in other words, they must be songs that are based upon the teaching in the Word of God which is inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20-21). The church in America in the twenty-first century must take note of this since much of Christian music is lacking in biblical content. Thus, for music to be an effective teaching tool in the Christian church, it must be based upon the Word of God and specifically, sound doctrine.

Lastly, the final means by which the teaching of Christ was to continue to exist in a state of dwelling richly among the Colossians is that of making it their habit of singing with gratitude with their entire being for the benefit of the Father. He is not telling the Colossians to sing "within" their hearts but rather with their entire being. It is unlikely that Paul would be thinking of an inward, non-vocal praise to God since he is addressing in context the relationship the Colossians must have in regard to their corporate worship and interaction with each other in this worship of God.

This singing pertains to producing musical tones by means of the voice. It speaks of uttering words in musical tones and with musical inflections and modulations. It refers to delivering songs as an untrained, trained or professional singer. It speaks of making melody with one's vocal chords. Therefore, the Colossians were to continue to make it their habit of singing with gratitude in their hearts for the benefit of the Father. This means that they were to express thanks to God the Father through singing for receiving unmerited blessings from God as a result of exercising faith in Jesus Christ as Savior resulting in the Father declaring them justified.

The command in Ephesians 5:18 to "**be influenced by means of the Spirit's teaching**" and one in Colossians 3:16 requiring that "**the teaching of the one and only Christ must continue to exist in a state of dwelling abundantly among each and every one of**" the Colossians are synonymous. As noted earlier, this indicated by the fact that the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God regarding the Father's character and nature, will, provision for doing His will, and consequences for not doing His will (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29). The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures, (2 Ti 3:16) makes them understandable to the believer, (John 16:13-16) guides the believer in the correct application of the Word of God and reproduces the character of Christ in the believer who obeys the Word of God (Gal 5:22-23). Therefore, by obeying the Word of God, you are obeying the voice of the Spirit.

This leads to another question, "Why did Paul in Colossians 3:16 not mention the Holy Spirit in that verse but does so in Ephesians 5:18?" The answer is simply that Paul wanted to emphasize the Holy Spirit's relationship to fellowship in Ephesians 5:18 whereas in Colossians 3:16 he wanted to emphasize the importance of the Word of God in relation to fellowship. So, if you look at both passages, Paul is emphasizing that the Bible is a living book in that the Spirit inspired it and is speaking actively to the believer in the Bible.

One must realize that experiencing fellowship with God is in effect experiencing one's eternal relationship with the Triune God and one's union and identification with Jesus Christ. One must not blur the distinction between our eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God though both are obviously related. One also must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience.

When I say one must not blur the distinction between one's eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God I mean that though they are related, they are different. They are related because fellowship with God is experiencing one's eternal relationship with God. They are different in that sin does not cause one to lose one's eternal relationship with God, but it does cause one to lose fellowship with God.

Let me use an analogy. I entered the Wenstrom family at physical birth. When I disobeyed my parents, I lost fellowship with them. I was sent to my room. They didn't disown me, but they refused to have fellowship with me until I did two things. One I confessed I was wrong to them. Then, I had to do what I was told. The same is true in God's family, if we sin, God will not have fellowship with us. He doesn't disown us when we sin. He disciplines us because He loves us (Hebrews 12:4-11; Revelation 3:19). We are still in His family. When we confess our sins to our heavenly Father, we are restored to fellowship with Him and when we obey Him we maintain that fellowship with Him.

When I say, we must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience, mean that committing sin (mental, verbal, or overt) prevents us from experiencing our position in Christ as well as sanctification and yet it does not cause us to lose our position in Christ. In fact, to experience fellowship with God is to experience one's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, lastly, there are many metaphors in Scripture which speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. For instance, experiencing sanctification speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is experiencing being set apart to serve God exclusively. Fellowship with God speaks of experiencing one's relationship with God from the perspective that we are communing with God.

John uses the term "abide" in his writings (1 John 2:6, 10) which is a reference to the Lord's Vine and the Branches Metaphor. Our Lord taught His disciples that

He is the Vine, and they are the Branches and that like a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine so they cannot produce fruit apart from Him (John 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10). This term "abide" is a reference to fellowship with God.

John also uses the term "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7) which speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is living according to God's holy standards. In 1 John 1:5 he says that "God is light" which is a reference to the fact that as to His character and nature, God is holy. So, the believer is living according to God's holy standards when they are in fellowship with God. God's holy standards are found in the Word of God.

So, the filling of the Spirit and fellowship with God are not mutually exclusive. They are inextricably related. In other words, if you experiencing fellowship with God, you are obeying the command to be influenced by the Spirit. In fact, experiencing one's sanctification, and walking in the light and abiding in Christ or His Word are also inextricably tied to each other. They all speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. Thus, when a believer confesses their sins, they are not only restored to fellowship with God, but they are filled with the Spirit since to be in fellowship with God demands obedience to God's Word and the Holy Spirit inspired God's Word and speaks actively to the believer through the Word. They are also experiencing sanctification and are walking in the light, i.e., living according to God's holy standards.

Paul presents a contrast in Ephesians 5:18. He is contrasting the mental state of someone who is under the influence of alcohol and drunk with that of one who is under the influence of the Spirit inspired teaching of the apostle Paul recorded in the Ephesian epistle. The issue crystal clear: to be drunk with wine means to be brought under the influence of wine. Visible characteristics begin to take place as a person comes under the influence of alcohol. In contrast, to be filled with the Spirit is to be influenced by the Spirit so the Spirit-influenced believer does things that are unnatural for him under the influence of the Spirit even as the drunken individual does things that are unnatural for him under the influence of the spirits.

The comparison is a matter of influence or control. A drunken person is controlled by alcohol, which he has consumed. Because of this he thinks in ways normally unnatural to him. Or he conducts himself in ways that are opposite of his norms and standards. Likewise, the believer who is under the influence of the Spirit acts in ways that are unnatural to him. In other words, the believer under the influence of the Spirit is going to act in ways that are contrary to his old Adamic-life.

The issue is not getting the Spirit within you, but rather of allowing the indwelling Spirit to take charge and move into every area of your life. So, to be influenced by means of the Spirit inspired contents of Scripture, means that the believer must voluntarily surrender their old Adamic-life in exchange for the new Christ-life. The

believer must make a conscious decision to acknowledge any known sins to the Father and then immediately apply the Word of God to their thought process. So, to be fully influenced by means of the Spirit means that the believer must voluntarily surrender their old Adamic-life in exchange for the new Christ-life. The believer must make a conscious decision to confess any known sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship (1 John 1:9). This fellowship is maintained by obeying the Word of God, which is inspired by the Spirit.

Constantine Campbell writes "Instead of becoming drunk with wine, believers are to 'be filled by the Spirit.'[176] Without further qualification, Paul clearly refers here to the Holy Spirit.[177] The concept of 'spirit' in modern English may lead to a common misunderstanding that Paul offers the Spirit as the alternate 'substance' with which believers are to be filled—instead of being filled with wine, they are to be filled with the Spirit. This misunderstanding is reinforced by our use of 'spirit' to refer to an alcoholic beverage—as though Paul is making a pun about what sort of 'spirit' believers should be filled with—wine or the Holy Spirit. But in ancient Greek, 'spirit' is *never* used to refer to an alcoholic beverage, which means that Paul could not have intended such a pun.[178] It's only a (false) pun because of the English language."[179]

J. B. Bond writes "There are two major opinions on what Paul means by the filling of the Spirit here, both of which are found in Acts. One meaning is special enablement for special tasks (cf. Acts 4:31). The other is being spiritual, that is, spiritually mature. When the believers chose the first deacons, the apostles said to pick men 'of good reputation, *full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom*' (6:3). To be full of wisdom means to be wise, and so to be full of the Holy Spirit means to be spiritual.

Paul might be saying that believers should allow themselves to be controlled by the Spirit by yielding to the influence of the Word of God on their minds. As wine influences the mind, so too does God's Spirit when one is abiding in Christ (John 15:1–5). If this is what Paul means, he is calling believers actively to seek to be under the Holy Spirit's influence via the Word (cf. Col 3:16, which parallels Eph 5:19–20). Or he might simply be calling them to be spiritual, again by allowing God's Word to have its influence (cf. 1 Cor 2:14–16)."[180]

Tony Evans writes "When you come to Christ, you are indwelt by the Spirit, and he will never leave you. But being *filled* by the Spirit is different. A drunk is under

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[176] πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι. The imperfective aspect of the present imperative πληροῦσθε here conveys a general command, so that believers are characterized by being filled by the Spirit; Campbell, *Basics of Verbal Aspect*, 70–71.
[177] BDAG, s.v. "πνεῦμα," 835 §5dβ.
[178] BDAG, s.v. "πνεῦμα," 832–36.
[179] Campbell, C. R. (2023). *The Letter to the Ephesians* (D. A. Carson, Ed.; pp. 237–238). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
[180] Bond, J. B. (2010). The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians. In R. N. Wilkin (Ed.), *The Grace New Testament Commentary* (p. 884). Grace Evangelical Society.

the influence of alcohol. A person filled by the Spirit is under the Spirit's influence."[181]

Max Anders writes "What does it mean to be **filled with the Spirit**? Some interpreters equate this command with instances of being filled with the Spirit in the Book of Acts in which miraculous things happened: people spoke in tongues; prophecies and visions were given; people were healed. 'Be filled' in this verse (*plarao*) is not the same word as the one used in the Book of Acts (*pimplemi*), nor are the consequences the same. Rather than understanding this command in verse 18 to have anything to do with miraculous or extraordinary happenings, it is better to understand it in context. In this ethical context, it means directed, influenced, and ultimately governed by the Holy Spirit."[182]

Thomas Hale writes "Christians must **not get drunk on wine**—or on any other alcoholic drink. Paul does not say that a Christian must never drink any wine at all (Psalm 104:15); he only says that a Christian must never get drunk.[183] A Christian must not even get a tiny bit drunk. Some people, especially some tribes, are heavy drinkers by custom; but God says to them as well: Do not get drunk. To get drunk is a sin. And once a person becomes drunk, he is led to commit even worse sins. And his desire to drink will grow and grow, and eventually it will enslave him.

People drink in order to find happiness or encouragement, but of course their happiness and encouragement lasts only a very short time. And they pay a high price for such momentary pleasure; drinking squanders not only their money but also their health. There is only one way to find permanent joy, happiness, and encouragement, and that is by being **filled with the** (Holy) **Spirit**."[184]

Francis Foulkes writes "But again the apostle is not merely negative. He does not seek simply to take away joys and pleasures from people's lives. He would replace them by higher joys and better pleasures. It is no mere coincidence that in Acts 2 also the fullness of wine and the fullness of the Spirit are set side by side. There is the implication there, repeated here, that the Christian knows a better way than by wine of being lifted above the depression and the joyless monotony of life, a better way of removing self-consciousness and quickening thought and word and action than by the use of intoxicants. It is by being *filled with the Spirit*."[185]

It is extremely important that the church age believer understands that when Paul issues this command in Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by the Spirit's teaching, he does not say that they were to ask the Father or the Spirit or the Son to be influenced by the Spirit. Rather, they must simply apply 1 John 1:9 and confess their sins in

[181] Evans, T. (2019). *The Tony Evans Bible Commentary* (p. 1229). Holman Bible Publishers.
[182] Anders, M. (1999). *Galatians-Colossians* (Vol. 8, p. 172). Broadman & Holman Publishers.
[183] God leads some Christians to completely abstain from any kind of alcoholic beverage (see Luke 1:15). Certainly, any believer who had a drinking problem before becoming a Christian must stop drinking altogether.
[184] Hale, T. (1996). *The Applied New Testament Commentary* (p. 746). David C. Cook.
[185] Foulkes, F. (1989). *Ephesians: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 10, p. 155). InterVarsity Press.

order to be restored to fellowship with the Triune God, which is maintained by exercising faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures, which enables them to obey the various prohibitions and commands issued by the Spirit through the Scriptures. This post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures, which enables the believer to obey the various prohibitions and commands issued by the Spirit through the Scriptures, is the means by which the believer obeys the command to be influenced by the Spirit. Thus, to be influenced by the Spirit inspired Scriptures is to be experiencing fellowship with the Triune God because the latter is accomplished by the same means as the former.

Now, in Ephesians 1:17, 2:21-22 and 3:16, the apostle Paul speaks of the means by which the believer can possess an experiential knowledge of the triune God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Christ. By appropriating by faith Paul's Spirit inspired teaching in this letter, the recipients of this letter would be influenced by the Spirit.

Romans 8:5-6 and the Filling of the Spirit

In Romans 8:5-6, the apostle Paul describes the mechanics of the filling of the Spirit and reveals that it is submitting to the Spirit and being occupied in one's mind with the things of the Spirit. Leading up to this passage, Paul taught in Romans 8:1 that there is never any condemnation, none whatsoever for them because of their union with Jesus Christ. Next, in Roman 8:2, he taught the Christians in Rome that the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death.

Then, in Romans 8:3, Paul "explains how" or presents the "reason why" the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ Jesus has set them free from the sin nature's authoritative power as well as spiritual death. The Law was unable to deliver sinful humanity from the sin nature and real spiritual death. However, the Spirit was able to set the Christian free from the sin nature and real spiritual death because the Father executed the sin nature through Christ's physical death.

Romans 8:4 teaches that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but are conducting their lives in submission to the Spirit. When approaching this passage, we must understand that Paul is speaking in the context of the Christian's sanctification. Beginning in Romans 6:1 and ending in Romans 8:39, Paul is speaking of the Christian's sanctification in its three stages: (1) Positional (2) Experiential (3) Perfective.

So, beginning in Romans 6:1 and concluding in Romans 8:39, Paul is teaching on the Christian's sanctification. Therefore, in Romans 8:4, he is continuing this discussion regarding the Christian's sanctification and in particular "experiential" sanctification.

In Romans 6:1-7:6, Paul taught on all three aspects of sanctification, "positional," "experiential" and "perfective." However, in Romans 7:7-25, he dealt exclusively with the Christian's problem in "experiencing" sanctification by using his own personal experience as a Christian. Then, in Romans 8:1-3, he reassures his readers that even though they fail at experiencing sanctification, they are still eternally secure.

Now, in Romans 8:4, he begins to teach how his readers can "experience" sanctification through the power of the Spirit and in particular occupying their minds with the desires of the Spirit rather than the desires of the sin nature.

So, in Romans 8:4, Paul teaches that in relation to "experiential" sanctification, the Father's purpose in sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in the Christian. Specifically, in those Christians who are not conducting their lives according to the desires of the sin nature but according to the desires of the Spirit.

Now, it has been held by many expositors that Paul is contrasting the unbeliever with the believer in Romans 8:5-8. They support this interpretation by citing Romans 8:9, which teaches that if anyone does not possess the Spirit of Christ, then he does not belong to Christ and only Christians possess the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, those who hold to this interpretation state that the expression *hoi kata sarka ontes*, "**those who are according to the flesh**" that appears in verse 5 and the expression *hoi en sarki ontes*, "**those who are in the flesh**" in verse 8 are describing the non-Christian.

However, this does violence to the context since Paul has been teaching on sanctification in Romans 6:1-8:3. He continues to do so in Romans 8:4-8.

We must remember that Paul just got through discussing the problems he has experiencing sanctification in Romans 7:14-25. Then, in Romans 8:1-3, he reassures his readers that even if they fail to experience sanctification like he did, they are still eternally secure.

Now, beginning in Romans 8:4-9, he teaches how they can solve this problem of experiencing sanctification by occupying their minds with the desires of the Spirit rather than the desires of the sin nature. Then, in Romans 8:9-11, he reassures his readers that the Spirit indwells their bodies and that Christ does as well, which both serve as the principle of victory over the sin nature. This would give Paul's readers assurance that they are eternally secure.

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The reason why many interpret Romans 8:5-8 as contrasting the unbeliever with the believer is that they do not understand that a believer can become involved in the things they attribute to the unbeliever.

For instance, in verse 5, Paul teaches that those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

A Christian can set his mind on the things of the flesh if he chooses to do so and thus prevent him from experiencing sanctification.

Also, in verse 6, he teaches that the mind on the flesh is death. This too a Christian is capable of.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

If his mind is occupied with the desires of his sin nature, he will die spiritually, in the sense of losing fellowship with God. This too will prevent him from experiencing sanctification.

Then, in verse 7, Paul teaches that the mind set on the flesh is hostile towards God.

Romans 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so. (NASB95)

In verse 8, he writes that those who are in flesh can never please God.

Romans 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (NASB95)

Each of these a Christian can become involved in and stop them from experiencing sanctification.

Those who contend that Paul is contrasting the believer with the unbeliever in verses 5-8 fail to see that a believer has the capacity to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature as indicated by the many prohibitions and commands in the New Testament that are designed to prevent this from happening. A case in point is Galatians 5:16-21.

Furthermore, in Romans 7:7-25, Paul clearly illustrates through his own personal experience as a Christian that a Christian can be governed by his sin nature if he attempts to obey the Word of God apart from the enabling power of the Spirit. Therefore, in Romans 8:3-4, Paul taught that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son on the Cross was so that the righteous requirement of the Law would be fulfilled in an "experiential" sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but are conducting their lives in submission to the Spirit.

Now, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul describes or explains what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and in submission to the Spirit. He gives this description or explanation in order that his readers might experience sanctification.

Therefore, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul is not contrasting a non-Christian with a Christian but rather he is contrasting a Christian who is out of fellowship with God because he is living in submission to his sin nature with that of a Christian who is in fellowship with God because he is living in submission to the Spirit. In fact, in these verses he is attempting to explain how the Christian can experience sanctification through the Spirit.

Up to this point he has not done so. In Romans 7:7-25, Paul describes his failure to experience sanctification. Then, in Romans 8:1-4, he reassures his readers that even though fail to experience sanctification they are still eternally secure. Now, in verses 5-8, he explains how they can experience sanctification. There is a natural progression in Paul's argument. If we interpret that in these verses, Paul is presenting a contrast between the unsaved and the saved, there is never any explanation as to how to the reader is to experience sanctification. It also does not pay attention to the context.

In verse 5, the first description is that a person who is submitting to the sin nature is occupied with the desires of the sin nature whereas the person who is submitting to the Spirit is occupied with the desires of the Spirit.

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

In Romans 8:5-8, Paul describes or explains what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and in submission to the Spirit. The first of these explanations or descriptions appear in verse 5. In this passage, Paul teaches that a Christian who is submitting to the sin nature has his mind preoccupied with the desires of the sin nature whereas the person who is submitting to the Spirit has his mind preoccupied with the desires of the Spirit.

"**Those who are**" is the articular nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *eimi*, which means, "to exist in a particular state or condition."

The word is employed with prepositional phrase *kata sarka*, which we saw at the end of verse 4 and means, "**in submission to the flesh**." Therefore, in Romans 8:5, the verb *eimi* along with this prepositional phrase denotes a Christian "existing in the state of being" in submission to the flesh, i.e., his sin nature.

There are some expositors who contend that the verb *eimi* along with this prepositional phrase in Romans 8:4 is a reference to the unbeliever. However, Paul used the verb *eimi* in a similar fashion in Romans 7:14 to describe himself as a Christian!

In Romans 7:14, *eimi* also meant, "to exist in a particular state or condition" and functioned as a copula uniting the subject *ego*, "**I myself**" with the predicate nominative *sarkinos*, "**flesh**." This indicated that Paul as a Christian "existed in the

state of being" of the flesh or unspiritual because he still possessed a nature that is totally antithetical to the spiritual or divine nature of the Law. The verb *eimi* denotes that Paul as a Christian "exists in the state of being" of the flesh meaning that he is unspiritual because he possesses a sin nature even though he has been declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior.

Also, in Romans 7:7-25, Paul made clear through his own personal experience as a Christian that a Christian can set his mind on the desires of the sin nature, which Paul teaches on in Romans 8:5-8.

Those who contend that Paul is contrasting the believer with the unbeliever in verses 5-8 fail to see that a believer has the capacity to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature as indicated by the many prohibitions and commands in the New Testament that are designed to prevent this from happening.

In Galatians 5:16-23, Paul commanded the Christians in Galatia to walk by the Spirit and they would not fulfill the desires of the sin nature. He goes on to describe the different manifestations of this taking place in their lives.

The fact that Paul commanded the Galatians to do this and his listing of the sins that manifest that his readers are being governed by their sin nature clearly imply that it is possible for a Christian to set his mind on the desires of the sin nature and give in to these sinful desires.

Furthermore, the many prohibitions in the New Testament that are designed to govern the Christian's conduct such as in Ephesians 4:17-32 and 5:1-9 as well as the list of sins that the Christian is to forsake clearly imply that a Christian can become involved in setting his mind on the desires of the sin nature.

Therefore, in Romans 8:5-8, Paul is teaching his readers how to avoid fulfilling the desires of the sin nature and how to fulfill the desires of the Spirit and thus experience sanctification. Evidence that a Christian's life is being governed by the old sin nature in an experiential sense is that he is out of fellowship with God. He is grieving, quenching or lying to the Spirit. The Christian occupied with the desires of his sin nature is not obeying the voice of the Spirit, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God.

"**According to the flesh**" is composed of the preposition *kata*, "**according to**" and the accusative feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, "**the flesh**."

We saw this same exact prepositional phrase at the end of verse 4 and we translated it "**in submission to the flesh**." It retains the same meaning here in verse 5. As was the case in verse 4, here in verse 5 the noun *sarx* refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian, which is how the word was used in Romans 6:19, 7:5, 18, 25 and 8:3.

The root meaning of *kata* is "down," which in our present context suggests submission to authority. The preposition *kata* is employed with the accusative form of the noun *sarx*, "**flesh**" and denotes conformity to a particular authority. Therefore,

those Christians who at any time exist in the state of being "in submission to" the sin nature will be occupied with the desires of the sin nature.

A Christian who is living in submission to the sin nature is giving into the desires of the sin nature and is not appropriating by faith through the power of the Spirit the teaching in Romans 6 that he has been crucified with Christ, died with Christ and has been raised with Christ. A Christian who is not occupied with his position in Christ will be occupied with the desires of the sin nature. It is an absolute and when this happens, the Christian will sin while on the flip side if his mind is occupied with his position in Christ, he will not sin but accomplish the will of the Father, which is to grow to spiritual maturity into Christ-likeness.

"**Set their minds on**" is the third person present active indicative form of the verb *phroneo*, which means, "to be preoccupied with" with the desires of the sin nature in the sense of concentrating and having one's thought patterns focused upon the desires of the sin nature to the exclusion of the will of God or what God desires. To be "preoccupied" means to be "completely engrossed in thought, absorbed."

In Romans 8:5, the verb *phroneo* is used in relation to both the sin nature and the Spirit. In relation to the sin nature, it means to be "preoccupied with" the desires of the sin nature to the exclusion of the will of God. This is how the Lord used this verb in Matthew 6:23 when dealing with Peter.

In Romans 8:5, when used in relation to the Spirit, *phroneo* means to be "preoccupied with" the desires of the Spirit. Paul used it in a similar fashion in Colossians 3:2 where he commanded the Colossian believers to be "preoccupied with" the things above and not on the things that are on the earth meaning be occupied with your position in Christ where you are seated at the right hand of God (cf. Colossians 3:1). Therefore, in Romans 8:5, the verb *phroneo* means, "to be preoccupied with" and is used in relation to both the desires of the sin nature and the desires of the Spirit.

"**The things**" is the accusative neuter plural form of the definite article *ho*, which is used as a substantive and refers to the "desires" or in other words, the various lust patterns of the flesh, i.e., the indwelling Adamic sin nature.

The "**things of the flesh**" denote the various lust patterns or sinful desires that originate from the sin nature. It refers not only to sexual lust but also power lust, approbation lust, social lust, monetary lust, materialism lust, inordinate ambition resulting in inordinate competition, revenge lust, criminal lust, chemical lust, crusader lust, and pleasure lust. At the heart of such lusts is the desire to live independently of the will of God.

Paul could have used the word *epithumia* as he did in Romans 1:24 and 6:12 to denote these various lust patterns or desires of the sin nature. Instead, he simply employs the substantive use of the definite article since he wants the reader to focus

on the conflict that takes place in them between the sin nature and the Spirit rather these various lust patterns or desires.

"**Of the flesh**" is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, which refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian.

The noun *sarx* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the substantive use of the article, "**the things**" to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *sarx* as a "genitive of production" indicates that these "**things**," i.e., "desires," or "various lust patterns" are "produced" by the sin nature. So, Paul is saying in Romans 8:5 that those Christians who are submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied with the desires "produced by" the sin nature and which wage war against the Christian's soul and new nature. The genitive of "production" is similar to a genitive of "source." However, the former suggests not only source but also involvement on the part of the sin nature in the sense that it is active by waging war against the soul of the Christian with the sinful desires it produces (Romans 7:22-23; 1 Peter 2:11).

Romans 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (NASB95)

"**But those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit**" is the "adversative" use of the conjunction *de*, which introduces a statement that presents a contrast with Paul's statement that those Christians who are submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature. He doesn't employ the conjunction *alla* since he does not want to convey a "strong" contrast. Rather, he uses *de* because he wants to convey a contrast but not a strong one since he wants to emphasize two alternatives or directions that the Christian can go in.

"**According to the Spirit**" is composed of the preposition *kata*, "**according to**" and the accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, "**the Spirit**."

The noun *pneuma* refers to the Holy Spirit. Again, the root meaning of *kata* is "down," which in our present context suggests submission to authority. The preposition *kata* is employed with the accusative form of the noun *pneuma*, "**the Spirit**" and denotes conformity to a particular authority. Therefore, those Christians who at any time exist in the state of being "in submission to" the Spirit will be preoccupied with the desires of the Spirit. Therefore, we will translate this prepositional phrase, "**in submission to the Spirit**."

"**The things**" is the definite article *ho*, which refers to spiritual desires produced by the Spirit in the believer.

"**Of the Spirit**" is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, which refers to the Holy Spirit.

The noun *pneuma* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the substantive use of the article, "**the things**" to which it stands related.

Therefore, the noun *pneuma* as a "genitive of production" indicates that these "**things**," i.e., "desires," are "produced by" the Spirit. So, Paul is saying in Romans 8:5 that those Christians who are submitting to the Spirit are preoccupied with the desires "produced by" the Spirit.

The genitive of "production" is similar to a genitive of "source." However, the former suggests not only source but also personal involvement on the part of the Holy Spirit. He not only is the source of these spiritual or godly desires in contrast to the sinful desires produced by the sin nature, but also the Spirit is actively involvement in producing these desires as well. In the same way that the sin nature produces sinful desires, which wage war against the soul of the Christian, the Holy Spirit produces godly or spiritual desires that He communicates to the Christian through the communication of the Word of God and prayer.

The question then arises, "what desires does the Spirit produce in the believer?" The answer is that the Spirit desires that the Christian take part in ministering to the body of Christ, experience fellowship, learn and apply the Word of God, pray, worship God, witness and grow to spiritual maturity. He puts in the Christian the desire to become like Christ. The Holy Spirit "produces" these desires in the believer. Therefore, the genitive of production indicates that the Spirit "produces" in the believer the desire to minister to the body of Christ, to experience fellowship, to learn and apply the Word of God, to pray, to worship God, to witness and grow to spiritual maturity and become like Christ. Also, we need to remember that the Scriptures not only teach that the Spirit produces these desires in the believer but that He also gives the believer the capacity to fulfill these desires. Now, when the Christian does not permit the Spirit to fulfill these desires, he is "grieving" the Spirit and "hindering" Him as well.

Now, in Romans 8:6, Paul teaches that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is temporal spiritual death, i.e., loss of fellowship with God whereas the mind-set produced by the Spirit is life, i.e., experiencing eternal life and peace.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

This statement advances upon Paul's statement in Romans 8:5 and intensifies it. In the previous statement in Romans 8:5, Paul teaches that those Christians who are in submission to the sin nature, occupy their minds with the desires of the sin nature whereas those who are in submission to the Spirit occupied their minds with desires of the Spirit.

Now, in Romans 8:6, Paul's statement advances upon his statement in verse 5 and intensifies what it means to be in submission to the sin nature and what it means to be in submission to the Spirit as a Christian.

In verse 5, he taught that the result of submitting to the sin nature is the occupation of one's mind with the sinful desires produced by the sin nature whereas in contrast

to this he teaches that the result of submitting to the Spirit is the occupation of one's mind with the godly desires produced by the Spirit. Now, in verse 6, he is going to advance upon this statement in verse 5 and intensify it in the sense that he is going to present the ultimate result of submitting to the sin nature in contrast with that of submitting to the Spirit.

"**The mind**" is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *phronema*, which occurs only four times in the Greek New Testament, Romans 8:6 twice and Romans 8:7 and 8:27. In Romans 8:27, the noun is used with reference to the Holy Spirit's personality in the sense of His thoughts, sovereign will, desires and wisdom. In Romans 8:6-7, the word is used with reference to the Christian since in context, Paul is teaching on the Christian's sanctification and is contrasting the believer who is out of fellowship because he is submitting to his nature with that of the Christian who is in fellowship because he is submitting to the Spirit.

Phronema in these verses refers to the content of the Christian's thought process and his manner of thinking rather than the mind itself. It denotes the direction and orientation of human thought or a person's "state of mind" or "mind-set." Therefore, in Romans 8:6, the noun *phronema* refers to the Christian's "mind-set" or "state of mind" or "mental attitude" and is used in relation to both the sin nature and the Spirit. Thus, Paul is saying that the "mind-set" or "mental attitude" produced by the sin nature is temporal spiritual death, i.e., loss of fellowship with God whereas the "mind-set" or "mental attitude" produced by the Spirit is experiencing eternal life and peace and thus experiencing fellowship with God.

"**Set on**" does not translate a word in the Greek text of Romans 8:6 since the translators interpret that Paul is using the figure of ellipsis meaning that he deliberately omits the third person present active indicative form of the verb *phroneo*, though it is implied. However, the fact that the noun *sarx* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that this mind-set is "produced by" the sin nature indicates that there is not need for the verb *phroneo* since the thought in the Greek text is complete.

"**The flesh**" is the articular genitive feminine singular form of the noun *sarx*, which refers to the sin nature from the perspective of its location in the Christian.

The noun *sarx* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the noun *phronema*, "**the mind-set**," to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *sarx* as a "genitive of production" indicates that this "mind-set" or "state of mind" is "produced" by the sin nature. It is produced by the sin nature because Paul taught in Romans 8:5 that those Christians submitting to the sin nature are preoccupied in their thinking with the desires produced by the sin nature. Therefore, the mind-set "produced by" the sin nature is the direct result of the Christian being preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature, which culminates in a loss of fellowship with God.

"**Death**" is the nominative masculine singular form of the *thanatos*, which refers to "temporal spiritual death" or in other words, "loss of fellowship" with God.

Spiritual death for the unbeliever is called "real spiritual death." Paul is speaking in the context of the Christian's sanctification. Therefore, since "real spiritual death" is used exclusively for the unbeliever and "temporal spiritual death" is used exclusively of the Christian, the latter is being referred to here by Paul in Romans 8:6.

"Temporal spiritual death" or "loss of fellowship" with God takes place when the believer commits mental, verbal or overt acts of sin as a result of obeying the desires of the sin nature.

There is a distinction between the terms "relationship" and "fellowship." Since our relationship with God is eternal, it can never be lost. Meanwhile, our fellowship with God, in time, can be lost due to sin and is only restored through the confession of sin to the Father (1 John 1:9).

Fellowship is made possible because of our eternal relationship and is thus taking advantage of that eternal relationship. Fellowship with the Lord demands that the believer confess any known sin to the Father when necessary in order to be restored to fellowship.

The believer, therefore, must "confess" any known sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship.

1 John 1:9 If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing. (Author's translation)

Immediately upon confessing his sins to the Father, the Christian is automatically restored to fellowship with Him. He is restored to fellowship because of the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. Thus, the Father is faithful and just to forgive the believer his sins.

This fellowship is maintained by bringing one's thoughts into obedience to the teaching of Jesus Christ. This constitutes obeying the commands of Ephesians 5:18 to be influenced by means of the Spirit and Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul. Therefore, obedience to the Word of God will enable the believer to experience fellowship with God, which is synonymous with experiencing sanctification (1 John 2:3-6).

Paul spoke of "temporal spiritual death" i.e., "loss of fellowship with God in Romans 6:16, 7:9-10, 13 and 24. In this passage, he teaches that if the Roman Christians if they present themselves as slaves to the sin nature then this will result in temporal spiritual death.

In Romans 7:9-10, 13 and 24, Paul teaches that his inability as a Christian to render perfect obedience to the Law resulted in him losing fellowship with God or in other words, it led to his experiencing "temporal spiritual death."

Paul develops further the concept of "temporal spiritual death" for the believer in Romans 8:5-13.

Romans 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. (NASB95)

"**But the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace**" presents a contrast with Paul's statement that the mind-set produced by the sin nature is as an eternal spiritual truth, temporal spiritual death. He wants to convey a contrast but not a strong one since both temporal spiritual death and experiencing eternal life and the peace of God can both take place in the Christian depending upon his mental attitude.

"**The mind**" is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *phronema*, which once again means, "mind set" but this time it is used in relation to the Spirit, which functions as a genitive of production indicating that this mind-set is "produced by" the Spirit.

"**On the Spirit**" is the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma*, which refers to the Holy Spirit.

The noun *pneuma* functions as a "genitive of production" meaning that it "produces" the noun *phronema*, "**the mind-set**," to which it stands related. Therefore, the noun *pneuma* as a "genitive of production" indicates that this "mind-set" or "state of mind" is "produced" by the Spirit. It is produced by the Spirit because Paul taught in Romans 8:5 that those Christians submitting to the Spirit are preoccupied in their thinking with the desires produced by the Spirit. Therefore, the mind-set "produced by" the Spirit is the direct result of the Christian being preoccupied with the desires produced by Spirit, which results in experiencing eternal life and the peace of God.

"**Life**" is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *zoe*, which refers to experiencing the eternal life the believer received from the Holy Spirit in regeneration the moment the believer exercised faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and was regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

"**Peace**" is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *eirene*, which refers to peace with God in an objective sense.

In Romans 8:6, the noun *eirene* refers to experiencing the permanent and eternal peace treaty that God established between Himself and the justified sinner through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ and became their personal possession forever, the moment they were declared justified by Him through faith in Jesus Christ. The word refers to the reconciliation between the sinner and God through faith alone in Christ alone (Acts 10:36; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:14, 15, 17).

This reconciliation is presented in the gospel message that God has made a peace treaty with the entire human race and the terms of that peace treaty is accepting the Gospel message through faith alone in Christ alone.

True peace is having a relationship with God, which can only be acquired by an unregenerate human being through faith alone in Christ alone. After salvation, eirene for the believer is the tranquil or serene state or condition of the soul of the believer who obeys the Father's will, which is revealed by the Spirit through the communication of the Word of God.

The believer whose mind-set is produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit will experience this peace.

Like the church age believer's salvation and sanctification, the peace of God is accomplished in the believer in three stages: (1) Positionally: The believer has peace with God because of his eternal union and identification with Jesus Christ, which received through faith alone in Christ alone. (2) Experientially: The believer can experience the peace of God by being obedient to the Word of God. (3) Ultimately: The believer is guaranteed that he will experience permanently the peace of God in a resurrection body.

By "positionally" I mean that God views the believer as being at peace with Him as a result of faith in Christ and his eternal union with His Son, which sets up the "potential" to experience this peace in time. It also sets up the "guarantee" or experiencing permanently this peace when the believer receives his resurrection body.

After salvation, experiencing the peace of God is only a "potential" since it demands obedience to God whereas the believer is "guaranteed" that he will experience the peace of God permanently in a resurrection body.

The believer is eternally united with the Lord Jesus Christ at the moment of conversion through the Baptism of the Spirit (Galatians 3:26-28) and has peace positionally at the moment of conversion.

This eternal union with Jesus Christ serves as the basis for the believer having the privilege and opportunity to have fellowship with God. After being delivered from sin, Satan, his cosmic system and eternal condemnation, in respect to his self, the believer can experience the peace of God in time by having fellowship with God, which is accomplished by obedience to God's Word. When the believer is obeying the Spirit's voice, which is heard through the communication of the Word of God, he enables the Holy Spirit to reproduce the peace of God in him. Therefore, reproducing the peace of God in the believer is one of the objectives of God the Holy Spirit in the process of experiential sanctification and is thus produced by Him (Galatians 5:22-23).

Therefore, in Romans 8:6, the noun *eirene* refers to the peace of God that the believer can experience by having a mind-set produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit. These desires would include fellowship, learning and applying the Word of God, executing the Father's will, unity, serving, and praying.

Therefore, we can see from Paul's statements here in Romans 8:5-6 and that experiencing fellowship with God and losing that fellowship is based upon the believer's mental attitude. The believer whose mental attitude is produced by the sin nature as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the sin nature will experience loss of fellowship with God. While on the other hand, the believer whose mental attitude is produced by the Spirit as a result of being preoccupied with the desires produced by the Spirit will experience eternal life and peace and thus fellowship with God.

The Filling of the Spirit vs. the Indwelling of the Spirit

The believer must be aware of the fact that there is a distinction between the "indwelling" of the Spirit and the "filling" of the Spirit. The former is taught in John 14:16, Romans 8:9, 11, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:18-20, 2 Corinthians 6:16 and 1 John 2:20, 26-28.

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer in order to provide a temple for the indwelling of the Shekinah Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, which serves as the principle of victory over the indwelling old sin nature. He provides the believer the spiritual capacity to understand the Word of God, since the Spirit serves as the believer's true teacher and mentor in place of the absent Christ.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit occurs at the moment of conversion and is *permanent* meaning it cannot be lost (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16). The Scriptures teach that the Spirit still indwells Christians when they sin indicating that the indwelling of the Spirit can never be lost due to sin, which is unlike the filling of the Spirit which can be lost due to sin but regained through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) and maintained by obedience (1 John 2:3-6).

That the Spirit still indwells a believer when they sin is implied in that in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Paul commands the Corinthian believers, some of which were involved in gross sexual immorality, to flee immorality on the basis that the Spirit indwells their bodies.

The indwelling of the Spirit is "permanent" because the Lord Jesus taught that the Spirit will be with them forever, thus obedience is not a condition for the indwelling of the Spirit.

Only in the Old Testament could the indwelling of the Spirit be lost as was the case with King Saul. In fact, in Psalm 51:11, David prayed that God would not take away the Spirit from him. So, prior to the day of Pentecost the indwelling of the Spirit was temporary whereas from that day on until the conclusion of the church age, it is permanent.

The indwelling presence of the Spirit in the Christian is evidence of the Christian's justification. It is also proof of the Christian's salvation and of his

position in Christ and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a sign that the Christian is a child of God. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve as assurance for the Christian that he or she is eternally secure. It also serves as encouragement to the Christian when he or she endures underserved suffering. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves also as motivation for the Christian to grow to spiritual maturity. It is the basis for the Christian to give number one priority to his relationship with God rather giving it to people. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a reminder to the Christian that he has divine omnipotence available to him to grow to maturity and to endure undeserved suffering. It is also a guarantee that the Christian possesses eternal life and will live with God forever. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit is the principle of victory over the old sin nature. The "filling" of the Spirit is the function of victory over the old sin nature. The word "principle" means that the "indwelling" is the reason or the basis for our victory over the old sin nature. The word "function" refers to how we are to operate to gain a moment-by-moment victory in our lives over the old sin nature.

The "filling" of the Spirit is "dynamic," whereas the "indwelling" is "static." The Christian is commanded to be "filled" with the Spirit whereas he is never commanded to be "indwelt" by the Spirit. When you are filled with the Spirit you are appropriating by faith the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

Confession of Sin and the Filling of the Spirit

The confession of sin after conversion is absolutely essential in order to be influenced by the Spirit and to experience fellowship with God. 1 John 1:9 teaches the importance of confession in relation to being restored to fellowship with God. We cannot experience fellowship with God unless we are influenced by means of the Spirit.

1 John 1:9 If any of us does, at any time confess our sins, He is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of each one of us, in other words, to purify each one of us from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action. (Author's translation)

1 John 1:9 contains a fifth class conditional statement which communicates a spiritual principle pertaining to experiencing fellowship with the Father which is in addition to the fifth class conditional statements presented in 1 John 1:6-8.

Verse 9 is the fourth in a series of six fifth class conditional statements which pertain to experiencing fellowship with God (1 John 1:8, 9, 10; 2:1). Each of these fifth class conditional clauses consist of three pairs that can be divided into two: (1) Negative statement in the apodosis (1 Jn. 1:6, 8, 10). (2) Positive statement in the

apodosis (1 Jn. 1:7, 9; 2:1). The negative statements 1 John 1:6, 8 and 10 reflect the claims of the false teachers located in geographical region of the recipients of this epistle whereas the positive statements in 1 John 1:7, 9 and 2:1 reflect the apostolic teaching with regards to fellowship with God.

The recipients of this epistle were located in the Roman province of Asia. The occasion of the epistle itself and the context of the entire book clearly indicates that they were already believers in Jesus Christ who were experiencing fellowship with God and each other. However, they were now being exposed to Docetic and Cerinthian Gnostic teaching that denied the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. John emphatically refutes this teaching in the prologue of the epistle. If they believed this false teaching, it would prevent them from continuing to have fellowship with God since fellowship with God is based upon the Person, Work and Life of the Lord Jesus Christ. This false teaching the apostle John was seeking to protect the recipients of this epistle from, were propagating an "incipient" form of Gnosticism since it was not a full blown threat to orthodox Christianity in the mid to late part of the first century as it did become in the middle of the second century.

John's teaching in the prologue and throughout the book concerning the person of Christ is designed to protect his readers from these heretical teachings and to ensure that their fellowship with God and other believers might continue or be maintained. That John's readers were already experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Son and that this letter is a protection from the false teaching concerning the person of Jesus Christ is indicated in 1 John 2:13-15, 21, 26-29, 3:7-9, 4:1-3, 5:9-11, 13. Therefore, John's teaching in 1 John 1:6-2:2 is designed to protect the Christian community from these false teachers.

1 John 1:6-2:2 are also connected to 1 John 1:5 which asserts that God is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in the state of being light. Then, John states in emphatic terms that there is absolutely no darkness in His nature, none whatsoever.

1 John 1:6-2:2 presents the implications of these assertions in verse 5. These verses are an inference from verse 5 and communicate spiritual principles with regards to fellowship with God. Specifically, they present spiritual principles which the recipients of this epistle can employ for themselves in order to determine if they are in fact experiencing fellowship with God or not. These principles are designed to protect the recipients of this epistle from the false teaching which was being propagated where they lived.

Therefore, in 1 John 1:9, the apostle John solemnly issues another fifth class conditional statement. Its purpose is to persuade the Christian community reading this letter to continue making personal application of this fifth class conditional statement. Doing so would ensure that they will continue to experience fellowship with the Trinity. It is a reminder to them of something they were already doing. It is designed to encourage them to continue practicing this principle presented in verse

9. This fifth class conditional statement contains a protasis and an apodosis as well as a result clause. The relationship between the protasis and apodosis is "cause-effect." The cause: "**If any of us does, at any time confess our sins**." The effect: "**He is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of each one of us, in other words, to purify each one of us from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action**."

This fifth class conditional in 1 John 1:9 asserts that if any believer does, at any time confess their sins, He (God the Father) is, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as being faithful as well as just to forgive these sins for the benefit of the believer. He then describes this forgiveness as purifying the believer from each and every unrighteous thought, word or action.

Thus, 1 John 1:9 stands in contrast to 1 John 1:8 in that confessing one's sins to the Father is the complete opposite of a believer entering into the claim that they have never experienced the guilt of sin. It is the very opposite of deceiving oneself into thinking that you have not committed a sin.

This confession of sin to the Father is to be in the privacy of their royal priesthood and does not refer to the public confession or acknowledgement of sin. This is indicated by the fact that John is clearly informing his readers that they must confess their sins to the Father, which would be a matter between the believer and the Father and no one else.

The believer is adjusted to the holiness of God when they apply the principle stated in 1 John 1:9. It is absolutely essential to apply this principle and confess their sins to the Father in order to experience fellowship with the Father since He is holy and does not tolerate sin or evil. The Lord Jesus Christ's substitutionary death on the cross is the basis for the forgiveness of the believer's sins both in the positional, experiential and perfective sense.

It is extremely important for the believer to understand that this verb *homologeō* in 1 John 1:9 has no emotional connotation attached to it and was used in classical Greek for confessing one's guilt in court. The Bible does not teach that the believer is to feel sorry for their sins but rather they are to confess their sins to the Father. God is not concerned with the believer emoting, but rather God is interested in what His Son did at that cross of Calvary 2000 years ago when every sin in human history, past, present and future was imputed to His Son and was judged by His justice. This is why the Scriptures state in Hebrews 8:11 that God remembers the believer's sins no more. His Son paid the penalty for those sins, which was His death. However, we must keep in mind that as the believer grows up spiritually committing sin will become more and more repulsive. Eventually, God wants the believer to adopt His view of sin and not take joy in committing sin.

In 1 John 1:9, the apostle John asserts that the Father is characterized as being faithful and just. By "faithful," he means that the Father firmly adheres to His promises to forgive sin when the believer confesses any sin to Him.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the adjective "faithful," "strict or thorough in the performance of duty; true to one's word, promises, vows; steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; reliable, trusted, or believed; adhering or true to fact or an original." They also state, "faithful implies long-continued and steadfast fidelity to whatever one is bound to by a pledge, duty or obligation.

If we paraphrase these definitions, we could say that the Father forgives the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because: (1) He is true to His promise in His Word to forgive the sins of those who express faith in His Son. (2) He is steady in allegiance to His promise of the forgiveness of sins.

The Father is *pistos*, "**faithful**" to forgive the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because the Father always fulfills His promise and His agreement in the New Covenant with Israel to forgive sins based upon the merits of the death of His Jesus Christ on the cross. Those Jews who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone enter into that New Covenant promise and agreement that provides the forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:34). Those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah.

The believer's confession of sins to the Father points the Father's attention to His New covenant agreement and promise to forgive sin. The believer's confession of their personal sins to the Father obligates the Father to execute His promise of the forgiveness of sins because the believer has met the requirements of this agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

Faithfulness is one of the attributes of God as related to moral beings (Deut. 7:9; 32:4; Lam. 3:23; Isa. 49:7; Hos. 11:12; Ps. 25:10; 33:4; 89:1-8; 91:4; 96:13; 98:3; 100:5; 119:75; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 2 Tim. 2:13; Jn. 1:9; Heb. 10:23; 1 Pet. 4:19; Rev. 19:11). It is one of the relative attributes of God meaning that it is related to God's relationship to men. Faithfulness characterizes God's loyalty to His covenant people Israel and the Church.

Faithfulness is one of the relative attributes of God. There are two kinds of attributes: (1) Absolute or intrinsic: those attributes that God possesses of Himself such as life and love. (2) Relative: those attributes related to His creation and especially men and angels.

For example, by nature God is truth but when God relates that truth to man, God's truth becomes faithfulness. Love is one of God's intrinsic or absolute attributes but when His love is directed towards sinners, it becomes grace and mercy and compassion.

God is faithful to His promises found in the Old Testament, which speak of the forgiveness of sins. The promise of the forgiveness of sins is of course rooted in the Old Testament (Is. 43:25; 53:11; Ps. 103:12-13; Ezek. 36:24-26; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 7:18-20). In Christ, all the promises of the Old Testament prophets are fulfilled including the forgiveness of sins. The Lord is faithful to His promises in the Old Testament and specifically the New covenant to forgive sins. This is what Paul is referring to here in 1 John 1:9.

The voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of Jesus Christ on the cross paid the penalty for every sin in human history-past, present and future and is the basis for the forgiveness of sins (1 John 2:12). The Lord in the institution of the Lord's Table speaks of this promise of the forgiveness of sins, which is based upon His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross, which is denoted by the phrase "My blood." (Matt. 26:28)

Therefore, the promise of the forgiveness of sins is related to this substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:7). The Father remains faithful to the unfaithful Christian with regards to His promise to forgive sin, and which forgiveness of sins was based upon His death on the cross.

The apostles proclaimed that this promise of the forgiveness of sins is appropriated through faith in the Lord Jesus because in Him is the fulfillment of all the promises that were made through the Old Testament prophets (Acts 2:14-41; 10:33-44; 13:16-39; 26:1-18; 2 Cor. 1:18-20). It is through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone that an individual receives the forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness of sins is based entirely upon the merits of the Lord Jesus and His finished work on the cross and for Christ's sake the Christian's sins forgiven (Rom. 4:1-17; 11:6; Gal. 2:16; 3:5-9; Eph. 2:1-9; Titus 3:5-7).

The believer is no longer under judgment because of their faith in Jesus Christ which took place at their conversion which resulted in their being declared justified by the Father (John 3:18; 5:24). The believer is no longer under condemnation because of his union with Christ through the baptism of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1; Col. 2:13-14). God remembers the believer's sins no more because of the merits of His Son Jesus Christ's death on the cross (Ps. 51:1-9; Heb. 8:12; 10:17).

The New Covenant to Israel is mentioned by our Lord in instituting the communion service in Luke 22:20 and by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:25. Although the church is not Israel, she still benefits from the promise of forgiveness of sins which is offered in the New Covenant. Those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah. A Gentile benefits from the

promise of the forgiveness of sins in the New Covenant when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Paul's teaching in Romans makes clear that both Jew and Gentile sinners can receive the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of righteousness when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is of the Jews not only in the sense that the Savior Jesus Christ is a Jew but also the promise of salvation and the forgiveness of sins is rooted in the New Covenant promises to Israel.

The church age believer is restored to fellowship with God when they confess their sins to the Father because He is faithful to His covenant and His promise to provide for the forgiveness of sins, which is based upon His Son's death on the cross.

After conversion, the believer experiences, that which is true of themselves positionally when they confess their sins to the Father. God is faithful to His covenant and promise to forgive the believer's sins because He was propitiated meaning He is totally and completely satisfied with His Son's death on the cross as the payment for every sin in human history-past, present and future (1 John 2:1-2).

Therefore, the believer who confesses their sins to the Father is in a sense reminding the Father of His covenant promise to forgive sins (1 John 1:9). This of course is from the human perspective since God does not need to be reminded. The Father is true to His promise to forgive the sins of those who express faith in His Son. His steadfast fidelity to His promise in His Word to forgive sins obligates the Father to forgive the believer their sins when they confess them since the believer has met the requirements of the agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

John asserts in 1 John 1:9 that God is "just" in the sense that the execution of His judgments of His government are in perfect agreement with His perfect character and nature and are also based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. Therefore, He is "just" to execute the law of the forgiveness of sins that is based upon the merits of the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. It also denotes the agreement between the Father's nature and His acts.

The adjective *dikaios* here in 1 John 1:9 should be translated "just," rather than "righteous" since the former more accurately expresses the meaning of the word in the Greek.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the adjective "righteous," "characterized by uprightness or morality; morally right or justifiable; acting in an upright, moral way; virtuous." They define the adjective "just," "guided by truth, reason, justice and fairness; done or made according to principle; equitable; proper; based on right; rightful, lawful; agreeable to truth or fact; true; correct; given or awarded rightly; deserved; as a sentence, punishment, reward; in accordance with standards or requirements; proper or right; especially in Biblical use, righteous."

If we paraphrase the definition of "just" we could say that the Father is *dikaios*, "just" to forgive the believer their personal sins when they confess them to Him because: (1) He is guided by His attribute of truth, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins to those who have believed in His Son. (2) He is guided by His attribute of justice, which executes the judgment of the forgiveness of sins because the righteous demands of the Father have been propitiated by the merits of His Son Jesus Christ's death on the cross. (3) He always operates according to His perfect principles. (4) He is equitable because His righteous demands have been propitiated by the merits of His Son Jesus Christ's death on the cross. (5) He always does everything based upon what is right, rightful and lawful and it is right, rightful and lawful to forgive the believer's his sins when he confesses them because the Father's righteous demands that the believer's sins be judged has been propitiated by the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. (6) He always does what is agreeable to His attribute of truth, which proclaims the forgiveness of sins to those who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone. (7) He rightly rewards the believer with the forgiveness of their sins experientially when they confess them to the Father because the Father's righteous demands that the believer's sins be judged has been propitiated by the death of His Son Jesus Christ on the cross. (8) He always operates according to His perfect standards and principles because of perfect holy character and nature.

The Father is "**just**" to forgive the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him because the Father always fulfills His promise and His agreement in the New Covenant with Israel to forgive sins based upon the merits of the death of His Jesus Christ on the cross. Those Jews who have expressed faith alone in Christ alone enter into that New Covenant promise and agreement that provides the forgiveness of sins (cf. Jer. 31:34). Those Gentiles who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior are engrafted into regenerate Jews according to Romans 11:17. Consequently, these regenerate Gentiles benefit from the New Covenant promise stipulating the forgiveness of sins to those who trust in the Messiah.

The believer's confession of sins to the Father points the Father's attention to His New covenant agreement and promise to forgive sin. The believer's confession of their personal sins to the Father obligates the Father to execute His promise of the forgiveness of sins because the believer has met the requirements of this agreement at the moment of justification when they expressed faith alone in Christ alone.

The verb *aphiemi*, "forgive" in 1 John 1:9 pertains to removing the guilt resulting from wrongdoing. It speaks of the Father removing the guilt from the believer as a result of the believer sinning against Him. It expresses the idea that the Father lets go of the obligation that the believer owes Him as a result of sinning against Him. It means to release someone from the guilt or penalty of sin as one would a financial debt. To forgive means to give someone a release from the wrong that he has done to you. It means to give up any right of retaliation.

Again, the basis for releasing the believer from this obligation is Jesus Christ's death on the cross which satisfied the demands of the Father's holiness that required that sin be judged and bear the full brunt of His righteous indignation.

1 John 1:9 ends with John asserting that the Father purifies the believer from all unrighteousness or each and every unrighteous thought, word and action. This is an explanatory statement which expresses the idea that the Father forgiving the believer their sins when they confess these sins to Him can also be described as purifying them from all unrighteousness. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that all sin is unrighteousness. It can also be supported by the fact that when the Father forgives the believer their sins, He is in effect purifying them "experientially" from the guilt of sin which is described by John as "unrighteousness." They are purified "positionally" and in a "perfective" sense as we have noted earlier.

Jesus Christ's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths is the basis for the Father purifying the believer when they confess their sins to Him. In other words, the Father purifies them when they confess their sins to Him because His Son Jesus Christ's substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross was the payment for their sins. They propitiated the Father whose holiness demanded that they be judged for committing these sins against Him.

In 1 John 1:9, the noun *adikia* means "unrighteousness" and is used to describe the sins of the believer. The word is antithetical in meaning to the noun *dikaiosune*, "righteousness," which is a general term for "virtue" and "integrity" of character, thus, *adikia* is the state of possessing no virtue or integrity.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines "integrity": (1) Soundness of and adherence to moral principle and character; uprightness; honesty (2) The state of being whole, entire, or undiminished (3) A sound, unimpaired, or perfect condition.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines "virtue": (1) Moral excellence; goodness; righteousness (2) Conformity of one's life and conduct to moral and ethical principles; uprightness, rectitude.

Therefore, the noun *adikia* describes the believer's sins as thoughts, words or actions that do not adhere to the will of God, and that are not upright, honest, perfectly whole, thus leaving them in an unsound, impaired and in a bad condition. It describes these thoughts, words and actions as having no virtue in the sense that they have no moral excellence, goodness, and do not conform to the will of God.

Some believers today argue that the confession of sin is not related to the filling of the Spirit. As we have noted, 1 John 1:9 teaches the Christian to confess their sins to the Father in order to be restored to fellowship with God.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (ESV)

1 John 1:9 But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. (NET)

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB95)

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV84)

If you notice, there is no explicit mention of the filling of the Spirit in this verse. There is only the mention that if the Christian confesses their sins to the Father. Since 1 John 1:9 is a part of a discussion found in 1 John 1:5-2:2 concerning sin in relation to fellowship, John is teaching that if the Christian confesses their sins to the Father, they will be restored to fellowship with God. Therefore, this has caused some to argue that the confession of sin does not restore the filling of the Spirit since there is no explicit reference to the Spirit in 1 John 1:9 or anywhere in that context.

However, this is an argument from silence and very dangerous since there are many truths in the Bible which are revealed through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture but are not revealed in one particular verse explicitly. Take for example the doctrines of the Trinity and the Rapture. No orthodox or evangelic Christian today would deny the doctrine of the "Trinity" even though the term appears nowhere in the Bible. They also would not deny the rapture of the church even though the word "rapture" is not in the Bible.

So, we can say that even though there is no explicit reference to the term "Trinity" in the Bible, this does not mean that the doctrine of the Trinity is false since if we can compare Scripture with Scripture, it is clear that this term accurately describes the teaching of Scripture. In the same way, even though the word "rapture" does not appear in Scripture, it is clearly one of the great truths in the Bible when we compare Scripture with Scripture.

Just as the doctrines of the rapture and the Trinity are known through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture and not through one particular verse of Scripture so the doctrine of the confession of sin to restore the filling of the Spirit is not found in one particular verse of Scripture but is revealed through a comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

So, the question arises, "Does the confession of sins to God the Father by the Christian restore the filling of the Spirit?" To answer this, we need to answer the question, "Is the filling of the Spirit related to fellowship with God?" The answer to that question is, it must, since to have fellowship with God the Father and the Son one would also be experiencing fellowship with the Holy Spirit. If one is experiencing fellowship with the Father, one is also experiencing it with the Son and the Spirit.

Furthermore, Paul taught in 2 Timothy 3:16 that "all Scripture is God-breathed!" Peter taught in 2 Peter 1:20-21 that the Holy Spirit inspired the Bible. Thus,

obviously 1 John 1:9 was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now, if the believer applies 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sin to the Father, they have just obeyed the Holy Spirit since He is the member of the Trinity teaching the Christian to apply this verse. So, if the Christian does what 1 John 1:9 says to do and confesses their sin, they are filled with Spirit since they are in effect, being influenced by the Holy Spirit since He is the one speaking through John in 1 John 1:9.

This leads us to another question, "What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?" Well, first, it is directly related to the Word of God. To obey the Word of God is to obey the Holy Spirit since He inspired the Word of God and He speaks actively to the believer through the Bible regarding the Father's will for their lives.

The commands to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18 and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul in Colossians 3:16 are synonymous since each bears the same results: fellowship with the Father. This makes sense because we already established that the Spirit inspired the Word of God and thus speaks to the Christian through the Word.

The commands, "be filled with the Spirit" and "let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you," are synonymous because the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer through the communication of the Word of God regarding the Father's character and nature.

The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures, (2 Ti 3:16) makes them understandable to the believer, (John 16:13-16) guides the believer in the correct application of the Word of God and reproduces the character of Christ in the believer who obeys the Word of God (Gal 5:22-23). Therefore, by obeying the Word of God, you are obeying the voice of the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. (NASB95)

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (NASB95)

Now if one looks carefully at the results of obeying both of these commands, one can see that they are synonymous since they both produce psalms and hymns, spiritual songs, singing and thanksgiving to God.

Therefore, if the believer obeys the teaching of the Holy Spirit in 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sins to the Father, they will be filled with the Spirit since obedience to the Word of God is equivalent to obeying the Spirit. The latter inspired the former. In other words, if the believer obeys the teaching of the Holy Spirit in 1 John 1:9 and confesses their sins to the Father, they will be obeying the commands to be filled

with the Spirit and letting the Word of Christ richly dwell in your soul since both commands are synonymous.

This leads to another question, "Why did Paul in Colossians 3:16 not mention the Holy Spirit in that verse but does so in Ephesians 5:18?" The answer is simply that Paul wanted to emphasize the Holy Spirit's relationship to fellowship in Ephesians 5:18 whereas in Colossians 3:16 he wanted to emphasize the importance of the Word of God in relation to fellowship. So, if you look at both passages, Paul is emphasizing that the Bible is a living book in that the Spirit inspired it and is speaking actively to us in it.

One must realize that experiencing fellowship with God is in effect experiencing one's eternal relationship with the Triune God and one's union and identification with Jesus Christ. One must not blur the distinction between our eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God though both are obviously related. One also must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience.

When I say one must not blur the distinction between one's eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God I mean that though they are related, they are different. They are related because fellowship with God is experiencing one's eternal relationship with God. They are different in that sin does not cause one to lose one's eternal relationship with God, but it does cause one to lose fellowship with God.

Let me use an analogy. I entered the Wenstrom family at physical birth. When I disobeyed my parents, I lost fellowship with them. I was sent to my room. They didn't disown me, but they refused to have fellowship with me until I did two things. One I confessed I was wrong to them. Then, I had to do what I was told. The same is true in God's family, if we sin, God will not have fellowship with us. He doesn't disown us when we sin. He disciplines us because He loves us (Hebrews 12:4-11; Revelation 3:19). We are still in His family. When we confess our sins to our heavenly Father, we are restored to fellowship with Him and when we obey Him we maintain that fellowship with Him.

When I say, we must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience, mean that committing sin (mental, verbal, or overt) prevents us from experiencing our position in Christ as well as sanctification and yet it does not cause us to lose our position in Christ. In fact, to experience fellowship with God is to experience one's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Now, lastly, there are many metaphors in Scripture which speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. For instance, experiencing sanctification speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is experiencing being set apart to serve God exclusively. Fellowship with God speaks of experiencing one's relationship with God from the perspective that we are communing with God.

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John uses the term "abide" in his writings (1 John 2:6, 10) which is a reference to the Lord's Vine and the Branches Metaphor. Our Lord taught His disciples that He is the Vine, and they are the Branches and that like a branch cannot bear fruit apart from the vine so they cannot produce fruit apart from Him (John 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10). This term "abide" is a reference to fellowship with God.

John also uses the term "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7) which speaks of fellowship with God from the perspective that it is living according to God's holy standards. In 1 John 1:5 he says that "God is light" which is a reference to the fact that as to His character and nature, God is holy. So, the believer is living according to God's holy standards when they are in fellowship with God. God's holy standards are found in the Word of God.

So, the filling of the Spirit and fellowship with God are not mutually exclusive. They are inextricably related. In fact, experiencing one's sanctification, and walking in the light and abiding in Christ or His Word are also inextricably tied to each other. They all speak of experiencing fellowship with God from different perspectives. Thus, when a believer confesses their sins, they are not only restored to fellowship with God, but they are filled with the Spirit since to be in fellowship with God demands obedience to God's Word and the Holy Spirit inspired God's Word and speaks actively to the believer through the Word. They are also experiencing sanctification and are walking in the light, i.e., living according to God's holy standards.

The Results of the Filling of the Spirit

The results of being filled by means of the Spirit are many. First of all, the believer can now produce divine good of intrinsic value (Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:1-8; 1 Corinthians 3:11-14). The divine good produced by the Holy Spirit in the obedient believer will result in rewards for the believer at the Bema Seat Evaluation (1 Corinthians 3:11-14). Christ is magnified in the inner life of the believer (2 Corinthians 3:3; Philippians 1:20-21). Christ is "**glorified**" in the believer's human body (John 7:39 cf. 16:14; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The believer is able to imitate God (Ephesians 5:1-2). Christ "**formed**" in you, which is a reference to the character of Christ (Galatians 4:19). Christ "**dwelling in the heart**" of the believer which is a reference to the Word of Christ dominating one's thinking (Ephesians 3:16-17). Christ being "**exalted**" in the body of the believer, which is a reference to the character of Christ being manifested through the believer's physical body (Philippians 2:1-2). This manifestation of the character of Christ in the life of the believer is called the "**fruit of the Spirit**" (Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:1-8).

Another result of the filling of the Spirit or more accurately being influenced by the Spirit is that God the Holy Spirit controls the believer's soul and is governing

the believer's decision making process and decisions (Galatians 5:16). The believer's new nature becomes operational (Romans 13:14; 2 Corinthians 5:17a; Galatians 3:27; 6:15; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; 2 Peter 1:4) and divine power is as well (Ephesians 3:16, 20; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 1:11). The believer who is influenced by means of the Spirit is experiencing his union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session. He is experiencing his sanctification and salvation or in other words, his deliverance from the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system.

The believer now has the capacity to execute the plan of God the Father for his or her life, which is to become like Christ. Also, the believer can now truly worship God (John 4:24). The believer who is filled with the Spirit or influenced by means of the Spirit is truly spiritual and is experiencing fellowship with God (1 Corinthians 2:11-14). The soul of the believer who is being influenced by the means of the Spirit is protected from Satanic influence and false doctrine and the influence of the sin nature. It is also protected against legalism as well as arrogance, self-righteousness, self-deception, and self-absorption.

Sins by the Believer against the Holy Spirit

There are two types of sin committed by the unbeliever against God the Holy Spirit: (1) "**Blasphemy**" against the Spirit (Matthew 12:14-32) (2) "**Resistance**" of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).

There are three sins by the believer against the Holy Spirit: (1) "**Lying**" to God the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3) (2) "**Grieving**" the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) (3) "**Quenching**" the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Blasphemy of the Spirit

The Bible teaches that there is an unpardonable sin or a sin which cannot never be forgiven. The Lord stated that the blasphemy of the Spirit will not be forgiven in Matthew 12:22-32. What does this mean?

Matthew 12:22 Then a demon-possessed man {who was} blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. 23 All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?" 24 But when the Pharisees heard {this} they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons." 25 And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? 27 If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast {them} out?

For this reason, they will be your judges. 28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong {man?} and then he will plunder his house. 30 He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters. 31 Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the {age} to come." (NASB95)

There is confusion as to whether or not the blasphemy of the Spirit can take place in our day and age or is it exclusive to the First Advent of Christ.

Some great theologians such as Lewis Sperry Chafer write that this sin only takes place during the First Advent of Christ when He was physically present on earth.

Chafer in effect states, and many follow his interpretation of this passage, that the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit was unique to Christ's First Advent and was the attributing the miracles of Christ to the devil rather than the Holy Spirit, thus defaming the perfect integrity of the Spirit's witness concerning Christ.

I know many great Bible teachers who when you ask them, "What is the unpardonable sin?" they usually reply, "It is blaspheming the Holy Spirit" or "It is the sin of attributing to the devil the works of the Holy Spirit and could only take place during the First Advent of Christ."

First of all, I believe this interpretation was in response to the false claim by some that you can commit a sin that cannot be forgiven. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven except for the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior over a lifetime.

People go the eternal Lake of Fire because they choose to and not because of their sins since the penalty for the entire human race-past, present and future was paid for by Jesus Christ on the cross. The unbeliever's sins are never mentioned at the Great White Throne Judgment of Unbelievers, but rather their own inferior human works performed in self-righteous arrogance. This is according to Revelation 20:11-15.

So, the Scriptures emphatically teach that the only sin that can't be forgiven and that sends a person to the eternal Lake of Fire is the rejection of Jesus Christ as one's own personal Savior. The sin of rejecting Christ as Savior is the reason why people will end up in the eternal Lake of Fire forever and ever. This is not the will of God though because the will of God is that all men be saved. God's attitude toward the entire human race is that He desires all to believe in His Son Jesus Christ (John 3:16-17; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).

Secondly, as I noted earlier many expositors state that the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit was unique to Christ's First Advent and was the attributing the miracles of

Christ to the devil rather than the Holy Spirit, thus defaming the perfect integrity of the Spirit's witness of Christ.

When I say unique, I mean that at no time in history have these conditions ever existed where Christ was on the earth performing miracles by means of the Spirit. These expositors are missing the point and the principle, which our Lord is relating in this passage. It is the rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning the Person of Christ at the point of hearing the Gospel for salvation that is blasphemous and unpardonable and not simply attributing the miracles of Christ to the devil.

To say that the blasphemy of the Spirit only took place during the First Advent of Christ is diminishing the rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning Christ in subsequent dispensations such as the church age. In other words, it is just as much blasphemous today to reject the Spirit's witness concerning Christ during this dispensation as it was during the First Advent!

To say that the blasphemy of the Spirit was attributing Christ's miracles to the devil is putting undo emphasis on the rejection of the miracles rather than their rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning Christ as their Messiah.

Remember the miracles of Christ were to demonstrate that He was the Jewish Messiah since the Jews require a sign according to 1 Corinthians 1:22. The Jews rejection of Christ's miracles then revealed an even deeper problem among them and that was their negative attitude toward the Spirit's witness concerning Him. The Spirit witnessed that Christ was the Messiah by performing the miracles for the humanity of Christ. The Spirit employed miracles to convict the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

He doesn't operate that way today because Christ now sits at the right hand of the Father. He no longer employs miracles to witness to the unbeliever that the Lord Jesus is the Messiah since the Lord no longer resides on planet earth but at the right hand of the Father.

So, blaspheming the Spirit is not a particular act of sin but rather a negative attitude towards the Spirit's witness concerning Christ that extends over a lifetime. It cannot be forgiven because it is the rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning Christ in common grace over a lifetime.

If you reject the Spirit's repeated attempts over a lifetime to witness that Jesus is the Christ, then you will go to the Lake of Fire. I say it is the rejection of the Spirit's witness of Christ over a lifetime because there were many times before we became born-again and saved that we rejected the Spirit's witness concerning Christ in common grace.

God is patient, He will offer the Gospel to the unbeliever throughout their lifetime as we noted in 2 Peter 3:9. We have all been hostile towards God before salvation, were we not? (Colossians 1:19-21)

We have all rejected Christ before being declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ and then changed our attitude at some point and trusted in Him as Savior. Therefore, the blasphemy of the Spirit is an attitude that extends over a lifetime that rejects what the Holy Spirit has to say about Jesus Christ and can occur in any dispensation.

The blasphemy of the Spirit is a lifelong, antagonistic and hostile mental attitude towards the Holy Spirit's witness regarding the Person and Work of Christ at the point of hearing the Gospel for salvation and is not merely attributing the miracles of Christ to the devil. If you reject Christ as Savior, you are rejecting in effect the witness of the Spirit and thus calling the Spirit a liar.

The blasphemy of the Spirit is a lifelong negative attitude towards the Spirit's work in common grace. The problem was not that the Pharisees rejected the miracles and attributed His miracles to the kingdom of darkness but rather the problem was their negative attitude toward Christ.

It is not attributing the miracles to the kingdom of darkness that cannot be forgiven but rather the lifelong rejection of the Spirit's trustworthy witness concerning Christ at the point of hearing the Gospel for salvation. This is why the Lord said that the blasphemy of the Spirit couldn't be forgiven.

Thirdly, is it any more blasphemous to reject Christ then as it is today? Is it any more blasphemous to reject the Spirit's witness concerning Christ then as it is today? Of course not!

Therefore, we can conclude that the blasphemy against the Spirit is not unique to the dispensation of the hypostatic union or First Advent of Christ since individuals are rejecting the Holy Spirit's witness of Christ at the point of hearing the gospel for salvation even today in our day and age, thus it can and does occur in every dispensation of history.

The reason why the Lord said that rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning Himself is blasphemous, and not the rejection of Himself is because the Holy Spirit is that member of the Trinity who convicts the unbeliever in common grace.

The Holy Spirit in common grace bears witness to the unbeliever that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Common grace refers to that aspect of God's grace policy, which is directed towards the entire human race, without exception. God the Holy Spirit convicts the unbeliever that he is a sinner and needs a Savior. The Lord in His Upper Room Discourse mentions this principle (John 16:7-11).

The Holy Spirit in common grace takes the Gospel message and makes it understandable to the unbeliever so that they can either make the non-meritorious decision to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior or reject Him. What is the gospel? (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

It is the Holy Spirit, who takes the Gospel information that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, was buried and was raised on the third day according

to the Scriptures. When this is presented, then it is simple case of believing this information regarding the Lord Jesus (Ephesians 1:13).

We have to possess some information regarding Christ in order to believe in Him. You can't believe in someone you have no knowledge of. Therefore, it is essential that we present the gospel accurately and concisely to the unbeliever because the Gospel is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16).

The Holy Spirit takes whatever truth is communicated to the unbeliever and makes it understandable so that they can make a decision for or against Christ as their Savior. The unbeliever cannot understand the gospel message of Jesus Christ unless the Holy Spirit enables him.

A spiritually dead person cannot understand the things of God without the aid of the Holy Spirit in common grace. This principle appears in 1 Corinthians 2:1-10. A spiritually dead person needs help at salvation.

The Holy Spirit in common grace has to make spiritual information understandable to the spiritually dead person so that they can make a decision to either accept Christ as Savior or reject Him (2 Corinthians 6:1-2). This process takes place over a lifetime until the unbeliever accepts Christ or they die. There are no more opportunities after death (Hebrews 9:27).

The word for "**blasphemy**" in Matthew 12:31 is the noun *blasphemia*. It is a compound word composed of the following: (1) Verb *blapto*, "to hurt, injure." (2) Noun *pheme*, "speech, report." Thus, the word literally means "injurious speech" or "evil speech or report."

The classical meaning is "evil speech, profane speech, defamation," or "slander." It is a word used to denote the strongest form of mockery or slander. In reference to the Greek pantheon of gods, *blasphemia* is the misrepresentation of their true nature or power. It is used consistently in the Septuagint (LXX) for the defamation of the character and nature of God.

The word appears 20 times in the New Testament and refers to slander, defamation of character. Thus, by rejecting the witness of the Holy Spirit concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, the unbeliever is in fact blaspheming or defaming the character of the Spirit.

The term "**Holy**" describes the Spirit's perfect character and integrity. The unbeliever is in effect calling the Spirit a liar by rejecting His witness that they are a sinner and need a Savior and Jesus Christ is that Savior.

The Pharisees rejection of the Holy Spirit's witness regarding Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and Savior of the world was a defamation of the character and integrity of God the Holy Spirit. This is why our Lord calls the Pharisees rejection of Him as the Messiah as blaspheming the Spirit.

Also, I want you to notice the tense of the verb for the phrase "**it shall not be forgiven**" in verses 31 and 31. The future tense of the verb *aphiemi* indicates the

Pharisees' sin would be judged at a future day meaning the Great White Throne Judgment mentioned in Revelation 20:11-15.

In both cases the future tense of the verb *aphiemi* is indicating clearly that the sin that the Pharisees were committing at that particular moment of attributing Christ's miracles to the devil rather than the Spirit was not the sin that was unpardonable.

If the so-called unpardonable sin were taking place at that moment, the Lord would have used the present tense meaning that the sin of the Pharisees of blaspheming the Spirit was not forgiven at that moment.

The future tense of the verb leaves room for repentance or a change of attitude by the Pharisees, which took place among many of them according to John 12:42 and Acts 15:5.

The only solution for this negative attitude towards the Spirit's witness concerning Christ was for the Pharisees to repent or change one's mind by believing in Him. Their hostile and antagonistic attitude needed to be changed.

It is not a particular act that was the problem of the Pharisees but rather their blasphemous attitude, which was the root of their blasphemous actions. Attitude precedes action. This is why the Jewish leaders were told to repent or what it really says is that they were to change their minds about Christ (Matthew 3:2; 4:17; Mark 1:14-15).

The word for "**repent**" in each of these passages is the compound verb *metanoeo*, which is composed of two words: (a) Preposition *meta*, "change." (b) Verb *noeo*, "to exercise the mind."

The cognate noun of the verb *noeo* is *nous*, "mind, attitude." So literally this compound verb *metanoeo* in all of these passages means "to change your attitude," or "to change your mind."

The Pharisees had to change their attitude towards the Spirit's witness concerning the Lord Jesus. When it says the kingdom of God is at hand it refers to the fact that their Jewish Messiah, the King Himself was in their midst and that they needed to change their attitude regarding Him.

The King and His kingdom cannot be separated…they could have had the kingdom if the nation accepted as Messiah, but of course, they did not. They needed to stop thinking of Jesus of Nazareth as the carpenter's son, a mere man and a threat to their ministry and to turn to Him as their Lord and Savior. Yet, many of the Jews rejected the Spirit's witness regarding the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the promised Messiah…that He was the Son of God.

His miracles were signs to the Jewish nation that He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah, yet they attributed His miracles to the Enemy, Satan. The Lord rebuked the Pharisees regarding their stubbornness in rejecting Him as Messiah even though He gave them many signs that He was the Messiah (John 12:37-42).

Now, I want to address one more important principle regarding this passage in Matthew 12:32. Note the phrase in Matthew 12:32: "**either in this age or in the age to come**." It is very important for it indicates the time element involved in this eternal condemnation for blaspheming the Spirit. This phrase clearly indicates that the rejection of Spirit's witness regarding the Person and Work of Christ will not be forgiven during the dispensation of the hypostatic union and in the future. Thus, implying that it not only took place during the First Advent of Christ, but it will take place in future dispensations such as the church age, tribulation and millennial reign of Christ! The translation "**in the age to come**" is a misleading translation. A more accurate translation would be "**in the future**." Why? The usual word for "**age**" is *aion*, but it is not used here.

The phrase "**in the age to come**" is a prepositional phrase composed of the following: (a) Preposition *en*, "in." (b) Dative masculine singular definite article *to*, "the." Dative masculine singular present active participle form of the verb *mello*, which is *mellonti*, "future."

The articular participle *to mellonti* is used substantively meaning "the future." This is what we call a locative of time or as some grammarians call a dative of time. It indicates when the action of the main verb will take place. So, in the context of Matthew 12:32 the dative or locative of time indicates that the blasphemy of the Spirit will not be forgiven in the future as well as during the First Advent of Christ. Thus, implying that it is not unique to the First Advent of Christ but rather can take place in every dispensation after it. All of humanity is the object of God's forgiveness. Every sin ever committed in human history has been forgiven by God the Father because His justice imputed every sin past, present and future to His impeccable Son on the cross and judged Him for all of them as their substitute.

Resisting the Spirit

The second sin that the non-believer commits against the Holy Spirit is that of resisting Him. It is found in Acts 6:7-15.

Acts 6:1 Now in those days, when the disciples were growing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against the native Hebraic Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 6:2 So the twelve called the whole group of the disciples together and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to wait on tables. 6:3 But carefully select from among you, brothers, seven men who are well-attested, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this necessary task. 6:4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 6:5 The proposal pleased the entire group, so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor,

Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a Gentile convert to Judaism from Antioch. 6:6 They stood these men before the apostles, who prayed and placed their hands on them. 6:7 The word of God continued to spread, the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith. 6:8 Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. (NET)

The pivotal figure in this passage is the first martyr of the church, namely Stephen who was a deacon. Stephen was one of seven men chosen from among the Hellenistic or Greek speaking Jews in the early church to supervise the daily distribution of food to those in need." Luke named him first in the list in Acts 6:5 and he rapidly stood out according to Acts 6:8 by the grace and power he demonstrated because he was continually under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He received his power because he was filled with the Spirit. His name in the Greek is *stephanos*. The early church was predominately Jewish rather than Gentile. There was a great deal of growing pains for the church because many of these Jewish believers had a difficult time making the transition of being under the Mosaic Law to being under grace.

Stephen was instrumental in helping to make this transition come about and it cost him his life. His trial before the Council indicates that he knew his Old Testament for he gives a summary history of the Jews nation from Abraham to Christ. He evidently was quite a theologian for he dynamically defended the Christian faith against its enemies.

Acts 6:9 But some men from the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, as well as some from Cilicia and the province of Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. (NET)

The Greek Word in the New Testament for "**Freedman**" is *Libertinos*, "Libertines." This Greek word *Libertinos* is Luke's transliteration of the Latin *libertinus*, which in turn appears in the old English versions as "libertine." The loanword means people who have been manumitted or release from slavery. They were an international group of Jewish followers of the Mosaic Law. We know that they were international because Luke tells us that they came from throughout the various provinces in the Roman Empire. Stephen was witnessing to these Hellenistic or Greek speaking Jews. They are called the Synagogue of the Freedman. These individuals secretly instigated a persecution against Stephen whom they were not able to refute because of his tremendous wisdom and knowledge of the Scriptures. Acts 6:9 states that they were composed of men from Cyrene, Alexandria in Egypt and Cilicia and Asia.

Acts 6:10 Yet they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. 6:11 Then they secretly instigated some men to say, "We have heard this man speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God." (NET)

Here we have makings of a conspiracy against Stephen. His ministry was so powerful that his opponents resorted to plotting a conspiracy against him and eventually violence.

Acts 6:12 They incited the people, the elders, and the experts in the law; then they approached Stephen, seized him, and brought him before the council. (NET)

The Council refers to the Sanhedrin. Stephen's principal antagonists were the same individuals who condemned our Lord to the Cross, namely the Jewish Sanhedrin. They were the leaders of the Jewish nation. Jewish tradition states that they existed continually since the council of seventy elders in the time of Moses (Nm. 11:16).

The Sanhedrin consisted of seventy members and the high priest as president. Only the high priest could preside over the Sanhedrin. Next in rank to the high priest were the chief priests, whose presence and power in the Sanhedrin were due to their office in the temple. They were uniformly members of the Sadducean aristocracy, which solidified them into a powerful party.

Next came the elders, who were the lay members or who didn't hold a high office in the Sanhedrin. They came from the most influential families in Jerusalem. These individuals were mainly Sadducees who didn't believe in a literal resurrection like the Pharisees. The powers of the Sanhedrin were not limited merely to religious affairs while the Romans controlled civil matters in Jerusalem. On the contrary, the Romans allowed the Jewish Sanhedrin the same large control of internal affairs that they granted other subject peoples. As a result, the Sanhedrin exercised jurisdiction over all matters on which smaller Jewish courts could not reach a decision except those matters that the Roman governor directly controlled. The court not only administered civil matters according to Jewish law but also dealt with criminal justice, keeping its own police force and making arrests. All Jews everywhere fell under the Sanhedrin's authority. In this passage in Acts, Stephen is put on trial before this court.

Acts 6:13 They brought forward false witnesses who said, "This man does not stop saying things against this holy place and the law. 6:14 For we have heard him saying that Jesus the Nazarene will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us." (NET)

Notice that these individuals resort to the same tactics that they used against our Lord throughout His six trials before human courts. These strident proponents for keeping the Mosaic Law were breaking the commandment not to bear false witness.

Exodus 20:16 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. (NET)

They claimed to be the keepers and protectors of the Law and yet they were the biggest Lawbreakers. The false charges brought up against Stephen are similar to those brought up against the Lord (cf. Matt. 26:59-61). As in the case of our Lord,

the false charges brought up against Stephen were not total fabrications, but rather subtle misrepresentations of what was intended.

Acts 6:15 All who were sitting in the council looked intently at Stephen and saw his face was like the face of an angel. (NET)

Luke states that Stephen's face or countenance became like the face of an angel. What does he mean by that? Simply that Stephen was filled with the Spirit. Acts 6:3, 5 states that this characterized Stephen's life. Because he was filled with the Spirit or under the influence and guidance of the Spirit, he possessed courage, confidence and contentment. He possessed courage, which is the ability to think and apply doctrine under pressure. Stephen possessed confidence because he knew the Scriptures. He was empowered and was receiving guidance from the Spirit. Stephen had contentment because he was doing the Lord's will.

Acts 7:1 Then the high priest said, "Are these things true?" (NET)

Stephen is about to give a summary history of the Jewish people all the way to the moment that he was speaking before the Council. He doesn't even acknowledge the charges or seek to defend himself but rather seeks to give a masterful dissertation on the history of Israel. His dissertation before the Sanhedrin indicates his fabulous knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. Stephen mentions the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph and the twelve patriarchs of the Jewish race. He also mentions Moses and birth of Israel as a nation in 1441 B.C. He speaks of David, the greatest king of Israel and Solomon his son the wisest man of the ancient world. Finally, He mentions the One who all these individuals look forward to in faith, namely the Lord Jesus Christ the object of the faith of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David and Solomon.

Acts 7:1 Then the high priest said, "Are these things true?" 7:2 So he replied, "Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he settled in Haran, 7:3 and said to him, '*Go out from your country and from your relatives, and come to the land I will show you*.' 7:4 Then he went out from the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God made him move to this country where you now live. 7:5 He did not give any of it to him for an inheritance, not even a foot of ground, yet God promised *to give it to him as his possession, and to his descendants after him*, even though Abraham as yet had no child. 7:6 But God spoke as follows: 'Your *descendants will be foreigners in a foreign country, whose citizens will enslave them and mistreat them for four hundred years*. 7:7 *But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves*,' said God, '*and after these things they will come out of there* and *worship me in this place*.' 7:8 Then God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision, and so he became the father of Isaac and circumcised him when he was eight days old, and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. 7:9 The

patriarchs, because they were jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt. But God was with him, 7:10 and rescued him from all his troubles, and granted him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. 7:11 Then a famine occurred throughout Egypt and Canaan, causing great suffering, and our ancestors could not find food. 7:12 So when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there the first time. 7:13 On their second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers again, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. 7:14 So Joseph sent a message and invited his father Jacob and all his relatives to come, seventy-five people in all. 7:15 So Jacob went down to Egypt and died there, along with our ancestors, 7:16 and their bones were later moved to Shechem and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a certain sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

7:17 "But as the time drew near for God to fulfill the promise he had declared to Abraham, the people increased greatly in number in Egypt, 7:18 until *another king who did not know about Joseph ruled over Egypt.* 7:19 This was the one who exploited our people and was cruel to our ancestors, forcing them to abandon their infants so they would die. 7:20 At that time Moses was born, and he was beautiful to God. For three months he was brought up in his father's house, 7:21 and when he had been abandoned, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. 7:22 So Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds. 7:23 But when he was about forty years old, it entered his mind to visit his fellow countrymen the Israelites. 7:24 When he saw one of them being hurt unfairly, Moses came to his defense and avenged the person who was mistreated by striking down the Egyptian. 7:25 He thought his own people would understand that God was delivering them through him, but they did not understand. 7:26 The next day Moses saw two men fighting, and tried to make peace between them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why are you hurting one another?' 7:27 But the man who was unfairly hurting his neighbor pushed Moses aside, saying, '*Who made you a ruler and judge over us?* 7:28 *You don't want to kill me the way you killed the Egyptian yesterday, do you?*' 7:29 When the man said this, Moses fled and became a foreigner in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

7:30 "After forty years had passed, *an angel appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush.* 7:31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight, and when he approached to investigate, there came the voice of the Lord, 7:32 '*I am the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*' Moses began to tremble and did not dare to look more closely. 7:33 *But the Lord said to him,* '*Take the sandals off your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.* 7:34 *I have certainly seen the suffering of my*

people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Now come, I will send you to Egypt.' **7:35 This same Moses they had rejected, saying, '*Who made you a ruler and judge?*' God sent as both ruler and deliverer through the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. 7:36 This man led them out, performing wonders and miraculous signs in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. 7:37 This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, '*God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers.*' 7:38 This is the man who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors, and he received living oracles to give to you. 7:39 Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him, but pushed him aside and turned back to Egypt in their hearts, 7:40 saying to Aaron, '*Make us gods who will go in front of us, for this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him!*' 7:41 At that time they made an idol in the form of a calf, brought a sacrifice to the idol, and began rejoicing in the works of their hands. 7:42 But God turned away from them and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets: '*It was not to me that you offered slain animals and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, house of Israel?* 7:43 *But you took along the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of the god Rephan, the images you made to worship, but I will deport you beyond Babylon.*' 7:44 Our ancestors had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as God who spoke to Moses ordered him to make it according to the design he had seen. 7:45 Our ancestors received possession of it and brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors, until the time of David. 7:46 He found favor with God and asked that he could find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. 7:47 But Solomon built a house for him. 7:48 Yet the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands, as the prophet says,**

7:49 '*Heaven is my throne,*
and earth is the footstool for my feet.
What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is my resting place?
7:50 *Did my hand not make all these things?*'

7:51 "You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your ancestors did! 7:52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become! 7:53 You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it."

7:54 When they heard these things, they became furious and ground their teeth at him. 7:55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently toward heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 7:56 "Look!" he said. "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 7:57 But they covered their ears, shouting out with a loud voice, and rushed at him with one intent. 7:58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. 7:59 They continued to stone Stephen while he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 7:60 Then he fell to his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" When he had said this, he died. (NET)

In Stephen's discourse there are three ideas that run like cords through its fabric: There is progress and change in God's program. The blessings of God are not limited to the land of Israel and the temple area. Israel in its past always evidenced a pattern of opposition to God's plans and His men. Those whom Stephen is addressing here are inflexible and religious. In God's workings with the nation of Israel from Abraham, the first Jew to Solomon there was innovation and change. The point is clear: If God changed so many things in Israel's history, who is to say that the Law and the temple area were permanent?

Remember what our Lord said to the Samaritan woman at the well concerning the temple and Jerusalem (cf. John 4:21-24). So, Stephen tries to communicate the principle in this discourse that God's program changes, there is a progression of revelation to it.

It is also important to understand the attitude of the Jews here because before the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the three pillars of Jewish society were the following: (1) Land (2) Law (3) Temple. The Jews put undo emphasis upon these three things. All three were God-given, yet they worshipped these blessings rather than the One who gave them these great blessings. This has application for us here in the United States today. Christians today are constantly tempted to assert that our nation and our great possessions are God-given rather than acknowledge our total and absolute dependence upon God.

Under the second point some of the greatest blessings bestowed upon the Jews were apart from the temple and the land. Stephen gives four examples: (1) Israel's patriarchs and leaders were all blessed outside the land. (2) Abraham in Mesopotamia. (3) Joseph found favor while in Egypt and Moses while in the desert of Midian. (4) The Law was given outside the land of Israel and the tabernacles was built in the desert.

Under the third point, Israel has a history of rebelling against God and His leaders that He has delegated authority to. Abraham went to Haran when he shouldn't have and Joseph was sold by his jealous brothers into slavery. Moses was rejected by the

Exodus generation. What is very interesting here and I'm sure did not escape Stephen's hostile audience was that both Joseph and Moses were not accepted until their second appearances. The parallel with Christ could not have escaped Stephen's audience.

Stephen's speech fulfilled a prophecy that our Lord gave to His disciples which is recorded in Luke 21:10.

Luke 21:10 Then he said to them, "Nation will rise up in arms against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 21:11 There will be great earthquakes, famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven. 21:12 But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you, handing you over to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. 21:13 This will be a time for you to serve as witnesses. 21:14 Therefore be resolved not to rehearse ahead of time how to make your defense. 21:15 For I will give you the words along with the wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. 21:16 You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will have some of you put to death. 21:17 You will be hated by everyone because of my name. 21:18 Yet not a hair of your head will perish. 21:19 By your endurance you will gain your lives. (NET)

Acts 7:51 "You stubborn people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit, like your ancestors did! (NET)

"**Stubbor**" is the Greek noun *sklerotrachelos*. This word only appears here in the NT. In classical Greek and the LXX, the term vividly describes one whose jaws and neck are rigid from angrily resisting argument or counsel. It describes someone who is obstinate (cf. Ex. 33:5; Deut. 9:6).

The phrase "**uncircumcised in heart and ears**" refers to the fact that they were unregenerate or in other words, not born-again and saved. The born again believer is circumcised in Christ, Paul states this to the church at Colossae in Colossians 2:11. The Jew was driven from the land because of his uncircumcised heart as God declares through Moses in Leviticus 26:40-42. God is concerned about the condition of your heart. To reject the Spirit's witness concerning Christ upon hearing the Gospel is to have an uncircumcised heart before God.

The Greek word for "**resisting**" is the second person plural present active indicative conjugation of the verb *antipipto*. It appears only once in the NT, here in Acts 7:51. *Antipipto* is a compound verb composed of the following: (1) Preposition *anti*, "against, opposite." (2) Verb *pipto*, "to fall." Literally, the word means "to fall against," or "to fall in a contrary direction." It expresses determined and active resistance to the Holy Spirit's work in common grace.

Acts 7:52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold long ago the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers

and murderers you have now become! 7:53 You received the law by decrees given by angels, but you did not obey it." (NET)

This statement by Stephen is reminiscent of Lord's condemnation of the Pharisees in Matthew 23:29-38. The reason why the Sanhedrin covered their ears when Stephen said this is because they remembered what the Lord Jesus said to the high priest Caiaphas and before the entire Sanhedrin (cf. Matt 26:62-64). Also, what is interesting about Stephen's martyrdom is that Saul of Tarsus (aka the apostle Paul) meets Stephen. This is the first time and the last time they would meet on planet earth. Both are in the presence of the Lord at this time. Stephen was a tremendous witness to Saul in death. It was Stephen who prepared Saul for the appearance of the Lord on that dusty road to Damascus. The Lord never wastes the blood of His saints!

Acts 7:54 When they heard these things, they became furious and ground their teeth at him. 7:55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently toward heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 7:56 "Look!" he said. "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 7:57 But they covered their ears, shouting out with a loud voice, and rushed at him with one intent. 7:58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began to stone him, and the witnesses laid their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. 7:59 They continued to stone Stephen while he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 7:60 Then he fell to his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" When he had said this, he died. (NET)

Stephen again manifests his Christ-like attitude in death. His words echo that of our Lord's at the cross of Calvary two thousand years ago.

Luke 23:34 [But Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."] Then *they threw dice to divide his clothes*. (NET)

Interestingly enough, the leaders of the Jewish nation were resisting the Spirit by putting to death Stephen who was filled with the Spirit. Stephen was witnessing to these unregenerate Jews by means of the power of the Spirit. They rejected the Spirit's ministry in common grace.

Also, notice that Stephen wasn't a pastor or evangelist but rather a deacon serving his brethren, laying down his life for them just as our Lord did at the cross.

Stephen was a tremendous witness to Saul in death. It was Stephen who prepared Saul for the appearance of the Lord on that dusty road to Damascus. The Lord never wastes the blood of His saints! For Israel, it meant condemnation. This was their 3rd murder. They permitted John the Baptist to be killed and demanded that Jesus be put to death and now the blood of Stephen was on their heads. The Jews sinned against God the Father who sent John (Mt. 21:33-46). They sinned against the Son of God when they asked Pilate to have Him condemned to the Cross (Mt. 21:33-46). Finally,

when they stoned Stephen, Israel sinned against the Holy Spirit who was working in and through Stephen and the apostles (Mt. 10:1-8; Acts 7:51).

Judgment finally came to the unregenerate members of the nation of Israel, when Titus and the Roman legions destroyed the city of David in 70 A.D. Those who died without being born-again and saved would never be forgiven the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The nations rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning the Person and Work of Christ would never be forgiven at the Great White Throne Judgment. Resisting the Holy Spirit is in effect blaspheming the Holy Spirit. The sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as Savior is the rejection of the Spirit's witness concerning Him. The Jews did not reject Stephen but in reality, they had rejected the Spirit's witness and thus would receive their just condemnation at the Great White Throne Judgment.

Grieving the Spirit

"Grieving" the Holy Spirit is a sin that is directed towards His Person and takes place in the life of the believer when the believer's thoughts, words and actions are influenced and governed by the cosmic system of Satan and the old sin nature. It prevents the Christian from being filled with the Spirit and from walking according to the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (NET)

"**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**" is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *kai* (καί), "**and**" (2) negative particle *me* (μή), "**not**" (3) second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω), "**you will grieve**" (4) articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" (5) articular accusative masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), "**holy**" (6) articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), "**of God**."

We begin the exegesis and exposition of Ephesians 4:30 by Paul's use of the conjunction *kai* (καί), which functions as a marker of result because it is introducing a prohibition, which presents the logical result of obeying the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions presented in Ephesians 4:25-29.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, 17, 2:18, 22, 3:5, 16, 4:3, and 4, the articular dative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) here in Ephesians 4:30 means "the Spirit" and refers of course to the Holy Spirit.

The articular construction of this word is monadic, which identifies this word as being in a class by itself, which is indicated by the word's genitive adjunct *tou theou* (τοῦ θεοῦ), which indicates the entire expression *to pneuma to hagion tou theou* (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ) has a monadic notion. Therefore, this indicates that this Spirit is "unique" or "in a class by Himself" since He is God and holy and promised

as permanent possession by Jesus Christ to those sinner who would trust in Him as their Savior.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) here in Ephesians 4:30 is modified by the articular accusative masculine plural form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), which means "holy" and is used to describe the third member of the Trinity, the Spirit and denotes the state of being holy.

The word functions as an accusative of simple apposition meaning that it stands in apposition to the articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" and thus is describing the referent of the latter as being holy.

The articular form of the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος) also marks this word as functioning in the second attributive position is article-noun-article-adjective. This difference in the placement of the adjective is not one of relation, but of position and emphasis. In the second attributive position "both substantive and adjective receive emphasis and the adjective is added as a sort of climax in apposition with a separate article.[186],,[187]

The noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context.

The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) is the "par excellence" use of the article, which expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worship was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity, which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods.

The noun *theos* (θεός) functions as a genitive of source, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit "originates from" God and specifically God the Father in the sense that the Father sent the Holy Spirit at the request of His Son to do so (cf. John 14:26).

The verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) appears 1373 times in Greek classics and 54 times in the Septuagint. In each, the word was a general term for "sorrow," encompassing various expressions of grief. The verb means, "to cause pain, sorrow, grief, distress" to someone. It may refer to outward mourning or simply to sad feelings and is commonly used to designate heaviness of heart. In the papyri, its use ranges from grief over the loss of a loved one to sadness over the loss of a cloak.

The verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) appears 26 times in the Greek New Testament where it is used for all its variations.

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[186] Ibid., 777.

[187] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 306). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition lists the following meanings for the word: (1) to cause severe mental or emotional distress (2) to experience sadness or distress.[188]

Louw and Nida define the word "to cause someone to be sad, sorrowful or distressed."[189]

In the New Testament, the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) denotes deep sorrow such as in the case of our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt. 26:37). It was used for the disciples' reaction to our Lord's death in Matthew 17:23 and John 16:20.

In Ephesians 4:30, the verb expresses the Holy Spirit's sorrow, which is caused when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or over act of sin. Thus, it speaks of the Holy Spirit experiencing emotional distress when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or overt act of sin.

The meaning of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), which denies any idea of committing this sin against the Holy Spirit. Together, they form a prohibition.

The second personal plural form of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) refers of course to the recipients of this letter, who we noted are members of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia. This form of the verb refers to them not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by the fact that Paul is using the distributive sense of the second person plural, which emphasizes no exceptions expressing Paul's concern for the recipients of this letter not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals.

The active voice of the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a simple active voice, which indicates that the subject performs the action indicated by the verb. Therefore, this indicates that the recipients of this epistle as the subject are to perform the action of obeying this prohibition. Thus, indicates that they are forbidden from causing the Holy Spirit grief in the form of emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of His commands and prohibitions recorded in the Scriptures.

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present imperative, which has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. However, in Ephesians 1:15, Paul commends the recipients of this epistle for their post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures and correspondingly, they were obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them.

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[188] BDAG page 604

[189] Louw and Nida 25.275

The present tense of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present tense, which is used to signal a regularly occurring or habitual action on the part of the subject of the verb. Therefore, it expresses the idea of the recipients of this epistle "continuing to make it their habit of" not causing the Holy Spirit grief in the form of emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of His commands and prohibitions recorded in the Scriptures.

"**By whom you were sealed for the day of redemption**" is composed of the following: (1) preposition *en* (ἐν), "**by**" (2) dative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς), "**whom**" (3) second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω), "**you were marked with the seal**" (4) preposition *eis* (εἰς), "**for**" (5) accusative feminine singular form of the noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα), "**day**" (6) genitive feminine singular form of the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις), "**the redemption**."

The dative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) pertains to a relative reference to any entity, event, or state, either occurring overtly in the immediate context or clearly implied in the discourse or setting.[190] In this context, the referent of this word is the articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**the Spirit**" since both words agree in number (singular), gender (neuter). Therefore, the referent of this word is God the Holy Spirit.

The dative neuter singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence at the moment of the believer's justification.

This word is also the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which means "by means of" because it serves as a marker of means. This indicates that it is marking the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence as "the means by which" the church age believer was marked with the seal, which identifies them as the Father's possession and which seal was for the day of the redemption.

The second person plural aorist passive indicative conjugation of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) pertains to marking something with a seal as a means of identification in order to secure it as one's own possession. Thus, it speaks of something making something secure as a sign of ownership.

The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is of course the recipients of the Ephesian epistle and specifically the members of the Gentile Christian community who lived in the Roman province of Asia. The word not only refers to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by this form is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exception expressing the idea that the "each and every" member of the church was sealed identifying them as the Father's possession and which sealing too place at the moment of justification.

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[190] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 815). United Bible Societies.

The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) can have several meanings and referents depending upon the context. It doesn't always mean "day" as in a 24-hour period, but it can refer to an undefined or defined period of time that are marked by certain particular characteristics. However, in Ephesians 4:30, the noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) means "day" refers to an event, which will occur within a twenty-four hour period, namely the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is signified by the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις), which modifies it.

The noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) is used of the redemption of the body of the church age believer when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is imminent. Specifically, it speaks of the church age believer experiencing receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

The noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) functions an epexegetical genitive functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which means that it specifies or identifies the referent of the noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα). Therefore, the former is identifying the referent of the latter as the moment when the church age believer receives their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which completes their salvation and sanctification.

The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of purpose, which means that it is marking the day of redemption as the purpose for which the Holy Spirit sealed the church age believer at the moment of their justification.

The aorist tense of this verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) is a consummative aorist, which is used to stress the cessation of an act or state. Here it is emphasizing the cessation of the act of the Father sealing each one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle, who were Gentile Christians, at the moment of their justification by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit who is holy.

The passive voice means that the subject receives the action of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is expressed by the expression *en hō* (ἐν ᾧ), "by means of whom," which refers to the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence on behalf of the church age believer at the moment of justification. Therefore, the passive voice indicates that the church age believer as the subject receives the action being sealed by means of the exercise of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit at the moment of justification for the purpose of receiving a resurrection body at the rapture of the church.

The indicative mood of the verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

Ephesians 4:17 Therefore, at this particular time I am communicating, specifically, at this particular time I am solemnly and earnestly making a request on the basis of the Lord's sovereign authority. Namely, that each and

every one of you as a corporate unit continue to no longer make it your habit of conducting your lives as in fact the Gentiles are conducting their lives by means of the futility produced by their thinking. 18 Specifically, because they are darkened with respect to their understanding (of the three-fold revelation of the triune God). Consequently, they are alienated from the life, which originates uniquely in the character and nature of the one and only God because of the ignorance, which is a characteristic within them because of the hardness, which is produced by the function unique to their hearts. 19 Because they are characterized as insensitive (to God and His will and ways), each and every one of them as a corporate unit have given themselves over to self-indulgence for the purpose of practicing every type of sexual immorality in an inordinate and insatiable manner. 20 On the contrary, by no means whatsoever in this manner did each and every one of you as a corporate unit learn about the one and only Christ through experience. 21 If and let us assume for the sake of argument that each and every one of you as a corporate unit in fact conformed to an experiential knowledge of Him and we all agree each one of you did. In other words, each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught about Him through personal experience because obedience to the truth corresponds to an experiential knowledge of Jesus. 22 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught with reference to your former lifestyle to lay aside the old man's sinful desires, which are being corrupted in accordance with deceitful lust patterns. 23 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught to make it your habit of replenishing your human spirit, that is, your regenerate mind. 24 Specifically, each and every one of you as a corporate unit were taught to clothe yourselves with the new man, which has been created in conformity with God's image by the one and only truth exemplifying righteousness, indeed by exemplifying a holy righteousness. 25 Therefore, because each and every one of you as a corporate unit have laid aside that which characterized by falsehood, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of speaking truth with his neighbor for each and every one of us as a corporate unit are members of one another. 26 Each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of permitting yourselves to be justifiably angry with the result that each and every one of you as a corporate unit continue to make it your habit of not committing sin. Each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not letting the sun go down when justifiably angered. 27 Each and every one of you as a corporate unity must continue to make it your habit of not allowing an opportunity which benefits the devil. 28 The one who does steal must no longer steal but rather they must begin to work hard for a living and continue doing so. Specifically, by making it their habit of being diligently engaged in

performing activities with their own hands, which for their own benefit produce good, which is divine in quality and character in order to possess the capacity to make it their habit of sharing for the benefit of those who possess a need. 29 Any harmful word must never at any time proceed from the mouth of any one of you. But rather, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that something is characterized as the production of divine good in quality and character for the building up of the one who does possess a need. And we agree that something is characterized as the production of divine good in quality and character for the building upon of the one who does possess a need. Then, the production of divine good in quality and character must at any time proceed from the mouth of each one of you in order that it would provide grace for the benefit of those who are hearing. 30 Consequently, each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, originating from the one and only God by means of the exercise of whose omnipotence all of you without exception have been sealed for the day, namely, redemption. (Author's translation)

Ephesians 4:30 is composed of the following: (1) prohibition: *mē lypeite to pneuma to hagion tou theou* (μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ), "**each and every one of you as a corporate unit must continue to make it your habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, originating from the one and only God**." (Author's translation) (2) declarative statement: *en hō esphragisthēte eis hēmeran apolytrōseōs* (ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως), "**by means of the exercise of whose omnipotence all of you without exception have been sealed for the day, namely, redemption**." (Author's translation)

Therefore, Ephesians 4:30 begins with a prohibition, which required that the recipients of this letter, who were members of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia, continue to make it their habit of not grieving the Spirit, who is holy, and who originates from the Father. This is followed by a declarative statement, which describes a ministry performed by the Holy Spirit at justification on behalf of each member of the body of Christ, namely, He sealed every one of them for the day of redemption. The latter is a reference to the believer receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

The prohibition presents the logical result of obeying the various Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions presented in Ephesians 4:25-29. In other words, it indicates that if the recipients of this epistle obey the various Spriit inspired commands and prohibitions presented in Ephesians 4:25-29, they will never grieve the Holy Spirit. However, if they disobey them, they will in fact grieve the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 summarizes the Spirit inspired contents of Ephesians 4:25-29.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, 17, 2:18, 22, 3:5, 16, 4:3, and 4, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) in Ephesians 4:30 refers of course to the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is monadic, which indicates that He is "unique" or "in a class by Himself" since He is God and whose holy character transcends that of his moral rational creatures, namely, human and angelic beings.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:13, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) here in Ephesians 4:30 is modified by the adjective *hagios* (ἅγιος), which means "holy" and is used to describe the third member of the Trinity, the Spirit and denotes the state of being holy. This adjective describes the transcendent character of the Spirit in that His character is superior to the character of both angelic and human beings since the latter are inferior to Him due to the fact that He is their Creator and they are sinners.

The noun *theos* (θεός) refers to the Father which is indicated by the articular construction of the noun, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the Father unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, in every instance in which the word has appeared in this epistle up to this point in the Ephesian letter, the Father is this word's referent (1:1, 2, 3, 17, 2:4, 8, 10, 16, 19, 22, 3:2, 7, 9, 10, 19; 4:6, 13, 18, 24). The articular construction of the noun *theos* (θεός) expresses the idea that there were many gods in the world, but the God Jewish and Gentile Christians worship was the one and only true God in contrast to unregenerate humanity, which worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods. This noun functions as a genitive of source, which means that the person of the Holy Spirit "originates from" God in the sense that the Father sent the Holy Spirit to permanently indwell each member of the body of Christ at the request of His Son to do so (cf. John 14:26).

The verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) expresses the Holy Spirit's sorrow, which is caused when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or over act of sin. Thus, it speaks of the Holy Spirit experiencing emotional distress when a child of God commits a mental, verbal or overt act of sin. The second personal plural form of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) refers of course to the recipients of this letter, who we noted are members of the Gentile Christian community in the Roman province of Asia. This form of the verb refers to them not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by the fact that Paul is using the distributive sense of the second person plural, which emphasizes no exceptions expressing Paul's concern for the recipients of this letter not only as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The meaning of this verb is negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), which denies any idea of committing this sin against the Holy Spirit. Together, they form a prohibition. This negative particle denies any idea of these Gentile Christians causing the Holy Spirit sorrow or emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin, which is the result of disobeying any of the Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions in the Scriptures.

Of course, no human or angelic being can literally cause the Holy Spirit to experience sorrow or emotional distress. Thus, the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, employs an anthropopathism, which is ascribing the human emotion of grieving to the Holy Spirit, which He does not possess in order to communicate the Spirit's attitude towards the believer when they commit a mental, verbal or overt act of sin. Paul is thus using language of accommodation to communicate the Spirit's attitude toward the believer when they sin.

An "anthropopathism" is language of accommodation through which infinite God reveals Himself to the finite man. The term is derived from the Greek: (1) *Anthropos*, "man." (2) *Pathos*, "an inner function of the soul with overt manifestations."

Anthropopathisms ascribe to God human characteristics, which He does not have, in order to explain God's policy or viewpoint to us in terms of human attitudes. The Bible ascribes the following human emotions to God that He does not possess in order to convey His attitude towards man in terms that man can understand.

The following is a brief list of anthropopathisms found in the Word of God. Examples of Anthropopathisms: (1) God hates (Rm. 9:13). (2) Harbors jealousy (Ex. 20:5a; 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 6:15a). (3) Changes His mind (Gen. 6:6). (4) Vents violent anger (Jer. 4:8; 12:13; 25:37; 51:45; Ezek. 5:15).

These qualities are incompatible with God's essence, but such statements are descriptive and gain the attention of the reader.

Therefore, in Ephesians 4:30 Paul issues the recipients of Ephesians a prohibition, which required that they do not grieve or cause the Holy Spirit to experience emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of the Spirit inspired commands and prohibitions recorded in Ephesians 4:25-29.

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present imperative, which has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. However, in Ephesians 1:15, Paul commends the recipients of this epistle for their post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired Scriptures. Correspondingly, he also commends them for obeying the Lord Jesus Christ's Spirit inspired command in John 13:34 and 15:12 to love one another as He has loved them.

The present tense of this verb *lupeo* (λυπέω) is a customary present tense, which is used to signal a regularly occurring or habitual action on the part of the subject of the verb. Therefore, it expresses the idea of the recipients of this epistle "continuing to make it their habit of" not causing the Holy Spirit grief in the form of emotional distress because they have committed a mental, verbal or overt act of sin as a result of disobeying any one of His commands and prohibitions recorded in the Scriptures.

Therefore, by issuing this prohibition, Paul is performing preventative maintenance. He is warning them ahead of time to not make it a habit of grieving the Holy Spirit. He is not telling them to cease from this act implying that they were in already in the process of doing so. But rather, it is a prohibition designed to prevent them from grieving the Holy Spirit on a habitual basis, which would hinder the Holy Spirit from performing His function of forming Christ-like character in them. In other words, he is not implying that they were already involved in this sin of grieving the Holy Spirit but rather he is expressing a general precept.

Please note that this author is not saying that Paul does not want them to commit this sin ever again because as long as they possess an indwelling old Adamic sin nature and live in the devil's world they will be tempted to sin and they will sin. The Bible states that the believer is deceiving themselves if they say they can stop sinning altogether while they still have an old sin nature and live in the devil's world (cf. 1 John 1:8-10).

Clinton Arnold writes "As many theologians have rightly pointed out over the centuries, the fact that the Spirit grieves over sin demonstrates that the Spirit is a person. This is consistent with other attributes of personhood attested about the Spirit in Paul's writings, such as the Spirit's bearing witness (Rom 8:16), speaking (1 Tim 4:1), interceding for believers (Rom 8:26), having thoughts (Rom 8:27), having desires (Gal 5:17), dwelling in the lives of believers as in a temple (Rom 8:9, 11; 1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14), searching and investigating (1 Cor 2:10), teaching believers (1 Cor 2:13), leading the people of God (Gal 5:17–18, 25), and giving divine gifts and abilities to people (1 Cor 12:9, 11). The Spirit is therefore not an impersonal force or power."[191]

Interestingly, this prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 is similar to the language used by Isaiah 63:10, which speaks of the Israelites rebelling against the Spirit and thus grieving Him.

Isaiah 63:7 I will tell of the faithful acts of the Lord, of the Lord's praiseworthy deeds. I will tell about all the Lord did for us, the many good things he did for the family of Israel, because of his compassion and great faithfulness. 8 He said, "Certainly they will be my people, children who are not disloyal." He became their deliverer. 9 Through all that they suffered, he suffered too. The messenger sent from his very presence delivered them. In his love and mercy he protected them; he lifted them up and carried them throughout ancient times. 10 But they rebelled and offended his holy Spirit, so he turned into an enemy and fought against them. (NET)

[191] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 306). Zondervan.

Peter O'Brien writes "As elsewhere in Ephesians, Paul's words 'echo' the language of an Old Testament text, in this case Isaiah 63:10,[192] and once again an understanding of the scriptural context is important for interpreting the Ephesians passage. After depicting the messianic judgment and the victory of the anointed conqueror (Isa. 63:1–6), the prophet is stirred to eloquent intercession as he focusses on God's past goodness and the present desperate situation of his people. As the prophet reviews God's gracious actions, he begins with the exodus and recounts how Yahweh brought his people Israel into a covenant relationship with himself (v. 8). In language which directly recalls Exodus 33:12–14, v. 9 states that it was the 'presence' of God himself, not simply an angel or a messenger, which saved his people in the wilderness.[193] Israel, for its part, 'rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit' (v. 10). Nevertheless, the Lord placed his Holy Spirit in the midst of his people to deliver them and give them rest (v. 14).

The 'presence' of God is interpreted in the Isaianic passage in terms of the 'Holy Spirit' (vv. 10, 11). Although the Exodus narrative makes it plain that Yahweh himself led his people through the desert and gave them rest (note esp. Exod. 33:14, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest'), v. 14 of Isaiah 63 unequivocally asserts that it was 'the Spirit of the Lord' who gave them rest. The conclusion in the following line, 'this is how *you* guided your people,' underscores this equation of God's presence with his Holy Spirit.[194]

The links between the two biblical passages are so significant as to suggest a typological correspondence between the two events in the history of God's covenant people. In Isaiah 63, which looks back to the exodus, Yahweh is presented as the Saviour of Israel, who *redeemed* his people from Egypt, brought them into a covenant relationship with himself, led them by his own personal presence (i.e., his Holy Spirit) through the wilderness, and gave them rest. For its part, Israel the covenant people had rebelled against its Lord 'and grieved his Holy Spirit' (v. 10). In Ephesians Paul addresses the new covenant community, 'the one new man' (2:15) comprising Jews and Gentiles who have been *redeemed* (1:7) and reconciled to God through the cross of Christ (2:14–18). They have become a holy temple in the Lord, the place where *God himself* dwells by his Spirit (2:21, 22). Using the language of

[192] Paul's Greek is καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ ('do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God'), while the LXX of Isa. 63:10 has καὶ παρώξυναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ ('and they vexed his holy spirit'). Paul uses the verb λυπεῖτε (which is closer to the original Hebrew and corresponds to the usual LXX rendering of this Hebrew verb), turning the indicative statement of Isaiah into an imperative (for reasons see below). Cf. T. Moritz, *A Profound Mystery*, 92. Best, 457, is much more cautious, unnecessarily so in our judgment, about the dependence of Eph. 4:30 on Isa. 63:10. See the comments below regarding the intertextual relations between Exod. 33 and Isa. 63 and what we judge to be significant salvation-historical and, ultimately, theological connections between this New Testament text and its Old Testament antecedents.

[193] The words 'so he became their Saviour' (Isa. 63:8) seem to hark back to Exod. 14:30, where the verb 'to save' is used comprehensively of 'the Red Sea event [which] completed and sealed the whole enterprise as a work of salvation'; J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity, 1993), 513.

[194] Commenting on Isaiah 63, J. Wright, 'Spirit and Wilderness: The Interplay of Two Motifs within the Hebrew Bible as a Background to Mark 1:2–13', in *Perspectives on Language and Text: Festschrift for F. I. Andersen*, ed. E. W. Conrad and E. G. Newing (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 269–98, esp. 289, states: 'The spirit in this chapter is not the spirit of the special endowment as of the leaders of old, but is the very presence of God himself manifested in power and in operation'. Note the discussion of G. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 713–14.

Isaiah 63:10, Paul issues a warning to this new community not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, 'as Israel had done' in the wilderness (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1–11), the more so since they have been sealed by that same Holy Spirit until the day of *redemption* (4:30).[195] The change from the indicative ('they [Israel] grieved his Holy Spirit') to the imperative ('do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God') is deliberate and makes eminent sense in this exhortatory context. Paul picks up the Isaianic text in a chapter that highlights the work of God's Spirit (= God's personal presence; Isa. 63:10, 11, 14) in relation to the major salvation-historical event of the Old Testament, namely, the exodus. As he handles this scriptural passage, the apostle is obviously not engaging in some kind of atomistic exegesis, as he is often charged. Rather, he reads the Old Testament text with an understanding of its immediate context, its place in the flow of salvation history, and, apparently, within a pattern of new Exodus typology. Paul interprets the passage according to its plain sense, applying it to the new covenant community upon whom the ends of the ages have come (cf. 1 Cor. 10:11).

The exalted title used in Paul's exhortation, that his readers should not cause grief or distress to God's Spirit, echoes the language of Isaiah. *The Holy Spirit of God*, which is a rich expression not usually found elsewhere (cf. 1 Thess. 4:8), emphatically underscores the identity of the one who may be offended, and thus the seriousness of causing him distress. He is the 'Spirit' who is characterized by holiness, and therefore sensitive to anything unholy. And he is none other than the Spirit *of God*, who is at work in those who have been *created to be like God* in the *righteousness and holiness* that come from the truth (v. 24). Paul understands the Spirit in fully personal terms, since only persons can be grieved or feel pain and distress.[196] His injunction is striking, for it refers not to a direct attack on the Spirit but to believers engaging in sinful activities mentioned in the previous verses (especially harmful speech) which destroy relationships within the body and so mar the Spirit's work in building Christ's people (cf. 2:22; 4:3, 4). Anything incompatible with the unity or purity of the church is inconsistent with the Spirit's own nature and therefore grieves him.[197]"[198]

Clinton Arnold writes "Paul echoes the language of Isa 63:10 when he warns his readers not to grieve the Holy Spirit. In that passage, the prophet recalls the exodus

[195] In the preceding verse, Isa. 63:9, the prophet refers back to the Exodus event when he speaks of Yahweh acting 'in love and mercy' to redeem his people (and this is parallel to 'the angel of his presence [i.e., his Holy Spirit] saved them'), and as he looks forward to a new Exodus of Israel from exile. Isaiah's use of Exodus typology to depict Israel's future redemption from exile in a new Exodus has recently been shown to provide an important pattern for the substructure of Mark's Gospel and an understanding of Jesus' mission in Luke. Note R. E. Watts, *Isaiah's New Exodus and Mark* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1997), and M. Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1996), 247–66, etc., respectively. The parallels here in Eph. 4 suggest that Paul also was aware of this new Exodus focus in relation to his Gentile Christian readers.

[196] The verb λυπέω has the basic idea of grief or sorrow and occurs frequently in the LXX (cf. Gen. 45:5; 2 Sam. 19:2), as well as some fifteen times in Paul (cf. 2 Cor. 2:2–5; 7:8–11), out of a total twenty-six New Testament occurrences. Here the verb signifies 'to cause someone to be sad, sorrowful or distressed;' cf. Louw and Nida §25.75.

[197] Stott, 189.

[198] O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (pp. 346–348). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

event and how God redeemed his people with love and mercy (63:9), yet they rebelled against him in the desert and 'grieved[199] his Holy Spirit' (63:10). The psalmist likewise laments, 'How often they rebelled against him in the desert and grieved him in the wasteland!' (Ps 78:40). Paul recognizes that the new people of God face a similar danger. They, too, have been redeemed by God (Eph 1:7, 14) in an act of his love and mercy (2:4) and run the risk of rebelling against God in their words and actions.[200],[201]

Darrell Bock writes "The language parallels Isaiah 63:9–10, where acts that produced grieving by the Spirit were preceded by acts of good faith by God. The allusion may also hint at a risk in doing so. Believers are accountable to God, who can respond with discipline. Psalm 78:40–72 shows how these themes can be juxtaposed.[202] The offence is a significant one since they are called to reflect and represent God's presence in the world. The idea of grief also points to the pain or loss that such misrepresentation produces. Some hesitate to give emotions to God, but he also loves, has anger and rejoices. These acts that cause grieving are counter to why the Spirit indwells them and seals them for their day of deliverance (1:13–14). It is inconsistent with why God took the initiative to save them and with where God is taking them one day."[203]

The declarative statement, which modifies this prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 describes a ministry the Holy Spirit performs at the moment of justification on behalf of every member of the body of Christ. It asserts that by means of the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence at the moment of justification, every believer has been sealed for the day of the redemption, which is a reference to the rapture.

The referent of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὅς) is God the Holy Spirit and contains the figure of metonymy, which means that the Holy Spirit is put for the exercise of His divine omnipotence at the moment of the believer's justification. It is the preposition *en* (ἐν), which serves as a marker of means, which indicates that the exercise of the Holy Spirit's omnipotence is "the means by which" the church age believer was marked with the seal, which identifies them as the Father's possession and which seal was for the day of the redemption.

The verb *sphragizō* (σφραγίζω) pertains to marking something with a seal as a means of identification in order to secure it as one's own possession. Thus, it speaks of something making something secure as a sign of ownership. The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is of course the recipients of the Ephesian epistle and specifically the members of the Gentile Christian community who lived

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[199] The LXX has a different word for "grieve" (παρώξυναν, which actually means "provoke") from what appears in Ephesians. The word Paul uses (λυπεῖτε) more correctly reflects the Hebrew original (*ʿṣb*).
[200] The LXX has a different word for "grieve" (παρώξυναν, which actually means "provoke") from what appears in Ephesians. The word Paul uses (λυπεῖτε) more correctly reflects the Hebrew original (*ʿṣb*).
[201] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (p. 306). Zondervan.
[202] Arnold, p. 306.
[203] Bock, D. L. (2019). *Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary* (E. J. Schnabel, Ed.; Vol. 10, pp. 143–144). Inter-Varsity Press.

in the Roman province of Asia. The word not only refers to them as a corporate unit but also as individuals. The latter is indicated by this form is used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exception expressing the idea that the "each and every" member of the church was sealed identifying them as the Father's possession and which sealing too place at the moment of justification.

The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) refers to an event, which will occur within a twenty-four hour period, namely the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is signified by the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις), which modifies it. As was the case in Ephesians 1:7 and 14, the noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) appears here in Ephesians 4:30 and as was the case in Ephesians 1:14, here in Ephesians 4:30, it is used of the redemption of the body of the church age believer when they receive their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which is imminent. Specifically, it speaks of the church age believer experiencing receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church. The redemption of the church age believer's body at the rapture or resurrection of the church will be the completion of their salvation and sanctification. The noun *apolutrōsis* (ἀπολύτρωσις) functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive, which means that it is identifying the referent of the latter as the moment when the church age believer receives their resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church, which completes their salvation and sanctification. The noun *hemera* (ἡμέρα) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of purpose, which means that it is marking the day of redemption as the purpose for which the Holy Spirit sealed the church age believer at the moment of their justification. Thus, it is marking the church age believer receiving a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church as the purpose for which the Holy Spirit sealed them church age believer at the moment of their justification.

The day of redemption when every church age believer receives their resurrection body is first mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 1:14 and he also alludes to it in Romans 8:23.

Ephesians 1:3 The God, namely the Father of the Lord ruling over us, who is Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise. Namely, because He is the one who has blessed each and every one of us by means of each and every kind of Spirit appropriated blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. 4 For He chose each and every one of us for His own purpose because of Him alone before creation in order that each and every one of us would be holy as well as uncensurable in His judgment. 5 He did this by predestinating each and every one of us for the purpose of adoption as sons because of His love through Jesus Christ for Himself according to the pleasure of His will. 6 This was for the purpose of praising His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on each and every one of us because of the one who is divinely loved. 7 Because of whom, each one of us

are experiencing that which is the redemption through His blood, namely the forgiveness of our transgressions according to His infinite grace. 8 This He provided in abundance for the benefit of each and every one of us because of the exercise of a wisdom, which is absolute and divine in nature resulting in the manifestation of an insight, which is absolute and divine in nature. 9 He did this by revealing the mystery of His will for the benefit of each and every one of us according to His pleasure, which He planned beforehand because of our faith in and union and identification with Himself. 10 This was for the dispensation which brings to completion the various periods of history. Namely, to unite for the benefit of Himself each and every animate and inanimate object in the sphere of the sovereign authority of the person of the one and only Christ. Specifically, to unite for the benefit of Himself those things in the heavens as well as those things on the earth in the sphere of the sovereign authority of Himself. 11 Because of whom, each and every one of us has been claimed as a possession because of having been predestinated according to the predetermined plan. Namely, the one who is causing each and every animate and inanimate object to function according to His purpose, that is, His sovereign will 12 in order that each and every one of us would belong to a particular group of people. Namely, those who are certain of possessing a confident expectation of blessing because of their faith in and union and identification with the one and only Christ for the purpose of praising His glory. 13 Correspondingly, because of whom, each and every one of you were sealed by means of the omnipotence of the one and only promised Spirit, who is holy because each and every one of you obeyed the one and only message, which is truth, namely, the proclamation of the one and only gospel, which produced your salvation. Specifically, because each one of you believed in Him. 14 The Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance until He redeems His possession for the praise of His glory. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:23 Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies. (NET)

The relationship between the declarative statement and the prohibition in Ephesians 4:30 is extremely important for the recipients of this letter and all Christians throughout history and up to the present moment and future because the declarative statement presents the motivation for continuing to obey this prohibition. Namely that, they must continue to obey this prohibition because the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit at justification made them Father's permanent possession and will result in them receiving a resurrection body.

They must continue to obey this prohibition because of what the Spirit did for them at the justification in making them the Father's permanent possession and

because of what the Father will do for them through His Son at the rapture when He gives them a resurrection body. In other words, they must live their lives in a manner consistent with what the Spirit did for them at the justification in making them the Father's permanent possession and because of what the Father will do for them through His Son at the rapture in the future when He gives them a resurrection body.

So therefore, the declarative statement in Ephesians 4:30 is referring to two events which serves as bookends for the church age and the eternal plan of the Father for every church age believer, namely, the sealing ministry at justification and the resurrection of the church.

Clinton Arnold writes "What is interesting in this context that deals with the problem of ongoing sinful practices in the lives of believers is that Paul does not threaten them with the potential loss of the Spirit if they persist in their sin. Rather, he stresses that they continue to belong to God and bear his mark of ownership until their final redemption. Under the new covenant, the Spirit does not depart when sin is committed. Instead, the Spirit deeply grieves over it. Paul presents this as a truth that should motivate believers not to indulge their sinful desires—whether this might be filthy talk, stealing, uncontrolled anger, lying, or any other vice."[204]

Lewis Sperry Chafer writes "Because of the fact that the flesh and the Spirit are contrary the one to the other, the Apostle goes on to say: 'and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption' (verse 30). This important text, in addition to its clear implications as to the personality of the Holy Spirit, discloses the engaging fact that the child of God from the moment he is saved is so related to the indwelling Spirit that the sensitiveness of the Spirit supplements the normal functions of conscience. The Christian no longer lives according to his conscience alone, which conscience may be perverted and seared, but with the Holy Spirit Who may be grieved or not grieved by an act, a word, or a thought. That this new standard which the presence of the Spirit creates is higher than the old, and that under these conditions the true believer cannot walk as he walked before, needs no added emphasis (cf. Rom. 9:1). So, also, it should be observed that the Spirit Himself indwelling the believer becomes that *sealing* of God which is unto the day of redemption. That 'day,' be it said, is not the day of our death: it is rather the Day of Christ—the day when the body will be raised, redeemed, and reunited to the glorified soul and spirit. It is the day of 'our gathering together unto Him' (2 Thess 2:1). Thus, as we grieve the Spirit by turning to seek our consolation in the world and not in Christ, so, contrariwise, we satisfy the Spirit when we live wholly unto Christ and look steadfastly for the day of redemption which ever draweth nigh."[205]

[204] Arnold, C. E. (2010). *Ephesians* (pp. 306–307). Zondervan.
[205] Chafer, L. S. (1935). *The Ephesian letter* (p. 142). Loizeaux Brothers.

1 Thessalonians [5:19] Do not extinguish the Spirit. (NET)

This verse is composed of the following: (1) articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**Spirit**" (2) negative particle *me* (μή), "**not**" (3) second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *sbennymai* (σβέννυμαι), "**extinguish**."

Once again, Paul is employing the figure of asyndeton which means that he is not using a connective word between the previous command in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and the prohibition to follow here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. The purpose of this figure is to emphasize the solemn nature of the prohibition in verse 19.

The noun *pneuma* means "the Spirit" and refers of course to the Holy Spirit and not the human spirit. This is indicated by the articular construction of the word, which indicates that this word is in a class by itself expressing the idea that there were many spirits in the world but only one of them is a member of the Trinity and thus God. Secondly, this word is used in Scripture in relation to fire, and when it is, it is used of the Holy Spirit and never for the human spirit (cf. Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 2:3-4; 18:25).

The second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *sbennymai* (σβέννυμαι) occurs 145 times in classical Greek and 45 times in the Septuagint (LXX). In both bodies of literature the word has the following meanings: (1) Of fire: "to quench, to be extinguished, to go out." (2) Of fluids: "to suck dry, to dry up." (3) Of men, plants, and cities: "to die, perish." (4) Of foods in cooking: "to steam." (5) "To still, to damp down, to restrain, to rest, to lie down, to abate." (6) Of emotions and moods: "to still, to calm." (7) "To suppress, to restrain, to fade, to die out, to disappear" of the influence of personality.

The verb appears only 6 times in the Greek New Testament (Matt. 12:20; 25:8; Mark 9:48; Eph. 6:16; 1 Thess. 5:19; Heb. 11:34) where it is always used in relation to fire, either in a literal or metaphoric sense. The term *sbennumi* in the Greek New Testament is always used of extinguishing a light or fire whether in a figurative or literal sense. It is used of literal fire in Matthew 25:8, Mark 9:47 and Hebrews 11:34. It is used in a figurative or metaphorical sense in Matthew 12:20, Ephesians 6:16, and 1 Thessalonians 5:19. In Ephesians 6:16, the verb *sbennumi* is employed in Paul's military analogy and thus in a figurative or metaphorical sense for the act of "extinguishing" the flaming missiles of the evil one.

Now, here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 the verb *sbennymai* is employed in a metaphorical or figurative sense of extinguishing a fire. Specifically, it is used of extinguishing the post-justification activities of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the members of the Thessalonian Christian community in the sense of hindering them.

The referent of the second person plural form of this verb is of course the Thessalonian Christian community. It not only refers to them as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions indicating that each member of this community is required to continue obeying this command.

The meaning of this verb is negated by the negative particle *me* which denies the idea expressed by the verb. Therefore, these two words are forming a prohibition and a general precept which expresses the idea of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community not extinguishing the Holy Spirit.

The present imperative conjugation of this verb *sbennymai* and the negative particle *me* has the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. Therefore, they are expressing the idea that the Thessalonians must continue making it their habit of not extinguishing the Spirit since the contents of First Thessalonians affirm the Thessalonians were remaining faithful to Paul's apostolic teaching, i.e., the gospel.

The noun *pneuma*, "the Spirit" functions as an accusative direct object which means that it is receiving the action of the second person plural present active imperative conjugation of the verb *sbennymai*. This indicates that the Spirit receives the action of not being extinguished in a figurative sense and thus the Spirit's post-justification ministries on behalf of the Thessalonians receives the action of not being hindered by the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 Each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of not extinguishing the Spirit. (Author's translation)

The apostle Paul solemnly issues another prohibition here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. This is the second of three prohibitions that appear in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-21 (cf. 1 Thess. 5:15, 20). This prohibition requires that each member of the Thessalonian Christian continue to make it their habit of not extinguishing the Spirit.

Paul's use of the verb *sbennymai* here in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 is taken from the gospels where the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence depicted God by fire. One of the figures that is used for the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures is fire. John the Baptist is reported as having explicitly linked the coming of the Spirit with fire.

Luke 3:16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but one more powerful than I am is coming—I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (NET)

The "**tongues of fire**" that rested over the heads of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost was sign of the Spirit's presence in the church. The baptism of the Spirit thus was linked with fire.

Acts 2:1 Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2:2 Suddenly a sound like a violent wind blowing came from heaven and filled the entire house where they were sitting. 2:3 And tongues spreading out like a fire appeared to them and came to rest on each one of them. 2:4 All of

them were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them. (NET)

In the Old Testament, fire was a symbol of the Lord's presence and the instrument of His power, either in the way of approval or judgment. The Lord pre-incarnate Christ appeared in the burning bush to Moses in Exodus 3:2-5, which we call in theology, a theophany.

Exodus 3:2 The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from within a bush. He looked—and the bush was ablaze with fire, but it was not being consumed! (NET)

Exodus 14:24 In the morning watch the Lord looked down on the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw the Egyptian army into a panic. (NET)

Fire was also equated with the Lord's judgment.

Numbers 11:1 When the people complained, it displeased the LORD. When the LORD heard it, his anger burned, and so the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outer parts of the camp. 11:2 When the people cried to Moses, he prayed to the LORD, and the fire died out. 11:3 So he called the name of that place Taberah because there the fire of the LORD burned among them. (NET)

God is compared to fire not only because of His perfect integrity but also on account of His anger towards sin.

Hebrews 12:29 For our *God is indeed a devouring fire*. (NET)

Now, we know it is impossible for mortal man to extinguish the Holy Spirit of God so there must be a figure being employed here by the apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 with his use of this verb *sbennymai*. It is in fact figurative or metaphorical language for hindering the various post-justification ministries of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the child of God.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary lists the following definitions for the verb hinder: (1) To cause delay, interruption, or difficulty in; check, retard, hamper (2) To prevent from doing, acting, or happening (3) To be an obstacle or impediment.

The verb "hinder" emphasizes causing harmful or annoying delay or interference with progress. When the child of God sins and gets out of fellowship, they are hindering the activity of the Spirit in their lives.

What is that activity? One of His activities is to provide light for the soul of the child of God meaning guidance and direction in doing the will of God as they live in the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. The other activity that the Spirit is performing in the lives of God's children after justification is reproducing the character of Jesus Christ, which is the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:22-23; Col. 1:6, 10) or the fruit of the light (cf. Eph. 5:9) or fruit of righteousness (cf. Phil. 1:11.

When the child of God sins and get out of fellowship they are in effect hindering the Spirit's work of manifesting the Light or the holy character of the person of Jesus Christ in their physical bodies. When they sin and get out of fellowship, this activity of the Spirit of fruit bearing is hindered or prevented from continuing.

If we paraphrase Webster's definitions of the verb "hinder" and relate them to the Spirit's work in the life of the child of God, we could say the following: (1) Sin causes a delay or an interruption of the Spirit's work in producing Christ-like character in the believer. (2) Sin hampers the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer. (3) Sin prevents the Spirit from producing Christ-like character in the believer. (4) Sin is an obstacle or an impediment to the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer. (5) Sin causes harmful and annoying delay or interference to the Spirit's work in producing Christ-like character in the believer. (6) Sin interferes with the progress of the Spirit's work of producing Christ-like character in the believer.

Therefore, the verb *sbennymai* and the negative particle *me* are expressing the idea of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community not extinguishing the Holy Spirit in the sense of hindering the Spirit's various post-justification ministries on behalf of the Thessalonians.

The present imperative conjugation of the verb *sbennymai* and the negative particle *me* have the force of a general precept and makes no comment about whether the action is going on or not. It can also have the idea of the cessation of some act that is already in progress. However, the contents of First Thessalonians makes clear that the Thessalonians were obedient to the gospel. They make clear that the Thessalonians were not extinguishing or hindering the post-justification ministries of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Paul is expressing a general precept when issuing this prohibition here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

Paul affirms in 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8 that the Thessalonians were faithful to the gospel in spite of severe persecution was serving to encourage the Christians in the Roman province of Achaia and Macedonia. He also affirms in 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 that the gospel was working mightily in their lives. Paul affirms again in 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:10 that the Thessalonians were faithful to the gospel. He affirms in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 that the Thessalonians were experiencing their sanctification. In 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12, he affirms that they were practicing the love of God when interacting with each other and those in the non-Christian community.

Therefore, as was the case in Ephesians 4:30 when he prohibited the Ephesian Christian community to not grieve the Holy Spirit, Paul here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 is performing preventative maintenance by issuing this prohibition to not extinguish the Spirit. He is warning the Thessalonians ahead of time not to extinguish the Spirit's work in their lives. He is not implying that they were already involved in

this sin of hindering the post-justification work of the Holy Spirit but rather he is expressing a general precept.

Thomas Constable writes "Quenching 'the Spirit' is a figurative expression used to illustrate the possibility of hindering the Spirit's work in and through the believer. The image is that of water thrown on a fire (cf. Mark 9:48; Heb. 11:34). The proper response is to follow the Spirit's direction and control without resistance (v. 18; cf. Gal. 5:16, 25). The next verse gives one way in which believers can 'quench the Spirit.'"[206]

J. Hampton Keathley III writes "'Extinguish' is sbennumi, 'put out (a fire), quench, extinguish.' In its other occurrences in the New Testament it refers to fire (see Matt. 12:20; 25:8; Heb. 11:34, or metaphorically, Mark 9:48; Eph. 6:16). This is clearly a prohibition against hindering the work, ministry, and gifts of the Spirit who, because of His enlightening, empowering, cleansing—and ministry of warming the hearts of His people—is sometimes likened to fire in Scripture (Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:3, 4, and see also 2 Tim. 1:6). In view of this and the prohibition of verse 20 regarding prophecies, some in the church may have been resisting the gift of prophecy, and perhaps other manifestations of the Spirit as well. As a result, some of the leadership, being more cautious and conservative, may have overreacted and prohibited the ministry of the Spirit. In Corinth, a very different scenario occurred. There the gift of prophecy was being ignored because of an overzealous emphasis on the showy gifts like speaking in tongues (see 1 Cor. 12-14). However, because believers are called upon to walk by means of the Holy Spirit as the enabling power for the Christian life (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16ff.), it is possible that Paul's statement here is general, forbidding them to check the Spirit's ministry of controlling, refining, and convicting believers in their daily walk (see also Eph 4:30). By way of application, the prohibition is applicable to any aspect of the work of the indwelling Spirit in a Christian's life in view of the fact that sin grieves the person of the Spirit. We can say, then, that any sin a believer refuses to confess and deal with, grieves the Spirit's person and quenches or stifles His power."[207]

Knute Larson writes "The Holy Spirit himself cannot be put out. He is God. We can, however, stifle his work in our life. We quench the Spirit, or grieve him, when we do not reach for those attitudes and graces which are peculiarly his—love, joy, and peace (Gal. 5:22–23). The Spirit's fire is quenched when his presence is ignored or his guidance and conviction in our hearts are suppressed and rejected."[208]

Now, there is an interpretative issue that we need to address with this prohibition here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 since some interpreters believe that the reference to the

[206] Constable, Thomas L.; *First Thessalonians 2016 Edition*; page 50; Published by Sonic Light.
[207] Keathley, J. Hampton III; *I Thessalonians: An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary*; page 117; Biblical Studies Press, 1998
[208] Larson, K. (2000). *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon* (Vol. 9, p. 75). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Spirit in this verse is related to the reference to prophecies and in particular the exercise of the gift of prophecy in 1 Thessalonians 5:20.

Jeffery Weima expresses this view, he writes "Paul opens the fourth unit with a general prohibition: 'Do not quench the Spirit' (τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβέννυτε, *to pneuma mē sbennyte*). The apostle has mentioned the Holy Spirit explicitly only three other times in the letter thus far (1:5, 6; 4:8), and so here the reference to 'the Spirit' may appear to come quite unexpectedly and abruptly. However, as noted above (see comment on 5:16), in Paul's mind the activities of rejoicing, praying, and thanksgiving are all intimately linked to the working of the Holy Spirit so that the three commands of the third unit function as a transition to this fourth unit, with its treatment of the Spirit and Spirit-inspired prophecy in the context of worship.

If the larger context is ignored, the mention of 'the Spirit' could be interpreted in a general fashion to refer to ethical or moral conduct (see Gal. 5:18, 22–24). Thus, for example, John Chrysostom (*Hom. 1 Thess*. 11 [PG 62:461, 462]) reads into this verse a reference to the 'fruit of the Spirit.' However, in light of the immediately following reference to 'prophecies,' the mention of "the Spirit" must refer to the gifts or charismatic signs of the Spirit. A number of commentators argue that Paul has in view the gifts of the Spirit in general (e.g., see a list in 1 Cor. 12:7–11; also Rom. 12:6–8) and only in the next verse specifies the particular gift of prophecy (so, e.g., Ellicott 1880: 81; Frame 1912: 205; Best 1977: 238; Wanamaker 1990: 202). Others (Gunkel 1979: 30–31; Moore 1969: 84) think that the apostle already has a particular charismatic gift in mind, namely, speaking in tongues, since this gift proved to be a problem in the Corinthian church and Paul elsewhere pairs tongues speaking and prophesying in a manner that would parallel the references here to 'the Spirit' and 'prophecies' (1 Cor. 13:8: "as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease").[209] However, given (1) the pattern in this fourth unit of moving from the general to the particular (see comment above), (2) the content of the immediately following command, and (3) the use of the verb 'to quench,' it is more likely that the reference to 'the Spirit' is, in the apostle's mind, already restricted to the particular gift of prophecy (so, e.g., Bruce 1982: 125; Holtz 1986: 259; Fee 1994a: 59; Malherbe 2000: 331; Fee 2009: 219). This understanding of 'the Spirit' is supported by the occurrence of the same term (*pneuma*) in 2 Thess. 2:2, which in a context where it is set over against 'a word' and 'a letter,' also has the

Hom. 1 Thess. John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 1 Thessalonians*
PG Patrologia graeca, edited by J.-P. Migne, 162 vols. (Paris, 1857–86)
e.g., *exempli gratia*, for example
e.g., *exempli gratia*, for example
[209] The appeal to 1 Cor. 13:8 is misleading, since tongues speaking and prophecy are not paired there but part of a list of three things (the third item is knowledge) that are temporary in contrast to the permanency of love.
e.g., *exempli gratia*, for example

sense of 'prophecy' (so NIV) or "prophetic utterance" (Giblin 1967: 243; Fee 1994a: 74; 1994b: 207–8)."[210]

This author disagrees with Weima since the general character of the prohibition here in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 would rather indicate that Paul is thinking in broader terms for all the various post-justification ministries He performs through the Thessalonians and not simply the exercise of the gift of prophecy. Thus, Paul is thinking of the Thessalonians not hindering the Spirit's work in their lives in relation to experiencing sanctification (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8). He would also be thinking of the Thessalonians not hindering the Spirit's work in their lives in exercising the love of God in their lives when interacting with each other and the non-Christian community (cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:9-11). The apostle would also be thinking of the Thessalonians not hindering Paul's Spirit inspired teaching in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 by rejecting it He does not want them to reject his teaching that the dead in Christ will rise and then those who are alive at the time of the rapture and together will be reunited with the Lord Jesus in the earth's atmosphere at the rapture or resurrection of the church. Lastly, Paul would also be thinking of the Thessalonians not hindering his Spirit inspired teaching in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 by rejecting it. He does not want them to reject his teaching that they and all church age believers are delivered from the Lord's wrath which will be exercised against every unrepentant, unregenerate human being during the seventieth week of Daniel and His subsequent Second Advent.

D. E. Hiebert writes "The verb 'put out' (*sbennute*), when used of literal fire, means 'to quench, to extinguish.' Metaphorically it means 'to suppress, to stifle.' The reference is not to the person of the Holy Spirit Himself, for He can never be extinguished, but to His activity in the human heart. Since fire is always put out by something outside itself, this prohibition is directed against some hindrance to the Spirit's operation in their midst. It is not indicated whether they are quenching the Spirit in themselves or in others. Both thoughts may be included in this general injunction, yet the connection with v. 20 seems to indicate that the suppression of prophetic utterances in the assembly was primarily in view.

The precise situation in the Thessalonian church calling forth this injunction is not clear. Many interpreters hold that it arose out of the operation of the charismatic gifts in the Thessalonian church. Apparently speaking with tongues had led to disorders and confusion in the assembly, as at Corinth, and consequently some of the more staid members had reacted strongly against these spiritual manifestations, endeavoring to restrain them. Under this view, the situation was exactly the opposite to that at Corinth. There Paul had to restrain enthusiastic excesses in the exercise of

NIV New International Version (2011, unless otherwise indicated)

[210] Weima, J. A. D. (2014). *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: 1–2 Thessalonians*. (R. W. Yarbrough & R. H. Stein, Eds.) (p. 405). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

spectacular gifts, but here he must warn against an undue checking of the moving of the Spirit. Such an interpretation of the situation is possible, but it seems to read a lot into this simple injunction.

The general character of the prohibition would certainly leave room for a wider interpretation. Anything that might be permitted in their assembly, or in their own hearts, which was contrary to the nature and work of the Spirit would quench His operations. The Spirit's fire is quenched whenever His presence is ignored and His promptings are suppressed and rejected, or the fervor He kindles in the heart is dampened by unspiritual attitudes, criticisms, or actions. Certainly, any toleration of immorality and idleness, against which they have been warned (4:1–12), would quench the Spirit's working in their midst. They must not allow the operations of the Spirit to be suppressed either through yielding to the impulses of the flesh or by imposing a mechanical order upon the services that would hamper the free movements of the Spirit."[211]

In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 6 and 4:8, the Spirit is described by Paul as *hagios*, "**holy**." However, he does not employ the word here in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 because he is not emphasizing the effect that sin has upon the person of the Spirit and thus the Thessalonians' fellowship with Him. But rather it emphasizes the negative impact that sin has upon His various post-justification ministries that He performs on their behalf.

When Paul does uses this adjective *hagios*, "holy" in 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 6, and 4:8, he does so in order to remind the Thessalonians that the Spirit was responsible for their sanctification, which is designed to reproduce the holiness of Christ's character in the life of the believer. By obeying the gospel, the Thessalonians were obeying the Spirit who in turn reproduced the holy character of Christ in their lives.

The presence of this word "**holy**" is also a reminder to the Thessalonian Christian community that the Spirit's role in conforming them into the image of Jesus Christ involves providing them the capacity to reflect the holiness of God. The believer cannot experience fellowship with God unless they are as holy as God. Since the Spirit permanently indwells every Christian without exception, they now have the capacity to experience holy living or a life that conforms to God's perfect standards. This word denotes the Spirit as being inherently holy, thus it refers to the holiness of the Spirit, which refers to the absolute perfection of the Spirit's character.

This word "**holy**" is also a reminder to them that when they sin, they must confess these sins to the Father in order that they might be restored to fellowship with God since God is holy (cf. 1 John 1:5-9). This fellowship is maintained by obedience to the Spirit's teaching in the gospel.

[211] Hiebert, D. E. (1996). *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Revised Edition, pp. 262–263). Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books.

"Extinguishing" the Spirit is another sin committed by the believer that prevents him from being filled with the Spirit and walking according to the Spirit. In the context of 1 Thessalonians 5:19, the prohibition is a part of a series of exhortations which concludes Paul's message to the Thessalonians. In 1 Thessalonians 1:2-9 Paul praises the Thessalonians for their spiritual walk and witness. But he also challenges them throughout the rest of the epistle to continue to live obediently, orderly and in harmony with one another and with those in leadership. These praises and challenges are given in light of the rapture, which is the resurrection of the church, which is imminent and alluded to in every chapter of 1 Thessalonians.

What does fire produce? Light of course. Light enables the child of God to see where they are going in a spiritual sense. In the same way that the pillar of fire provided light and guided the Exodus generation through the darkness of the desert so the Spirit provides light for the church age believer's soul in order to guide them through the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. When they sin, they are extinguishing the light that the Spirit provides in their soul when they are in fellowship (1 John 1:5-2:2)**.**

Not only are they depriving themselves the guidance and direction of the Spirit when they sin but they are also hindering the Spirit's work of manifesting the light or holy character of Christ in their physical bodies while they live in the midst of the darkness of the cosmic system of Satan. When the child of God is out of fellowship, the holy character of Christ cannot be manifested in their physical bodies.

Remember what the Lord Jesus Christ said in **John 8:12 Therefore, Jesus addressed them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who keeps on obeying me (as a lifestyle) shall no never walk in the darkness but will possess the light of life." (NASB95)**

The Spirit's job during the church age is always to manifest the light of Christ through the body of Christ. The responsibility of the child of God as members of the body of Christ is to manifest the person of Christ. The Spirit enables them to, but this is hindered and brought to a complete stop when they sin and are out of fellowship. Paul exhorts the Roman believers to put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:12 The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. (NASB95)

When they are filled or more accurately influenced by the Spirit, they can discern the lies from the cosmic system of Satan.

Ephesians 5:13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. (NASB95)

So the church's function as the body of Christ is to manifest the Person of Christ or in other words, the Light of Christ. This is why Paul desired that Christ would be manifested in his physical body in Philippians 1:21.

Philippians 1:19 In fact, I know without a doubt that this (situation) will result for my benefit in (soul) prosperity through your supportive prayer by means of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 20 According to my confident anticipation that I will be put to shame in nothing but with all courage, as always, even now, Christ will be glorified in my body whether by life or by death because 21 as far as I am concerned to keep on living is Christ and to have died is profit. (Author's translation)

This is why Paul exhorts the Philippians in the following manner:

Philippians 2:14 Keep on performing all activities without murmurs resulting from doubts 15 so that you might demonstrate yourselves to be uncensurable and uncontaminated, students of God (the Holy Spirit), virtuous in the midst of a corrupt and depraved generation. Among whom you yourselves keep on appearing as luminaries in the cosmos 16 by all of you continuing to exhibit the Word of life as a boast for me on the day of Christ because I have not run in vain, nor have I worked diligently in vain. (Author's translation)

Lying to the Spirit

Another sin that prevents the believer from being filled with the Spirit or more accurately being influenced by the Spirit is that of "lying" to the Spirit. The only place where lying against the Holy Spirit is mentioned is in the book of Acts.

A married couple committed it during the early first century church, during the pre-canon period of the church age. The account of their sin against the Holy Spirit is noted in Acts 5:1-11. The book of Acts documents the transition period from the dispensation of the Mosaic Law to the mystery dispensation called the church age. Believers in the Old Testament dispensations were governed by the Law but during the church age, believers are governed by the Holy Spirit. This is never more evident as in this passage in Acts regarding the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. (NASB95)

This passage refers to the fact that the apostles were evangelizing their fellow Jewish countrymen in Israel. The church had just multiplied overnight to 3,000 persons on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:41 and more were being added by the day according to Acts 2:47, thus many needs were arising that needed to be met. Their fellow Jewish countryman and the synagogues would not aid those who were identifying themselves with Jesus Christ who was just recently crucified just a few months before on the fourteenth day of Nisan, which is the Passover.

So, the church had to rely upon each other to meet each other's needs. Their giving here is the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This is not communism that we see here in this passage where believers are selling their property to aid others. Communism is not only involuntary but tyranny itself. The selling of property here by the disciples was voluntary and motivated properly by their love for the Lord and a product of the Holy Spirit's ministry. This extraordinary generosity that is expressed here by the early church was a result of the fruit of the Spirit and not performed by human power.

Furthermore, the early church was continually devoted to the apostle's teaching and to fellowship according to Acts 2:42. One of the doctrines the Lord taught the apostles was giving. This the apostles passed onto to the rest of the church.

We must note that the Greek in Acts 4:34 does not mean that everyone sold his property at once. Rather, from time to time, as need would arise, someone would sell a piece of property…not all their property at once…please note that…They would sell off a piece of property off as needs would arise. So, this was not a mass selling of all one's property.

There are two words in the Greek that clearly indicate this: (1) Nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *poleo*, "to sell." (2) third person plural imperfect active indicative form of the verb *phero*, "to bring."

The historical present of the participle *poleo* is used to describe a past event in narrative literature, which we have here, since Luke is narrating this event that took place early in the church's history. The reason for the use of the historical present is normally to portray an event vividly, as though the reader were in the midst of the scene as it unfolds.

The key is the imperfect tense of the verb *phero*. It is what we call an iterative imperfect tense. The imperfect is frequently used for repeated action in past time. It describes an action that occurred at different time intervals in the past.

There are two types of iterative imperfect: (1) Iterative proper, in which the imperfect indicates repeated action by the same agent (2) Distributive, in which the imperfect is used for individual acts of multiple agents. Here we have a distributive iterative imperfect tense used for individual acts of multiple agents.

The distributive iterative imperfect tense of the verb *phero* indicates that at different time intervals in the early 1st century church individual acts of giving were performed by multiple individuals in the church. So, this was done from time to time as needs would arise. This was not a mass selling of all one's property as some suggest. This was not communism! What the disciples were doing was not imposed by law, rule, regulation or requirement, as is the case with communism but rather the beautiful outcome of a Spirit-filled life.

Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land,

sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Barnabas is a central figure in the early church before Paul came on the scene. He was an associate of Paul. In fact, it was Barnabas who sponsored Paul.

The early church was suspicious of Paul because of his previous persecutions of the church. Everyone was frightened of him. But Barnabas demonstrating his leadership qualities, namely, his compassion, removed the disciples' distrust in Paul. He secured the admission of the former persecutor to their fellowship. He was called Barnabas as a testimony to his eloquence.

The literal meaning of his name is "son of prophecy." He was a Levite meaning he was descended from the priestly tribe of Levi. He was from the island of Cyprus and a cousin of the evangelist Mark. This account here in the book of Acts is the first time that we encounter him on the pages of Scripture.

We now come to the central characters of our study, namely Ananias and his wife Sapphira. Here we also have Satan infiltrating the church and influencing these two believers to lie to the Holy Spirit.

Remember what Peter said: **1 Peter 5:8 Be of sober {spirit} be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (NASB95)**

Well, Satan is about to devour this married couple. They were not alert meaning that they were not of sober spirit or in other words, under the influence of the Spirit's mentorship. Remember, that the early church had multiplied in the face of opposition from without. It never has been harmed or hindered from without, but it has been perpetually harmed and its work hindered by perils from within. Satan could not destroy the church with opposition from without, so he did what he has always done to churches, he seeks to divide from within.

Satan knows the following principle and knows it well: **Mark 3:25 "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." (NASB95)**

He seeks to cause church members to live in their old sin nature to live for self. Satan causes personality conflicts, which in turn divide a church from within. He brings individuals into a local assembly who are legalistic and self-righteous in the hopes of dividing it.

Galatians 2:4 But {it was} because of the false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage. (NASB95)

So here in Acts 5 we have Satan influencing two members of the early first century church and getting them involved in the sin of hypocrisy in the attempts to divide it. The Scriptures state that the church was unified.

Acts 4:32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one {of them} claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. (NASB95)

So here we have Satan looking to divine his enemy the church. The name "**Ananias**" means "God is gracious." Ananias was certainly not gracious in fact he was grieving the Holy Spirit by not allowing the Spirit to produce the fruit of the Spirit in his life, which will result in generosity.

The name "**Sapphira**" means "beautiful." Sapphira did not live up to her name for she was ugly in her soul.

The phrase "**kept back**" is the third person singular aorist middle indicative form of the verb *nosphizomai*, "to misappropriate funds for one's own benefit." This is an intensive middle emphasizing the part taking here by Ananias meaning that he kept back some of the money for himself. Ananias with his wife's full knowledge misappropriated the money from the land they sold for their own benefit. They only brought a portion of the money they received from the sale of the land. They wanted to enjoy the acclaim of the church, as Barnabas did, without making a genuine sacrifice.

Now you might say what is wrong with them keeping some of the money back for themselves. There is nothing wrong with it. There was no regulation in the church that men should give, or that they should give at all. This was not a requirement for fellowship or for service. So, what was their great sin? One must discover the nature of the sin by what Peter said both to Ananias and Sapphira.

The problem with these two individuals is that they were involved in hypocrisy. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was the sin of pretending that part of what they gave was all. It was the sin of attempting to appear what they really were not, of endeavoring to make it appear that they had done what they really had not. They were lying.

Ananias and Sapphira could have retained the proceeds from the sale of the property, of course, but in collusion with each other they had lied, saying they had given all the money when actually they had given only a portion of the money. They deliberately attempted to deceive the apostles and the rest of the church into thinking that they were giving all the money. You see, they were wanted the approbation of the entire church since as we read in Acts 4:36-37 that Barnabas had sold some of his property and gave all the money to the aid of the church. These two did not do that since they only gave a portion of the money while all the time deceiving everyone into thinking that they gave it all. The terrible nature of the sin is not that of refusing to give, not that of only giving part, but that of attempting to make men believe that they had given it all, when they had only given part, and so that of lying to God.

The word for "**hypocrite**" in the Greek New Testament is the noun *hupokrites*. Our English word "hypocrite" is a transliteration from the Greek word. It is a compound word based on the verb *krino*, "to judge."

Hupokrites primarily denotes "one who answers;" then, "a stage-actor." It was a custom for Greek and Roman actors to speak in large masks with mechanical devices for augmenting the force of the voice. Hence the word became used metaphorically of "a hypocrite."

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was the sin of acting the part of gracious givers when in fact they were not. So, the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was lying to the Holy Spirit and this sin was manifested in their hypocrisy before the congregation. One thing is for sure, they did not deceive God the Holy Spirit.

Luke is making a parallel between Ananias and Sapphira's sin and Achan's sin, which appears in Joshua 7. Luke's use of the verb *nosphizomai* here in Acts 5:2, which in the Septuagint (Greek translation of Hebrew bible) heads the account in Joshua 7:1-26 of Achan's misappropriation of part of what had been dedicated to God. His use of the verb here implies that Luke meant to draw a parallel between the sin of Achan as the Israelites began their conquest of Canaan and the sin of Ananias and Sapphira as the church began its mission. Both incidents came under the immediate and drastic judgment of God and teaching a sobering lesson, and this is very likely how the early church saw it as well.

Acts 5:2 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back {some} of the price of the land?" (NASB95)

The word for "**filled**" is the third person singular aorist active indicative form of the verb *pleroo*. The same verb that we noted in Ephesians 5:18. Here in Acts 5:3 we have the same *pleroo* being employed by the writer Luke, but this time we have Satan influencing Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Spirit as a result of their hypocrisy. The Holy Spirit was not influencing, guiding or empowering these two to give to the church but rather Satan was influencing and the motivator behind this sin. They were not under the influence of the Spirit but under the influence of Satan. Throughout history Satan has been influencing believers to act against God. He motivated David to take a census of the nation of Israel independently from God (1 Chronicles 21:1). He also is influencing Peter to stop the Lord from doing the Father's will and going to the Cross (Matthew 16:23).

The phrase "**to lie**" is the aorist middle infinitive form of the verb *pseudomai*. It means, "to communicate what is false, with the evident purpose of misleading."

The middle voice is important because it affects the translation and therefore, the understanding of what went on this particular situation with Ananias and Sapphira. This is what we call a causative direct middle voice. The subject has something done for or to himself or herself. The cause here is volitional meaning that Ananias of his own volition committing the act of lying to the Holy Spirit, but the causative direct middle suggests that the prompting lay elsewhere and only that consent or permission, or toleration was wrung from the subject.

So, what the causative direct middle indicates is that Ananias of his own volitional lied to the Holy Spirit but that he was prompted or influence by Satan to do so! Instead of resisting Satan and submitting to the Holy Spirit, Ananias and Sapphira gave in to Satan and lied to the Holy Spirit.

Notice how Peter says that Ananias lied to God here in verse 4 and in verse 3 Peter says he lied to the Holy Spirit, thus affirming the Personality of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is a Person as these passages clearly demonstrates and not a force. You cannot lie to a force, but you can lie to a Person. This sin proceeds from the heart that is not under the influence of the Spirit but under the influence of Satan and the cosmic system and the old sin nature.

Ananias and Sapphira committed this act of sin because they received this thought from Satan and acted upon it. This is very important because it brings out the principle that the Satan and the kingdom of darkness are involved in thought projection. Paul calls thought projections from the kingdom of darkness "**flaming missiles**."

Ephesians 6:16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil {one.}. (NASB95)

Satan was projecting thoughts at Ananias and Sapphira. He was feeding their arrogance and they acted, thus they were still responsible for their actions. They chose to listen to Satan. If you are not under the influence of the Spirit, it will bear out in your actions. The Lord noted the principle concerning the heart that is not under the Spirit's guidance and direction (Matthew 15:18-20; Genesis 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9).

Acts 5:5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it. (NASB95)

The young men got up and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him. What has taken place is dying discipline. As Peter wrote later in his life, judgment begins "with the royal family of God."

1 Peter 4:17a For {it is} time for judgment to begin with the household of God. (NASB95)

Here we also have a classic case of the sin unto death mentioned by the apostle John.

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not {leading} to death, he shall ask and {God} will for him give life to those who commit sin not {leading} to death. There is a sin {leading} to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. (NASB95)

This discipline was severe because it was an example to the church, just as Achan was an example for the nation of Israel during the dispensation of the Law.

There elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

Acts 5:7 Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter responded to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?" And she said, "Yes, that was the price." Then Peter {said} to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out {as well}."(NASB95)

The word for "**test**" here is the verb *peirazo*. In early Greek literature *peirazo* meant, "to attempt, to try." At times, it could mean, "to test or try the quality or character of someone or something." In contexts of "testing" God or Christ, *peirazo* denotes the human efforts to "prove" God, which are actually signs of unbelief. God is not to be doubted because of His perfect integrity and veracity. Unbelief doubts His perfect integrity. Ananias and Sapphira tested the Spirit to see how much they could get away with before He judges. The word here means that they were presuming on God the Holy Spirit. They were presuming on Him to see if He will perform His Word, or to stretch Him to the limits.

Acts 5:10 And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things. (NASB95)

The word for "**fear**" here is the noun *phobos*. This word appears in verse 5 and here in verse 11 in order to emphasis the impact that their deaths made on the early church.

Phobos was used often in classical literature for "sudden and violent fear, fright, panic." Throughout the classical period the word was used not only for "terror" and "headlong flight" but "fear" or "apprehension," whatever the cause. It was commonly used for fear of death. The word was sometimes used in the positive sense of "respect, awe," or "reverence," especially toward human authority or the gods.

In the Septuagint (LXX) *phobos* usually translates the Hebrew root *yir`ah*, "to fear, to be afraid." In the LXX the word means "terror" when it relates to the enemies of Yahweh. It means "reverence, respect" when used in relation to the believer's relationship to the Lord.

Phobos occurs 47 times in the Greek New Testament. It is used in a subjective sense meaning "fear, dread, terror." It is also used in an objective sense meaning, that which strikes terror. *Phobos* is used of fears, apprehensions, and feelings of anxiety. It also means reverence, respect when directed toward God. This same usage is employed when directed toward legitimate authority, the rank of a person or his dignity. Here in our passage in Acts 5 we have the church demonstrating reverence and respect for the Lord as a result of the death of both Ananias and Sapphira.

Now, you might have asked the question that I have asked, which is Ananias and Sapphira were not the only Christians to have lied to the Holy Spirit, why did God put these two to death? Quite simply, the church was in her infancy and as we have noted there was a great transition-taking place from the dispensation of the Mosaic Law to the mystery dispensation, we call the church.

The Holy Spirit was instrumental in this transition. In fact, He was orchestrating it. The fact that these two individuals were put to death for their lying to the Holy Spirit was to demonstrate that God was at work in this group called the church! They didn't commit a sin that was any more grievous than what believers commit today. Believers in our day and age give with improper motivation and have approbation lust just like these two did, but the Holy Spirit was placing His mark upon the church. The fact that these two were disciplined manifested before all Jerusalem both unbelievers and believers, that God was indeed working in this new group, which we know as the church and that indeed a new dispensation was underway.

So, by disciplining this couple, the Spirit revealed His displeasure with sin and it marked off the church as distinct from Israel for such discipline was not a work in Israel. Remember, God disciplines His children and not those who are not His. This principle is taught in Hebrews 12.

The fact that Ananias and Sapphira, two believers in the Lord Jesus Christ received dying discipline was a clear indication that God was working actively in the church as He was during the dispensation of Israel and in particular the Exodus generation where two million born-again believers received dying discipline from the Lord.

The Lord judges sin severely at the beginning of a new dispensation. At the beginning of the dispensation of the Law, the Lord severely disciplined believers in the 1st Client Nation to God, Israel. Just after the tabernacle was erected, God killed Nadab and Abihu for not following the proper protocol in worshipping Him in the Tabernacle. This is found in Leviticus 10. The Lord also killed Achan for disobeying orders after Israel had entered the Promised Land (Josh. 7). While God was certainly not responsible for their sins, He did use these judgments as warnings to the His people, and even to us (1 Corinthians 10:11-12). So, by severely disciplining Ananias and Sapphira the Lord by means of the Holy Spirit was actively governing this new group in Jerusalem called the church.

The Restraining Ministry of the Holy Spirit

The apostle Paul teaches in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 that the Holy Spirit working through church age believers, whom, He indwells, restrains evil and specifically the manifestation of the Antichrist. These verses belong to a section which began in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 and ends in 2 Thessalonians 2:12. In this section, Paul attempts to

correct and reassure the Thessalonians that the eschatological day of the Lord does not precede the rapture or resurrection of the church. He teaches that the Spirit, who indwells each member of the church and prevents the appearance of Antichrist and thus the seventieth week of Daniel from beginning, must be removed from earth before the Antichrist can manifest himself. Thus, the Spirit and the church must be removed before the seventieth week can take place since Daniel 9:27 teaches that the seventieth week begins with Antichrist establishing a treaty with the nation of Israel. Therefore, Paul is addressing in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 the relationship between the church as well as the rapture and the eschatological day of the Lord, i.e., the seventieth week of Daniel and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

Now, in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, Paul, Silvanus and Timothy present a polite request to each member of the Thessalonian Christian community.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ's arrival resulting in our gathering before Him, each of us is requesting each and every one of you brothers and sisters. (Author's translation)

What this request is in relation to, is identified with the expressions *tēs parousias tou kyriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou* (τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), "**our Lord Jesus Christ's arrival**" and *hēmōn episynagōgēs ep' auton* (ἡμῶν ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ' αὐτὸν), "**our gathering into His presence**." The latter presents the result of the former taking place. Therefore, this means that the Lord Jesus Christ's arrival at the rapture or resurrection of the church will "result in" Paul, Silvanus, Timothy and each member of the Thessalonian Christian community being gathered together before the Lord Jesus Christ at that time.

The noun *parousia* (παρουσία), "**arrival**" in this verse appeared four times in First Thessalonians (cf. 2:19, 3:13; 4:15; 5:23). Now, as was the case in each of these verses, here in 2 Thessalonians 2:1, the word refers to Jesus Christ returning at the rapture or resurrection of the church to remove the church bodily from the earth prior to Daniel's seventieth week. Therefore, a comparison of these two expressions indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ's arrival to planet earth in the earth's atmosphere at the rapture or resurrection of the church will result in the church gathering into His presence.

So therefore, the contents of 2 Thessalonians 2:1 reveal that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are politely presenting a request to each member of the Thessalonian Christian community which is in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ's arrival which will result in the church gathering in the Lord's presence. This arrival is again speaking of the rapture or resurrection of the church. Therefore, the contents of this verse reveal that this request is with regards to the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ which will result in the dead in Christ and those alive in Christ on the earth gathering in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

2 Thessalonians 2:2 presents the content of the request since it identifies for the Thessalonians what Paul, Silvanus and Timothy are concerned about in relation to the rapture or resurrection of the church when they will receive their resurrection bodies and their sanctification and salvation are thus perfected.

2 Thessalonians 2:2 that each one of you would not be easily shaken from your composure, nor be alarmed by either a spirit, or by a message, or by a letter allegedly from us to the effect that the Lord's day is taking place. (Author's translation)

The contents of this verse reveal that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were politely requesting that the Thessalonians would not be easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by a spirit or by a message or by a letter allegedly from them, which taught that the day of the Lord was taking place when these three men wrote this epistle.

Therefore, this request is in the form of three prohibitions. The first was that the Thessalonians would not be easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by a spirit which taught that the day of the Lord was taking place when these three men wrote this epistle. The second is that they would not be easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by a message which taught that the day of the Lord was taking place when these three men wrote this epistle. The third is that they would not be easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy which taught that the day of the Lord was taking place when these three men wrote this epistle. Thus, these three prohibitions are related to the three sources from which this false doctrine was being propagated in the Roman province of Macedonia where Thessalonica was located.

Therefore, a comparison of these two verses reveal that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were concerned that each member of the Thessalonian Christian community would understand completely the relationship between the rapture, i.e., resurrection of the church and the eschatological day of the Lord.

Now, 2 Thessalonians 2:2 contains two infinitives which do not present the two-fold purpose for which Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were making a request of the Thessalonians but rather they constitute one appeal because Paul is using "synthetic parallelism." Some like Jeffery Weima assert that Paul is using "synonymous parallelism." However, these two infinitives have slightly different meanings with the second building on the first, which would constitute synthetic parallelism.

So therefore, here in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, the apostle Paul employs the articular aorist passive infinitive conjugation of the verb *saleuomai* (σαλεύομαι), "**would become easily shaken**" and the present passive infinitive conjugation of the verb *throeomai* (θροέομαι), "**be alarmed**." The former pertains to being emotionally shaken or distraught, deeply disturbed or distressed" while on the other hand, the latter pertains to being disturbed and thus being in a state of fear associated with

surprise. Therefore, we can see that both verbs contain the idea of being disturbed and fearful. However, the latter contains the additional nuance of surprise. Other than this slight difference in meaning between the two verbs, the meaning of both is negated with the former negated by the negative particle *me* (μή), "**not**" whereas the latter is negated by the negative disjunctive particle *mēde* (μηδέ), "**not**." Both verbs are also modified by the adverb of manner *tacheōs* (ταχέως), "**easily**." Therefore, the idea expressed by these two verbs is that the Thessalonians were not to be easily shaken from their composure with the added emphasis of not being taken by surprise by the false teaching that the day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age.

The verb *saleuomai* is functioning as an infinitive of purpose which indicates the purpose or the goal of the action of its controlling verb, which is the first person plural present active indicative form of the verb *erōtaō* (ἐρωτάω), "**each of us is requesting**," which appears in 2 Thessalonians 2:1. Therefore, the purpose of Paul, Silvanus and Timothy's request is that the Thessalonians would not be easily shaken from their composure by a spirit or by a message or by a letter allegedly from these three men, which teaches that the day of the Lord was taking place at the time the Thessalonians received this epistle.

When Paul speaks of the Thessalonians' "**composure**," he is referring to the calmness or repose of the minds of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community, which is the result of adhering in their minds to Paul, Silvanus and Timothy's teaching regarding the eschatological day of the Lord which they reminded them about in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. In other words, Paul does not want each member of the Thessalonian Christian community to deviate in any respect to his apostolic teaching concerning the seventieth week of Daniel and the Second Advent of Christ in relation to the rapture and the church. As he asserts in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 and 5:9, they will be delivered from the wrath of the Lamb which He will exercise against every unregenerate, unrepentant human being on the earth at that time. Instead, they will be perfective in a resurrection body at the rapture, which is the resurrection of the church.

Like the verb *saleuomai*, the verb *throeomai* is also functioning as an infinitive of purpose which indicates the purpose or the goal of the action of its controlling verb, which is the first person plural present active indicative form of the verb *erōtaō* (ἐρωτάω), "**each of us is requesting**," which appears in 2 Thessalonians 2:1. Therefore, this verb indicates that the Thessalonians were not to be alarmed by a spirit or by a message or by a letter allegedly from these three men, which teaches that the day of the Lord was taking place at the time the Thessalonians received this epistle. Thus, this verb *throeomai* not only identifies for the Thessalonians the purpose for which Paul, Silvanus and Timothy made a request of the Thessalonian Christian community but also advances upon the purpose expressed by the verb *saleuomai* because of the figure of synthetic parallelism.

The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**spirit**" refers to the false teaching propagated by false prophets which expressed a viewpoint which is contrary to the Spirit inspired teaching of the apostles and originates with Satan's cosmic system. The word has this same exact meaning in 1 John 4:1, 2, 3 and 6 where the apostle John uses this word in relation to the proto-Gnostic teachers who taught an early form of Docetic Gnosticism, which denied the human nature of Jesus Christ. In 2 Thessalonians 2:2, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**spirit**" is used relation to those who taught that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in the first century A.D. when Paul penned Second Thessalonians. This word speaks of the communication of not only prophecy but doctrine as well.

Also, the noun *logos* (λόγος), "**message**" in 2 Thessalonians 2:2 pertains to communication whereby the mind finds expression. It pertains to that which has been stated or said, with primary focus upon the content of communication. Specifically, it refers to the content which false teachers were communicating regarding the eschatological day of the Lord.

The noun *epistolē* (ἐπιστολή), "**letter**" in this verse pertains to written communication between two parties. Here it refers to written communication addressed to the Thessalonian Christian community from allegedly Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. Thus, it refers to a "pseudonymous" letter. The term "pseudonymity" refers to the practice of publishing one's writings under a revered person's name. This is why Paul explicitly identifies himself as the author at the end of some of his letters (cf. 2 Thess. 3:17-18; Gal. ; Col. 4:18). This would guarantee the authenticity of the letter.

Each of these words, *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**spirit**," *logos* (λόγος), "**message**," and *epistolē* (ἐπιστολή), "**letter**" are the object of the preposition *dia* (διά), "**by**" which functions in each instance as a marker of means indicating the means by which the Thessalonians were not to become easily shaken from their composure nor alarmed. Therefore, each of these three prepositional phrases are expressing the idea that the Thessalonians were not to be easily shaken from their composure nor alarmed "by" a spirit nor "by" a message, nor "by" a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy.

Therefore, these three words represent the three sources from which the false doctrine regarding the eschatological day of the Lord "might" have been propagated throughout the Roman province of Macedonia, where Thessalonica was located. Paul was not saying that this false doctrine was propagated by all three but rather that if it comes through any of these three or all three, this false doctrine was to be rejected by the Thessalonian Christian community since it contradicted his apostolic teaching regarding the eschatological day of the Lord.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:2, the expression *hōs hoti enestēken hē hēmera tou kyriou* (ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου), "**to the effect that the Lord's day is taking**

place" identifies the false doctrine, which caused the Thessalonians to be shaken from their composure and alarmed.

The reference to the day of the Lord or "**the Lord's day**" refers to the eschatological day of the Lord, which is composed the seventieth week of Daniel and the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. It takes place sometime after the rapture or resurrection of the church and begins when Antichrist establishes a seven-year treaty with the nation of Israel. It ends with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. During this period, Jesus Christ will exercise His righteous indignation against every unrepentant, unregenerate human being on the earth at that time. He will do this through the seven seal, trumpet and bowl judgments recorded in Revelation 6-18.

Now, Paul's polite request in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 was a reminder of what Paul asserts in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 that the Thessalonian Christian community must test those who claim to be communicating prophecy or Christian doctrine. They were test all prophecy and doctrine by comparing it to Paul's apostolic teaching and if a prophecy or a doctrine contradicted Paul's apostolic teaching, then the Thessalonians were to reject it. Therefore, they were to reject this false doctrine that the day of the Lord was already taking place in their day and age since it did not adhere to Paul's apostolic teaching regarding the day of the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:20 Each and every one of you must continue to make it your habit of not treating prophecies with contempt. 21 Instead, each one of you must continue to make it your habit of testing each one of these things. Each one of you must continue to make it your habit of holding on to those which are good. (Author's translation)

2 Thessalonians 2:3 contains a solemn prohibition followed by a *hoti* causal clause which presents the reason for the prohibition and contains a third class conditional statement which presents evidence which identifies that the day of the Lord is taking place.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Do not let anyone deceive any one of you in any way. For, if the rebellion does not take place first, namely the unique person characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness has been revealed, that is, the unique son characterized by a distinguishable destruction, then the Lord's day is absolutely not taking place. (Author's translation)

So, verse 3 begins by Paul, Silvanus and Timothy solemnly prohibiting any person to deceive any member of the Thessalonian Christian community in any way. These three were concerned about false teachers who were proclaiming that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age. This interpretation is indicated by the contents of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2. These verses record Paul, Silvanus and Timothy presenting a solemn request of each member of the Thessalonian Christian community that none of them would be easily shaken from their composure, nor alarmed by either a spirit, or by a message or by a letter

allegedly from them to the effect that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age.

The question arises to the identity of these false teachers. Were they unbelievers or believers in apostasy? This author believes that they were Christian pastors or evangelists or both who were in a state or apostasy or like the Thessalonians were simply confused themselves with regards to the timing of the rapture in relation to the eschatological day of the Lord. Only believers would be familiar or interested with the day of the Lord.

Even though they would be very familiar with the day of the Lord, it is unlikely that Jewish non-believers would be propagating this false doctrine. This is indicated by the fact that the unregenerate Jewish community in Thessalonica would have nothing to do with the Gentile Christian community in that city because Jews had nothing to do with Gentiles. Thus, they would never walk into the meetings of the Thessalonian Christian community or walk into the Gentile community to proclaim that the day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age.

This prohibition is modified by the prepositional phrase *kata mēdena tropon* (κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον). The noun *tropos* (τρόπος) speaks of the means by which the Thessalonians could be deceived into thinking that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age. The means are identified for the reader in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, which are *mēte dia pneumatos mēte dia logou mēte di' epistolēs* (μήτε διὰ πνεύματος μήτε διὰ λόγου μήτε δι' ἐπιστολῆς), "**by either a spirit or by a message or by a letter allegedly from us**." Therefore, the noun *tropos* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to a spirit or a message or a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, which asserts that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place when Paul wrote Second Thessalonians. Therefore, this indicates that the Thessalonians were being prohibited from being deceived by these false teachers into believing that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age in accordance with any means such as spirit, a letter or message allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy.

Therefore, 2 Thessalonians 2:3 begins with Paul forbidding each member of the Thessalonian Christian community from allowing anyone to deceive them into believing that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age in accordance with any means such as a spirit, message or a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy.

Then, this prohibition is followed by a *hoti* causal clause, which presents the reason for it and contains an elliptical third class conditional statement. It is elliptical because the statement *ouk enestēken hē hēmera tou kyriou* (οὐκ ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ κυρίου), "**the Lord's day is absolutely not taking place**" at the end of 2 Thessalonians 2:2 is implied with the addition of the emphatic negative adverb *ouk* (οὐκ). It forms the apodosis of the third class conditional clause would follow *hoti*

in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 if it were not omitted. The protasis of this third class condition is "**if the rebellion does not take place first, specifically, the man of lawlessness is revealed, that is, the son of destruction**."

The relationship between the protasis and the apodosis is "evidence-inference." This means that the apodosis is inferring something from the protasis. He Paul infers something in the apodosis from some evidence he presented in the protasis. The evidence presented in the protasis is that if the rebellion led by Antichrist has "not" taken place, specifically, the man of lawlessness is revealed, that is, the son of destruction. In the protasis, he infers that the day of the Lord is absolutely not taking place.

Here in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the context would indicate that the third class condition is expressing no indication of fulfillment. This means that if the rebellion led by Antichrist against Jesus Christ during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week does not take place first, then the day of the Lord is absolutely not taking place. In other words, the day of the Lord is certainly not taking place if the rebellion led by Antichrist against Jesus Christ has not come first. Or we can say, there is no indication that the day of the Lord is taking place if the rebellion led by Antichrist has not taken place.

Now, there is debate among expositors and scholars as to the correct translation and meaning and referent of this word *apostasia* (ἀποστασία), which we translated "**rebellion**." This author does not believe that this word *apostasia* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 refers to the rapture or the apostasy in the church at the end of the church age. Rather, this author is of the conviction that the word refers to the great rebellion led by the Antichrist during the seventieth week of Daniel. This is indicated by the fact that this noun *apostasia* is ambiguous and begs to be defined. Throughout his writings, Paul always defined terms which are ambiguous and here he defines the noun *apostasia* by employing the statement *kai apokalyphthē ho anthrōpos tēs anomias, ho huios tēs apōleias* (καὶ ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ⸀ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας), "**and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction**." (NET) He further defines the word in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 with the statement *ho antikeimenos kai hyperairomenos epi panta legomenon theon ē sebasma, hōste auton eis ton naon tou theou kathisai apodeiknynta heauton hoti estin theos* (ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα, ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσαι ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός), "**He opposes *and exalts himself above every* so-called *god* or object of worship, and as a result *he takes his seat* in God's temple, displaying himself as God**." (NET)

The reader can see that these statements clearly can be used to define the meaning of the noun *apostasia*. Paul is asserting that the *apostasia*, "the rebellion" is the Antichrist leading a rebellion of the human race against Jesus Christ during the seventieth week of Daniel. Therefore, since the noun *apostasia* is ambiguous and

begs to be defined, the apostle Paul explains what he means by his use of the word. Thus, this "rebellion" is Antichrist opposing God by demanding the human race worship him rather than God. Of course, Satan is behind the Antichrist since Isaiah 14:12-14 teaches that he desires the world to worship him and not God.

Therefore, this noun *apostasia* is explained in detail by Paul. He employs the epexegetical use of the conjunction *kai* to introduce a statement which defines the protasis which speaks of the rebellion led by Antichrist against the Lord Jesus Christ taking place first before the day of the Lord takes place. The word introduces the statement *apokalyphthē ho anthrōpos tēs anomias, ho huios tēs apōleias* (ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ⸀ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας), "**the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction**." NET) Therefore, this statement is defining the rebellion as the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction being revealed.

We translated the noun *anthropos* (ἄνθρωπος), "**a unique person**" because the word pertains to an adult human being and the word's articular construction is also monadic indicating that this human being is in a class all by himself, which is indicated by the word's genitive adjunct *tēs anomias* (τῆς ἀνομίας), "**of lawlessness**," which indicates a monadic notion.

The noun *anomia* (ἀνομία), "**characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness**" pertains to a person who is conducting themselves with complete disregard and contempt for the laws and regulations of the law of God that govern society. It pertains to the state of being or behaving or conducting oneself in open defiance of God's law, which can be summarized as loving God with one's entire being and strength by loving one's fellow human being by treating them in a manner in which you would want to be treated.

The articular construction of this abstract noun is distinguishing the lawlessness which characterizes the Antichrist from the lawlessness of the rest of the members of the human race since he will deify himself and demand people to worship him above every god including the true and living God, Jesus Christ. This interpretation is indicated by Paul's statements in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 *ho antikeimenos kai hyperairomenos epi panta legomenon theon ē sebasma, hōste auton eis ton naon tou theou kathisai apodeiknynta heauton hoti estin theos* (ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα, ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσαι ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός), "**He opposes *and exalts himself above every* so-called *god* or object of worship, and as a result *he takes his seat* in God's temple, displaying himself as God**." (NET)

This author believes that this word *anomia* is functioning as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive which typically states a specific example that is a part of the larger category named by the head noun. It is frequently used when the head noun is ambiguous or metaphorical. Here the genitive form of this noun *anomia*

specifies what is meant by the noun *anthropos*, which begs to be defined. Therefore, this construction would define this unique human being as one whose lawlessness distinguishes him from the lawlessness of the rest practiced by the rest of the human race.

This last interpretation is the best choice because Paul's emphasis here with this noun *anomia* in the genitive case is to merely define this unique human being rather than to identify what he produces. This is further supported by the monadic expression that appears after it, namely, *ho huios tēs apōleias* (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας), "**the son of destruction**."

The expression *ho huios tēs apōleias* (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας), "**characterized by a distinguishable destruction**" is clarifying the previous expression *ho anthrōpos tēs anomias* (ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ⸀ἀνομίας), "**characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness**."

The noun *huios* (υἱός), "**the unique son**" pertains to person who is a male and whose identity is defined in terms of relationship to a thing, which in our context is destruction. Like the noun *anthropos*, this term refers to the Antichrist since Paul's description of this person in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10 corresponds with the description of the little horn in Daniel 7:8, 11, 24-25 and 9:27, the first beast in Revelation chapter thirteen, who John describes in 1 John 2:18 as "the Antichrist."

The noun *apōleia*, "**characterized by a distinguishable destruction**" pertains to the termination of someone by causing them to no longer exists bodily on planet earth. Specifically, it speaks not only of the physical death of the Antichrist but also that he will suffer eternal condemnation in the lake of fire forever since God no longer has any use for him because he refused to exercise faith in His one and only Son Jesus Christ for eternal salvation. The articular construction of this abstract noun is distinguishing the destruction which the Antichrist will experience from the rest of the members of the human race since he will deify himself and demand people to worship him above every god including the true and living God, Jesus Christ. This interpretation is indicated by Paul's statements in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 *ho antikeimenos kai hyperairomenos epi panta legomenon theon ē sebasma, hōste auton eis ton naon tou theou kathisai apodeiknynta heauton hoti estin theos* (ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα, ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καθίσαι ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶν θεός), "**He opposes *and exalts himself above every* so-called *god* or object of worship, and as a result *he takes his seat* in God's temple, displaying himself as God**." (NET)

This word *apōleia* functions as a genitive of apposition or epexegetical genitive which defines this unique human being as one whose destruction distinguishes him from the destruction of the rest of unregenerate humanity. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that a comparison of Revelation 19:20-21 and 20:7-10 reveals that the Antichrist will not only be the first unregenerate human being to suffer

eternal condemnation in the lake fire but also he will suffer eternal condemnation before Satan.

So therefore, to summarize our findings in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. The apostle Paul solemnly forbids any false teacher to deceive any member of the Thessalonian Christian community that the eschatological day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age. They were not to receive such false doctrine through a spirit, or by a message or by a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. The reason why they were not to accept this false teaching is that the Antichrist, whose lawlessness and whose destruction will distinguish him from the rest of the human race, must be revealed publicly to the world first and then the day of the Lord can take place.

Now, many expositors believe that there is a temporal relationship between the protasis and the apodosis. This writer believes this as well. It appears that Paul is asserting that rebellion against God by the Antichrist must take place and then the day of the Lord will take place, which is indicates quite clearly by the presence of the temporal adverb *prōton* (πρῶτον), "**first**" in the protasis of the third class conditional statement which constitutes the *hoti* causal clause. This word pertains to something first in a series involving time. Here it indicates that the day of the Lord cannot take place until the rebellion led by Antichrist against the Lord takes place first in history.

Therefore, this would indicate that Paul is speaking of the day of the Lord as the Lord's response to this rebellion led by Antichrist. This response is the seven seal, trumpet and bowl judgments recorded in Revelation 6-18 as well as the Second Advent of Jesus Christ recorded in Revelation 19-20 and many other passages. In other words, this rebellion prompts these judgments resulting in the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. The implication is that the day of the Lord has not taken place because the Antichrist has not been publicly manifested to the world by his outrageous ungodly actions against God. Thus, the Thessalonian Christian community need not be concerned that the day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 The one who for his own benefit opposes, yes even, for his own benefit exalts himself against each and every so-called god or object of worship. Consequently, he himself sits down inside the one and only God's temple in order to present himself as God. (Author's translation)

Now, we come to 2 Thessalonians 2:4 which is composed of a participial clause which describe the actions of the Antichrist during the seventieth week of Daniel. This participial clause is followed by a result clause which presents the result of the former, which asserts that for his own benefit, the Antichrist opposes, yes even exalts himself against each and every so-called god or object of worship. The result clause emphatically asserts that the Antichrist will sit down inside the one and only God's temple in order to present himself as God.

There are actually two participles in this participial clause which are connected by a definite article. One intensifies the other and advances upon the other because of the figure of hendiadys. These two participial clauses modify the expressions *ho anthrōpos tēs anomias* (ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας), "**the unique person characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness**" and *ho huios tēs apōleias* (ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας), "**the unique son characterized by a distinguishable destruction**," which both appear in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 and refer to the Antichrist. Therefore, we can see that 2 Thessalonians 2:3 describes the character of the person of the Antichrist while 2 Thessalonians 2:4 describes his actions during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week of Daniel.

Paul's description of this person in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 corresponds with the description of the little horn in Daniel 7:8, 11, 24-25 and 9:27, the first beast in Revelation chapter thirteen. In 1 John 2:18, the apostle John calls this person "the Antichrist." John uses this term in 1 John 2:22, 4:3 and 2 John 7 to describe those who reject the human nature of Jesus Christ and are involved in Docetic Gnosticism. So therefore, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 are describing a person who John calls "the Antichrist."

The conjunction *kai* is is used to connect together the verbs *antikeimai* and *hyperairomai* in order to form the figure of hendiadys. This figure indicates that the verb *hyperairomai* is intensifying or advancing upon the idea expressed by the verb *antikeimai*. So therefore, the meaning of the verb *hyperairomai* intensifies the meaning of the verb *antikeimai* and makes the latter more emphatic. This is indicated by the fact that the former is telling the Thessalonian Christian community how the Antichrist will oppose God and His interests, namely by exalting himself above every so-called god or object of worship and thus exalts himself above the true and living God.

The prepositional phrase *epi panta legomenon theon ē sebasma* (ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα), "**against each and every so-called god or object of worship**" identifies what the Antichrist will oppose and exalt himself against. The accusative masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός), "**god**" pertains to the gods which unregenerate men will worship during the seventieth week of Daniel and which gods are promoted by Satan and his angels. Deuteronomy 32:17 and 1 Corinthians 10:20 teach that the worship of the gods of the unregenerate world are connected to the worship of demons since the sacrificing to idols is in reality sacrificing to demons who promote the worship of idols.

This noun is modified by the accusative masculine singular present passive participle conjugation of the verb *legō* (λέγω), which means "so-called" and is of course used with reference to the idols people will worship during the seventieth week of Daniel and speaks of these deities as being called a god with the implication that they are not. We also noted that the noun *theos* (θεός), "**god**" is also modified

by the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**each and every**" since the word not only denotes totality of a collective but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions.

The noun *sebasma* (σέβασμα), "**object of worship**" pertains to any artifact that is utilized for religious and devotional purposes. Therefore, while the noun *theos* (θεός), "**god**" speaks of a being worshipped by people during the seventieth week of Daniel, the noun *sebasma* (σέβασμα) speaks of the artifacts which represent these beings who the Bible identifies as being fallen angels led by Satan. Thus, the latter speaks of an idol as a representation of these gods.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 also contains a result clause which presents the result of the previous participial clause, which asserts that the Antichrist will oppose, yes even exalt himself against each and every so-called god or object of worship. This result clause emphatically asserts that the Antichrist will sit down inside the one and only God's temple in order to present himself as God.

The noun *naos* (ναός) refers to the temple which will be built in Jerusalem during the seventieth week of Daniel and will be the place where the God of Israel will be worshipped by the Jews. Specifically, it speaks of the holy of holies in the temple. We also noted that the articular construction of this word is monadic which indicates that this temple will be unique in the sense that it will be the exclusive place in which the God of Israel will be worshipped by the Jewish people during the seventieth week of Daniel. This monadic notion is suggested by this word's genitive adjunct *tou theou* (τοῦ θεοῦ), "of God."

The noun *theos* (θεός) appears in this result clause as it did in the two previous participial clauses. However, this time the word means "the one and only God" and is a reference to the Father. This is indicated by the word's articular construction, which in the New Testament commonly signifies the first member of the Trinity unless otherwise indicated by the context. Furthermore, the articular construction of this word indicates that this word is in a class by itself expressing the idea that there were many gods in the world but only one who is worthy to be worshipped by human beings. The article would remind the Thessalonians that they were delivered from idolatry since prior to their justification they worshipped the pantheon of Graeco-Roman gods (cf. 1 Thess. 1:9).

Some expositors have trouble with Paul's statements about the temple here in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 since he clearly says it will be standing when the Antichrist sits down in the temple displaying himself to the world as possessing the attributes of God since the temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. However, the patristic commentors solved the problem by asserting that it will be rebuilt again. This author along with many others believe this as well. If Zerubbabel's temple was rebuilt on the site of Solomon's which was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., then, it stands that the Jews could build another temple on the site of Herod's temple. Further

support that the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem is that Jesus taught that the temple would be standing when Antichrist rebels against Him (cf. Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14).

Therefore, Paul is teaching here in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that there will once again be a literal temple in Jerusalem. However, this has not stopped some expositors have contended that the apostle is speaking here in figurative terms and not literal.

Now, 2 Thessalonians 2:3 contains a reference to the rebellion led by the Antichrist against Jesus Christ during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week. The contents of 2 Thessalonians 2:4 describe this rebellion in detail. In fact, it defines for the reader what Paul means by this rebellion.

First, the rebellion of unregenerate unrepentant humanity led by Antichrist against Jesus Christ will have the Antichrist opposing, yes even exalting himself against each and every so-called god or place of worship. Thus, he will oppose and exalt himself against the God of Israel, who the New Testament identifies as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He will also oppose and exalt himself against the place in which they will be worshipped during the seventieth week, namely the temple in Jerusalem which will be rebuilt during that period or prior to this period after the rapture of the church.

Undoubtedly, the Jews who build this temple will not be believers in Jesus Christ. However, they will be building a temple for the God of Israel, which the New Testament again identifies as being the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus, these Jews will build this temple ignorant of this fact. However, this does not change that God considers this temple to be His since Paul asserts here in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that this temple is the possession of the one and only God.

Secondly, the rebellion of unregenerate unrepentant humanity led by Antichrist against Jesus Christ will have the Antichrist sitting down in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem during the midway point of the seventieth week of Daniel while displaying himself to the public as possessing the attributes of God. This action on the part of the Antichrist during the seventieth week of Daniel is not only prophesied about in Daniel 9:27 but also Daniel 11:36. This action desecrates the temple and is described by Daniel as an abomination.

Now, this author is of the conviction that what will cause the Antichrist to display himself to the world as possessing the attributes of God is that he will die as a result of being assassinated but will recover, thus causing the world and the Antichrist to believe that he is indeed God. This is indicated by the contents of Revelation chapter thirteen.

Revelation 13:1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and

his throne and great authority. 3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. 4 They worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. 11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. 12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. 15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. 17 And he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. (NASB95)

Notice in Revelation 13:3, that John asserts that one of the beast's heads had been slain and his fatal would be healed and the whole earth worshipped this beast. Is this Rome or a person? Revelation 13:12 indicates that this is a person since it asserts that the false prophet who is the second beast in this passage makes the citizens of earth worship the first beast whose fatal would was healed. Then, Revelation 13:14 asserts that the second beast, i.e., the false prophet who promotes the worship of the first beast tells the world to make an image to this first beast whose fatal wound of

the sword but has come to life. Revelation 13:12 and 14 indicate that this the beast whose fatal wound had been healed and had come to life after being dead is a person rather than the Roman Empire. This person of course would be the Antichrist.

2 Thessalonians 2:5 Do you not remember that while I still living among each one of you, I was regularly communicating these things to each one of you? (Author's translation)

Now, in 2 Thessalonians 2:5, the apostle Paul poses a rhetorical question to the Thessalonian Christian community which asks, "Do you not remember what when I was living with you that I repeatedly communicated these things to you?" It is not a genuine question seeking an answer but rather a rhetorical question which is making an emphatic assertion. Thus, Paul is saying to the Thessalonians that they should have remembered that the eschatological day of the Lord is absolutely not taking place unless the Antichrist has first rebelled against God by presenting himself in the rebuilt Jewish temple as God. Therefore, they should not have been easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by either a spirit, or by a message or by a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy which asserts that the day of the Lord is taking place.

Therefore, Paul is emphatically saying in this rhetorical question that the Thessalonians should have remembered that he communicated to them that the eschatological day of the Lord is absolutely not taking place unless the Antichrist has first rebelled against God by presenting himself in the rebuilt Jewish temple as God. Thus, Paul is not asking a genuine question that seeks an answer but rather he is posing a rhetorical question that is making an emphatic assertion. Consequently, they should not have been easily shaken from their composure or alarmed by either a spirit, or by a message or by a letter allegedly from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy which asserts that the day of the Lord is taking place.

The fact that Paul has to remind the Thessalonians of these things as he does in 2 Thessalonians 2:5 indicates that the Thessalonians were in fact shaken from their composure and alarmed by this false doctrine. This does not mean they were out of fellowship with the Lord. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy in chapter one of Second Thessalonians commends the Thessalonians because their post-justification faith in the gospel was growing to an extraordinary degree and because their divine-love for each other was growing to a considerable degree (2 Thess. 1:3) despite the fact that they were being persecuted by the unregenerate citizens of Thessalonica (2 Thess. 1:4). Consequently, Paul, Silvanus and Timothy boasted about the Thessalonians to other congregations in the Roman provinces of Macedonia and Achaia (2 Thess. 1:4).

Therefore, it appears that the Thessalonian Christian community was simply confused with or unsure of the timing of the day of the Lord in relation to the rapture and the church. This is true of many in the Christian community today in the twenty-

first century. This confusion caused some if not all in the Thessalonian Christian community to be shaken from their composure and alarmed by this false doctrine that the day of the Lord was taking place in their day and age.

2 Thessalonians 2:6 So now each and every one of you possess an accurate comprehensive knowledge of that which is preventing this in order that he himself has been revealed during his own distinct period of time. (Author's translation)

Now, the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 asserts that now the Thessalonian Christian community possessed an accurate comprehensive knowledge of that which prevents the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place in order that the Antichrist will be revealed in his own distinct period of time. As noted, what is stopping the manifestation of the Antichrist from taking place is the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every church age believer, and which omnipotence is manifesting itself in the lives of individual church age believers who obey the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God. Then, in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul asserts that the hidden power of lawlessness is already at work in the world in their day and age. However, he says that the one who is holding the manifestation of the Antichrist back, namely the Holy Spirit will continue hold back this manifestation until, he, the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way, which will take place at the rapture of the church. The Holy Spirit is localized in the church today. However, when the church is raptured, then the Holy Spirit will be removed from the earth as well. Thus, enabling the Antichrist to be manifested to the world.

Now, Paul's statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 presents the logical result of his teaching in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 with 2 Thessalonians 2:5 functioning as a parenthetical remark about this teaching. Therefore, this would indicate that the eschatological day of the Lord is not taking place when the Antichrist will be revealed through his rebellion against God as a result of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself in the lives of individual church age believers, whom He indwells, obeying His teaching in the Word of God.

The adverb of time *nun*, "**now**" is emphasizing the moment when Paul and Silvanus were writing Second Thessalonians and the Thessalonian Christian community was hearing this letter read to them for the first time. The word marks a chronological shift from Paul teaching them about the eschatological day of the Lord in the past when he was living with them prior to his abrupt departure from them to when he wrote Second Thessalonians. It is also marking a chronological shift from the manifestation of the Antichrist in the future during the seventieth week of Daniel to the day and age Paul and the Thessalonians were living in which the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself in the lives of individual church age believers prevented this manifestation of the Antichrist.

The verb *katechō* pertains to preventing someone from doing something by restraining or hindering.[212] There is also a tremendous amount of conjecture regarding the referent of this word.

This author believes that the referent of the neuter singular form of this verb *katechō* is the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every church age believer, working through the individual members of the church who are in fellowship with Him through obedience to His teaching in the Word of God. This interpretation is indicated by several factors. First, only the omnipotence of God can restrain evil and the manifestation of the Antichrist by Satan.

Secondly, the neuter gender of the participle conjugation of this verb *katechō* conforms to the gender of the *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "Spirit." In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul switches from the neuter of this verb to the masculine (ὁ κατέχων), which confirms to the personality of the Holy Spirit by *ad sensum* agreement. In 2 Thessalonians 2:6, the neuter gender emphasizes the manifestation of the omnipotence of the Spirit through the church while the masculine gender in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 emphasizes the personality of the Holy Spirit.

Thirdly, the gospel is the power of God for salvation and the Spirit speaks to the unregenerate regarding the Father's will for them to trust in His one and only Son Jesus Christ as Savior in order to be reconciled to Him, who is holy (cf. Rom. 1:16-17).

The fourth reason for this interpretation is that 1 Corinthians 1:18 says that the word of the cross is the power of God and Hebrews 4:12 asserts that the word of God is alive and powerful and Ephesians 6:17 asserts that the word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Matthew 4:1-11 reveals that Satan is defeated by the application of the word of God, which appropriates the omnipotence of the Spirit. Thus, the sword of the Spirit was employed by the Lord Jesus to defeat Satan.

The fifth reason is that John 14:17, Romans 8:11, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19 and 1 John 2:20 and 27 teach that the Holy Spirit indwells each church age believer.

The sixth reason is that the removal of the *ho katechōn* (ὁ κατέχων), "**the one who holds back**," which is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 results in the manifestation of the Antichrist.

The seventh reason is that the rapture will result in the removal of the Holy Spirit manifesting His omnipotence through church age believers because it will remove the church from the earth which again is indwelt by the Spirit.

This seventh reason is supported by the fact that 1 Thessalonians 1:10 Paul taught the Thessalonians that they were delivered from the wrath to come and in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 he develops this doctrine addressing in this passage the Thessalonians relationship to the eschatological day of the Lord. He asserts in 1

[212] Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 164). New York: United Bible Societies.

Thessalonians 5:9 that the Thessalonians were not destined for wrath but rather God appointed them to experience the acquisition of salvation as a permanent possession through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, supporting this author's seventh reason is that the rapture is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:1. In fact, a comparison of 2 Thessalonians 2:1 with 2:2 reveals that that Paul, Silvanus and Timothy were concerned that each member of the Thessalonian Christian community would understand completely the relationship between the rapture, i.e., resurrection of the church and the eschatological day of the Lord. The fact that the church, which is indwelt by the Spirit, is removed along with the Spirit at the rapture would serve as a comfort that the Thessalonians would not experience the eschatological day of the Lord.

Therefore, the verb *katechō* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 is expressing the idea that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself through church age believers, who obey His teaching in the Word of God, is preventing the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place. This interpretation is indicated by the fact that the word is used in relation to Paul explaining to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 what must take place first before the eschatological day of the Lord can take place. Namely, when the Antichrist is manifesting to the world His rebellion against God during the last three and a half years of the seventieth week of Daniel.

Now, the verb *oida* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:6 is expressing the idea that each member of the Thessalonian Christian community possessed an accurate comprehensive knowledge that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself through church is preventing the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place. Thus, it is expressing the idea that each member of the Thessalonian Christian community possessed an accurate comprehensive knowledge of the church's relation to the eschatological day of the Lord. They received this accurate comprehensive knowledge when Paul and Silvanus taught them about the eschatological day of the Lord when they were living with the Thessalonian Christian community prior to their abrupt departure from them due to persecution.

Following this assertion that the Thessalonians possessed an accurate comprehensive knowledge of that which prevents the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place is a purpose clause. It is composed of the articular infinitive conjugation of this verb *apokalyptō* which is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which is a marker of purpose or result. Thus, the infinitive conjugation of this verb is an infinitive of purpose, which indicates the purpose or goal of the action or state of its controlling verb, which in our context is the verb *katechō*. The infinitive of

purpose answers the question "Why?" in that it looks ahead to the anticipated and intended result.[213]

Therefore, this indicates that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself through the church prevents the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place "in order that" the Antichrist is revealed to the public during his own distinct period of time. In other words, the purpose of the omnipotence of the Spirit manifesting itself through obedient members of the church, which prevents the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place, is so that the Antichrist will be revealed during the period of time ordained for him by God. The implication is that if the omnipotence of the Spirit was not manifesting itself through obedient members of the church whom He indwells, then the Antichrist would be manifested to the world.

This interpretation of the infinitive conjugation of this verb is supported by the prepositional phrase *en tō heautou kairō* (ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ), "**during his own distinct period of time**," which modifies it. This prepositional phrase refers to the extent of time within which the Antichrist will be revealed to the human race. It refers to the seventieth week of Daniel when the Antichrist will manifest his rebellion against God. It is distinguished from the church age when the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself through the church prevents this rebellion from taking place. It is distinguishing the manifestation of the Antichrist's rebellion against God during the seventieth week from the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself during the church age through the body of Christ, which prevents this rebellion from taking place. It also emphasizes the Antichrist's participation in the action of being revealed to the world since this will take place when he displays himself as God inside the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem during the midway point of the seventieth week of Daniel according to 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

Therefore, this prepositional phrase *en tō heautou kairō* (ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ καιρῷ), "**during his own distinct period of time**" is making a point in distinguishing the period of history in which the Antichrist will take center stage. The fact that the Spirit's work in the church is hindering his manifestation indicates that this prepositional phrase is emphasizing the fact that God is controlling the Antichrist's manifestation to the world this work of the Spirit in the church. He cannot appear until God removes the church, which is indwelt by the Spirit, at the rapture. Therefore, this prepositional phrase implies that God is the one who ordains the period of time in which the Antichrist will manifest himself to the world by his rebellion against Him. It is thus God who ordains when the eschatological day of the Lord will take place.

Therefore, the emphasis here with the infinitive conjugation of the verb *apokalyptō* is upon God's "intention" of having the omnipotence of the Spirit

[213] Wallace, D. B. (1996). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 590). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

manifesting itself through the church to prevent the eschatological day of the Lord from taking place. In other words, the infinitive of purpose would express the idea that God was in sovereign control of events. God was manifesting His sovereign control over human events and His control over the manifestation of the Antichrist and thus His control over when the eschatological day of the Lord will take place through the work of the Holy Spirit manifesting His omnipotence through the church.

Thus, the infinitive of purpose would serve as a great encouragement to the Thessalonian Christian community because it would communicate to them that God was in control of events. Specifically, it would encourage them because it would communicate to them that the eschatological day of the Lord and the manifestation of the Antichrist cannot take place because God determines when these events take place. God employs the omnipotence of the Spirit working through obedient members of the church to prevent these events from taking place in order that they will take place during the period of human history which He has ordained for them. This interpretation fits with the context of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 since Paul is attempting in this passage to calm the fears of the Thessalonians that the eschatological day of the Lord was absolutely not taking place in their day and age.

2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery which is characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness for its own benefit is already at work only until the one who now prevents it from being revealed causes Himself to depart from the midst of the world. (Author's translation)

Now, we come to 2 Thessalonians 2:7 which contains an epexegetical or explanatory clause followed by an elliptical participial clause which in turn is followed by an elliptical indefinite temporal clause. Altogether, they assert that the mystery which is characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness for its own benefit is already at work only until the one who now prevents it from being revealed causes Himself to depart out from the midst of the cosmic world system ruled by Satan.

The epexegetical or explanatory clause asserts that the mystery which is characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness for its own benefit is already at work. It serves to explain in greater detail the previous statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:6. It is explaining how the manifestation of the man of lawlessness, who is the Antichrist relates chronologically to the mystery of lawlessness that was presently at work in the world when Paul wrote Second Thessalonians. The contents of 2 Thessalonians 2:7 makes clear that the mystery of lawlessness precedes the manifestation of the man of lawlessness, who is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:6. The former also makes clear that the departure of the Holy Spirit with the church at the rapture will enable the mystery of lawlessness to be fully manifested to the world along with the man of lawlessness. The mystery of lawlessness and consequently the man of

lawlessness will be revealed publicly during the seventieth week of Daniel when the Antichrist desecrates the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and presents himself as God.

This explanatory or epexegetical clause also develops further the work of the Holy Spirit through the church preventing the manifestation of the Antichrist. It teaches that the Holy Spirit through the church prevents the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed to the world, which we will note is a reference to Satan's rebellion against God. Thus, 2 Thessalonians 2:7 is teaching that Satan will be the power behind the Antichrist and is presently working in the world to oppose God. The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit working through the individual members of the church who are obedient to His teaching in the gospel, i.e., the Word of God is preventing both the manifestation of the Antichrist and more importantly the manifestation of Satan's rebellion against God who is the power behind the Antichrist. The mystery of lawlessness, i.e., Satan's rebellion is behind the man of lawlessness, i.e., the Antichrist.

The noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), "**the mystery**" is used to describe the secret nature of Satan's rebellion against God in relation to unregenerate humanity which is enslaved not only to him but also sin. This rebellion will manifest itself openly to the human race through the Antichrist when he exalts himself against God by seating himself in the rebuilt Jewish temple during the middle of the seventieth week of Daniel in order to present himself as God.

This noun *mustērion*, "mystery" does not mean that this rebellion against God by the Antichrist was not known to Old Testament saints it was revealed to God's people in Old Testament Israel as recorded in Daniel 7:8, 11, 20-28, 9:27 and 11:36-45. During the church age, those who have been declared justified through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who teaches them about this Satanic rebellion against God through the Scriptures which He has inspired. Those justified through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone are the initiated whereas the unregenerate are not initiated. The former are aware of this Satanic rebellion whereas the latter are not but rather are deceived into taking part in this rebellion.

Therefore, this word *mustērion*, "mystery" describes Satan's rebellion against God in relation to those who do not exercise faith in Him as Savior in order to be declared justified by the Father, and who are thus the uninitiated in relation to God's plan for planet earth. This rebellion is a mystery or a secret to unregenerate humanity who are not initiated in regard to God's will, purpose and plan for the human race, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, which He inspired.

The noun *anomia* (ἀνομία), which appears in this verse also occurred in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. In both instances, the word means "lawlessness" and pertains to conducting oneself with complete disregard and contempt for the laws and regulations of the law of God that govern society. It pertains to the state of being or behaving or conducting oneself in open defiance of God's law, which can be

summarized as loving God with one's entire being and strength by loving one's fellow human being by treating them in a manner in which you would want to be treated.

The articular construction of this abstract noun *anomia* in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 particularizes the general quality of this noun and defines it more closely distinguishing it from other notions. It is distinguishing the lawlessness which characterizes Satan and his angels from the lawlessness of the human race since he is the author of lawlessness since he is the first of God's moral rational creatures to rebel against Him.

The term *energeō* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 is used of Satan and his rebellion against God which is a mystery to unregenerate humanity since they do not possess the Spirit who teaches those whom He has regenerated through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone about this rebellion. Here the verb refers to the work of Satan and those angels who he leads in rebellion against God being engaged in committing lawlessness. It speaks of Satan and his angels being engaged in conducting themselves with complete disregard and contempt for the laws and regulations of the law of God that govern human society. It pertains to Satan and his angels being engaged in behaving or conducting themselves in open defiance of God's law.

This verb *energeō* is modified by the adverb of time *ēdē* indicating that the mystery, which is characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness is "already" or "currently" at work in the world when Paul wrote Second Thessalonians in the first century A.D. In other words, it indicates that Satan's rebellion against God, which is a secret to unregenerate humanity and is characterized by a distinguishable lawlessness is "already" or "currently" at work in the world in the first century.

This word *ēdē* pertains to a point of time preceding another point of time and implying completion. The first point of time is the day and age in which Paul and the Thessalonians lived during the first century A.D. The second point of time is the Antichrist's rebellion against God during the seventieth week of Daniel. The former precedes of course the latter. This word indicates that Satan's rebellion is currently underway secretly in relation to the unregenerate when Paul wrote Second Thessalonians prior to it being manifesting openly during the seventieth week of Daniel.

Then, following this explanatory or epexegetical clause here in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 we have an elliptical participial clause, which like 2 Thessalonians 2:6 contains the participle conjugation of the verb *katechō* (κατέχω). In both instances, the verb means "to hold back, to restrain" since the word pertains to preventing someone from doing something by restraining or hindering. However, in 2 Thessalonians 2:6, this word was in the neuter singular form of this verb and its referent was the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every church age believer, manifesting itself through the individual members of the church who are in fellowship with Him

through obedience to His teaching in the Word of God. This time in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, we do not have the neuter singular form of the participle conjugation of this verb but rather the masculine singular. This time the referent of this participle is the person of the Holy Spirit, who indwells every church age believer, manifesting itself through the individual members of the church who are in fellowship with Him through obedience to His teaching in the Word of God. Therefore, the verb *katechō* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 is expressing the idea that the person of the Holy Spirit manifesting His omnipotence through church age believers, who obey His teaching in the Word of God, is preventing the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed.

The verb *katechō* is modified by the temporal adverb *arti* which pertains to a point of time simultaneous with the event of the discourse itself. Therefore, this word indicates that when Paul wrote First Thessalonians, simultaneously the Holy Spirit manifesting His omnipotence through church age believers, who obey His teaching in the Word of God, is preventing the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed.

The verb *katechō* is also modified by the adverb *monos* (μόνος), which pertains to the only entity in a class. Therefore, this verb is expressing the idea that "only" the Holy Spirit manifesting His omnipotence through obedient members of the church is preventing the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed openly to the world.

This participial clause is elliptical because Paul deliberately omits the accusative third person neuter singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), although it is implied. The word's referent is the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *mustērion* (μυστήριον), which refers to Satan's rebellion against God which is hidden from unregenerate humanity who are enslaved not only to sin but also Satan.

This participial clause is also elliptical because Paul also deliberately omits the aorist passive infinitive conjugation of the verb *apokalyptō* (ἀποκαλύπτω), though it is implied from 2 Thessalonians 2:6. As was the case when the word appeared in 2 Thessalonians 2:6, the verb *apokalyptō* here in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 means "to be revealed" since the word pertains to someone becoming known to the public. However, unlike 2 Thessalonians 2:6 when the verb was used in relation to the manifestation of the Antichrist to the world, the verb here in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 is used in relation to the mystery of lawlessness being revealed to the public, which again speaks of Satan's rebellion against God.

The intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) functions as the accusative subject of the articular accusative neuter singular aorist passive infinitive conjugation of the verb *apokalyptō* (ἀποκαλύπτω). This construction serves to emphasize that the mystery of lawlessness receives the action of being revealed to the human race. This revelation will be the direct result of the Holy Spirit departing the cosmic world system of Satan when the rapture of the church takes place.

The passive voice of this verb *apokalyptō* indicates that the mystery of lawlessness will receive the action of being revealed to the world when the Holy Spirit departs from the midst of planet earth at the rapture of the church. This is supported by the fact that through the church, the Spirit is preventing this mystery from being revealed to the unregenerate.

This elliptical participial clause is followed by an elliptical indefinite temporal clause, which refers to the period of history in which the Holy Spirit is no longer preventing the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed to the world through the exercise of His omnipotence through the church. Therefore, it refers to the rapture of the church which will end the church age. This indefinite temporal clause is expressing the idea that only the Holy Spirit now prevents the mystery of lawlessness from being revealed to the world "until" he departs out from the midst of Satan's cosmic system, which enslaves and deceives the inhabitants of planet earth.

This indefinite temporal clause is elliptical because Paul deliberately omits the articular genitive masculine singular form of the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος), though it is implied. This word means "cosmic world system" since it pertains to a vast system and arrangement of human affairs, earthly goods, godless governments, conflicts, riches, pleasures, culture, education, world religions, the cults and the occult dominated and negatively affected by Satan who is god of this satanic cosmos. The noun *kosmos* is not only a system but also an organization in the sense that it refers to the formation into a whole of interdependent and coordinated parts for harmonious and united action against God. It refers to the assemblage of fallen angels forming a complex whole that is under the authority of Satan.

The verb *ginomai* (γίνομαι) in this indefinite temporal clause is expressing the idea of the Holy Spirit "departing" out from the midst of Satan's cosmic world system. The causative middle of this verb indicates that from His own sovereign will, the Holy Spirit will cause Himself to depart out from the midst of Satan's cosmic system, which enslaves and deceives the inhabitants of planet earth.

So therefore, in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7, Paul presents two pieces of evidence which will mark the fact that the eschatological day of the Lord is taking place. First, the Antichrist must be revealed publicly to the world through his rebellion against God. Secondly, the Holy Spirit who indwells the church must be removed from the earth at the rapture in order for the Antichrist to be revealed to the world. This departure will result in the mystery of lawlessness being revealed to the world, which is Satan's rebellion against God and which rebellion is behind the Antichrist's rebellion.

Paul's statements recorded in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 assert that the eschatological day of the Lord is absolutely not taking place unless the Antichrist has first rebelled against God by presenting himself in the rebuilt Jewish temple as God. The apostle asserts in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 that the Spirit who indwells each member of the

church and restrains evil and the manifestation of the Antichrist as well as Satan's rebellion against God must be removed in order for the eschatological day of the Lord to be present.

So therefore, a comparison of 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 with 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 indicates that the manifestation of the Antichrist's rebellion against God and the Holy Spirit's removal from earth will signal that the eschatological day of the Lord is taking place. The Spirit will be removed from the earth at the rapture when the church is removed because the Spirit is localized during the church age in the individual members of the body of Christ who compose the church. Thus, the implication of Paul's statements in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 is that the Thessalonian Christian community will by no means be living on planet earth during the seventieth week of Daniel because they will have already been removed with the Spirit at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

When Paul asserts in these verses that the Spirit will cause Himself to depart planet earth so that the mystery of lawlessness can be revealed to the world and thus the Antichrist's rebellion against God can be revealed, he is not teaching that the Spirit will no longer be on earth but rather that He won't be localized in a group of people as He is during the church age. We must remember that He remains omnipresent even though He will no longer be localized in a group of believers as He is today in regard to the church.

In relation to the unregenerate, the Spirit will assume the same ministry He had before Pentecost and during the church age, namely, He will convict or convince them of sin, righteousness and the defeat of Satan by Jesus at the cross (cf. John 16:7-11). Many Gentiles and Jews will be saved and benefit from the ministry of the Holy Spirit. They will be regenerated by the Spirit during the seventieth week of Daniel and Second Advent of Jesus Christ, which the Spirit performed as well on behalf of church age believers at their justification. The Spirit will give insight to the believers at that time in relation to understanding the Word of God (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-16) just as He did for church age believers.

The Inspiration of Scripture and the Holy Spirit

The last ministry of the Holy Spirit, which we will note is that He inspired the Scriptures. The term "inspiration" like "Trinity" is not a biblical word but does summarize some important facets of biblical truth which we will delve into with this article. The theological idea of inspiration presupposes a personal God with a mind and a sovereign will. The Christian's conviction regarding the inspiration of the Bible is based upon the Bible's own testimony or in other words, it is based upon on explicit assertions.

J. Hampton Keathley III writes "As special revelation is God's communication to man of the truth he must know in order to be properly related to God, so inspiration deals with the preservation of that revelation so that what was received from God was accurately transmitted to others beyond the original recipient. In revelation we have the vertical reception of God's truth while in inspiration we have the horizontal communication of that revelation accurately to others. The question is how can we be sure the Bible is God's revelation to man and not merely the product of human ingenuity or merely human opinion? If what God revealed has not been accurately recorded, then that record is subject to question. The doctrine of inspiration answers that question and guarantees the accuracy of the Bible as God's special revelation."[214]

J. I. Packer writes "The idea of canonical Scripture, *i.e.,* of a document or corpus of documents containing a permanent authoritative record of divine revelation, goes back to Moses' writing of God's law in the wilderness (Ex. 34:27f.; Dt. 31:9ff., 24ff.). The truth of all statements, historical or theological, which Scripture makes, and their authority as words of God, are assumed without question or discussion in both Testaments. The Canon grew, but the concept of inspiration, which the idea of canonicity presupposes, was fully developed from the first, and is unchanged throughout the Bible. As there presented, it comprises two convictions. 1. *The words of Scripture are God's own words*. OT passages identify the Mosaic law and the words of the prophets, both spoken and written, with God's own speech (*cf.* 1 Ki. 22:8–16; Ne. 8; Ps. 119; Je. 25:1–13; 36, *etc.*). NT writers view the OT as a whole as 'the oracles of God' (Rom. 3:2), prophetic in character (Rom. 16:26; *cf.* 1:2; 3:21), written by men who were moved and taught by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20f.; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1:10–12). Christ and his apostles quote OT texts, not merely as what, *e.g.*, Moses, David or Isaiah said (see Mk. 7:10; 12:36; 7:6; Rom. 10:5; 11:9; 10:20, *etc.*), but also as what God said through these men (see Acts 4:25; 28:25, *etc.*), or sometimes simply as what 'he' (God) says (*e.g.* 1 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 8:5, 8), or what the Holy Spirit says (Heb. 3:7; 10:15). Furthermore, OT statements, not made by God in their contexts, are quoted as utterances of God (Mt. 19:4f.; Heb. 3:7; Acts 13:34f., citing Gn. 2:24; Ps. 95:7; Is. 55:2 respectively). Also, Paul refers to God's promise to Abraham and his threat to Pharaoh, both spoken long before the biblical record of them was written, as words which *Scripture* spoke to these two men (Gal. 3:8; Rom. 9:17); which shows how completely he equated the statements of Scripture with the utterance of God. 2. *Man's part in the producing of Scripture was merely to transmit what he had received*. Psychologically, from the standpoint of form, it is clear that the human writers contributed much to the making of Scripture—historical research, theological meditation, linguistic style, *etc.* Each

[214] Bibliology: The Doctrine of the Written Word, page 14; Biblical Studies Press 1997.

biblical book is in one sense the literary creation of its author. But theologically, from the standpoint of content, the Bible regards the human writers as having contributed nothing, and Scripture as being entirely the creation of God. This conviction is rooted in the self-consciousness of the founders of biblical religion, all of whom claimed to utter—and, in the case of the prophets and apostles, to write—what were, in the most literal sense, the words of another: God himself. The prophets (among whom Moses must be numbered: Dt. 18:15; 34:10) professed that they spoke the words of Yahweh, setting before Israel what Yahweh had shown them (Je. 1:7; Ezk. 2:7; Am. 3:7f.; *cf.* 1 Ki. 22). Jesus of Nazareth professed that he spoke words given him by his Father (Jn. 7:16; 12:49f.). The apostles taught and issued commands in Christ's name (2 Thes. 3:6), so claiming his authority and sanction (1 Cor. 14:37), and they maintained that both their matter and their words had been taught them by God's Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9–13; *cf.* Christ's promises, Jn. 14:26; 15:26f.; 16:13ff.). These are claims to inspiration. In the light of these claims, the evaluation of prophetic and apostolic writings as wholly God's word, in just the same way in which the two tables of the law, 'written with the finger of God' (Ex. 24:12; 31:18; 32:16), were wholly God's word, naturally became part of the biblical faith. Christ and the apostles bore striking witness to the fact of inspiration by their appeal to the authority of the OT. In effect, they claimed the Jewish Scriptures as the Christian Bible: a body of literature bearing prophetic witness to Christ (Jn. 5:39f.; Lk. 24:25ff., 44f.; 2 Cor. 3:14ff.) and designed by God specially for the instruction of Christian believers (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:14ff.; *cf.* the exposition of Ps. 95:7–11 in Heb. 3–4, and indeed the whole of Hebrews, in which every major point is made by appeal to OT texts). Christ insisted that what was written in the OT 'cannot be broken' (Jn. 10:35). He had not come, he told the Jews, to annul the law or the prophets (Mt. 5:17); if they thought he was doing that, they were mistaken; he had come to do the opposite—to bear witness to the divine authority of both by fulfilling them. The law stands for ever because it is God's word (Mt. 5:18; Lk. 16:17); the prophecies, particularly those concerning himself, must be fulfilled, for the same reason (Mt. 26:54; Lk. 22:37; *cf.* Mk. 8:31; Lk. 18:31). To Christ and his apostles, the appeal to Scripture was always decisive (*cf.* Mt. 4:4, 7, 10; Rom. 12:19; 1 Pet. 1:16, *etc.*). The freedom with which NT writers quote the OT (following LXX, Targums, or an *ad hoc* rendering of the Hebrew, as best suits them) has been held to show that they did not believe in the inspiredness of the original words. But their interest was not in the words, as such, but in their meaning; and recent study has made it appear that these quotations are interpretative and expository—a mode of quotation well known among the Jews. The writers seek to indicate the true (*i.e.,* Christian) meaning and application of their text by the form in which they cite it. In

X LXX Septuagint (Gk. version of OT)

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most cases this meaning has evidently been reached by a strict application of clear-cut theological principles about the relation of Christ and the church to the OT. (See C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 1952; K. Stendahl, *The School of St Matthew*, 1954; R. V. G. Tasker, *The Old Testament in the New Testament*[2], 1954; E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 1957.)[215]

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the word "inspiration" as "a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him to receive and communicate sacred revelation, the action or power of moving the intellect or emotions." They state that the word "inspire" means "to influence, move, or guide by divine or supernatural inspiration."

Therefore, the doctrine of inspiration contends that, God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human authors of Scripture, that without destroying their individuality, their literary style, their personal interests, and their vocabulary, God's complete and connected thought towards man was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture. The original languages of Scripture contain the very words of God, and therefore, bear the authority of divine authorship.

H. Lindsell writes "Inspiration carries with it the divine authority of God so that Scripture is binding upon the mind, heart and conscience as the only rule of faith and practice for the believer. In its authority, Scripture stands above men, creeds and the Church itself. All of them are subject to Scripture and any authority that any one of them many exert is valid insofar as it can be supported from Scripture."[216]

Consequently, there are three reasonable suppositions: (1) Since God is a Person, perfect, eternal, infinite and just, He will always have a message to give and He will always reveal it so it could be understood by any believer. (2) The divine record and revelation will be given in accurate terms: accuracy and inerrancy (3) the text of this record will be preserved in its purity by God Himself and will therefore be indestructible. God sees to that. Thus, one can say that the Bible in its original languages is the exact record, the mind and will of God.

Inspiration guarantees: (1) the accuracy of Satan's lies and the way that they were phrased. (2) The way people committed their sins. (3) Anything that is not related to the plan of God and outside the plan of God is recorded for a purpose and for a reason.

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy with Exposition states "1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself. 2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is

[215] Packer, J. I. (1996). Inspiration. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.)*New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
[216] Tenney, Merrill C. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible in Five Volumes*. page 288; Regency Reference Library, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1975.

of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms: obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. 3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning. 4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives. 5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church."

Ryrie defines inspiration as "God's superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs. Several features of the definition are worth emphasizing: (1) God superintended but did not dictate the material. (2) He used human authors and their own individual styles. (3) Nevertheless, the product was, in its original manuscripts, without error."[217]

W. H. Griffith Thomas writes "The word *inspiration* comes from *inspiratio* meaning 'to breathe in,' and is applied in Scripture as follows: (1) to God as the Author of man's intelligence (Job 12:8), and (2) to Scripture itself as inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16). In the latter passage it clearly denotes some action of God in the provision and conveyance of His revelation to man. While primarily spoken of the Old Testament, the term may rightly be extended to the New Testament also as part of the literature which is regarded as Scripture. The word means 'God-breathed' and indicates that primary and fundamental quality which gives Scripture its character of authoritativeness over spiritual life and makes it profitable for the various aspects of human need. What inspiration is can best be gathered from the claim of Scripture itself. Old Testament prophets claimed to speak as God gave them their messages. The New Testament claims this quality of divine authority for the Old Testament. In harmony with this, Scripture is everywhere spoken of as 'the word of God.' Such titles as 'the scriptures' and 'the oracles of God' (Rom 3:2), with such phrases as 'it is written,' clearly involve this. Then again, the words of Scripture are attributed to God as their Author (Matt 1:22; Acts 13:34) or to the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:16; Heb 3:7), and the writers are said to have spoken in or through the Holy Spirit (Matt 2:15), and so the very words of Scripture are regarded as divinely authoritative (John 10:34–35; Gal 3:16) and its contents designed for the spiritual use and guidance of mankind in all ages (Rom 15:4; 2 Tim 3:16). The Apostle Paul claims for his words

[217] Ryrie, C. C. (1972). *A survey of Bible doctrine*. Chicago: Moody Press.

an authority equal to that of the Old Testament and as given from God, while the author of the Apocalypse quite evidently places his message on a level with the older Scriptures.[218] The warrant for this doctrine of a divine authority enshrined in the Scripture lies in the teaching about the Holy Spirit who is promised as Teacher and Guide of the disciples of Christ (John 14:26; 16:13). It is best to use the term revelation of the subject matter of the message, and the word inspiration of the method by which the message was conveyed. By the inspiration of Scripture, we understand the communication of divine truth in some way unique in degree and kind. As the apostles were inspired to teach orally, we cannot think their inspiration left them when they had to write. Of the eight writers of the New Testament five were apostles and the other three were their close companions, men in a special relation to them. We can therefore regard inspiration as a special gift of the Holy Spirit by which the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles and their companions in the New Testament transmitted the revelation of God as they received it. All the available facts go to show that there was a quite unique manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the Apostolic Age. A comparison of the works of the second century with the books of the New Testament reveals the difference between the work of the Spirit of God in each age, between the Spirit of inspiration and the Spirit of illumination."[219]

Edward J. Young: "Inspiration is a superintendence of God the Holy Spirit over the writers of the Scriptures, as a result of which these Scriptures possess Divine authority and trustworthiness and, possessing such Divine authority and trustworthiness, are free from error."[220]

Millard J. Erickson: "By inspiration of the Scripture we mean that supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit upon the Scripture writers which rendered their writings an accurate record of the revelation or which resulted in what they wrote actually being the Word of God."[221]

The definitions of inspiration presented above speak both of God's action, by His Spirit, in the human author and of the nature of the resulting text. Therefore, the Scripture states that "no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation; indeed, prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:20–21). Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that not only are the human authors of Scripture "carried along by the Holy Spirit," but the resulting Scripture is "God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Notice that these passages teach that it is Scripture that is so described, not the human author. If we choose to use the word "inspired" instead of "God-breathed,"

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[218] William Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 332, 375.
[219] (1961). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, *118*(469), 40–42.
[220] Edward J. Young, *Thy Word Is Truth*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1957, p. 27.
[221] Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1983, p. 199.

then we can say that it is the text that is inspired, not the human authors. Now, if we use the term "inspire" to the fact that the human authors were "carried along by the Holy Spirit," then the authors of Scripture were in fact inspired. Therefore, our definition of inspiration is designed to capture both the work of the Holy Spirit through the human author and the resulting status of the text of Scripture.

It is important to understand that there is nothing in this definition that requires a particular mode of inspiration. The Scriptures reveal that inspiration may operate through a vision, a trance-like dream, and hearing voices. However, we must also keep in mind that there is nothing in the definition that requires such phenomena. In fact, the Scriptures also reveal that it is not clear that all of the biblical writers were always self-consciously aware that what they were writing was canonical Scripture.

So, the term "inspiration" is really not much more than a convenient label to attach to the process whereby God has brought about the existence of the Scriptures: verbal revelation and historical witness, words of human beings and words of God, the truth that God chose to communicate and the particular forms of individual human authors.

J. Hampton Keathley III writes "Inspiration must be carefully defined because of the varied uses of this term and the wrong ideas about inspiration being promoted today, ideas that are inconsistent with what the Bible itself teaches regarding inspiration. Inspiration may be defined as 'God's superintendence of the human authors of Scripture so that using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.' If we break this definition down into its various parts, we note several elements, each of which is vital to understanding what the Bible teaches about inspiration. (1) The word 'superintendence' refers to the guiding relationships God had with the human authors of Scripture in the various material of the Bible. His superintendence varied in degree, but it was always included so that the Spirit of God guaranteed the accuracy of what was written. (2) The word 'composed' shows that the writers were not simply stenographers who wrote what God dictated to them. They were actively involved using their own personalities, backgrounds, and God's working in their lives, but again, what was composed had the superintendence of God over the material written. (3) 'Without error' expresses what the Bible itself claims to be true regarding its record; it is God's word and that word is truth (John 17:17; Ps. 119:160). (4) Though our translations of the Bible are tremendously accurate, being based on thousands of manuscript witnesses, inspiration can only be ascribed to the original autographs, not to manuscript copies or the translations based on those copies."[222]

[222] Bibliology: The Doctrine of the Written Word; pages 15-16; Biblical Studies Press 1997

Enns writes "There are several important elements that belong in a proper definition of inspiration: (1) the divine element—God the Holy Spirit superintended the writers, ensuring the accuracy of the writing; (2) the human element—human authors wrote according to their individual styles and personalities; (3) the result of the divine-human authorship is the recording of God's truth without error; (4) inspiration extends to the selection of words by the writers; (5) inspiration relates to the original manuscripts."[223]

J. Ireland writes "The doctrine that God has 'inspired' a particular set of texts. The term usually refers to the Christian doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible, but it is problematic: Various Christian groups differently understand the process of God's inspiring of the sacred text. However, the differing views fall on a spectrum that is roughly described with the overly simple terms 'conservative' and 'liberal.' On one end of this spectrum, the 'conservative' view of inspiration is that God spoke through prophetic individuals (albeit in a manner that fully incorporated their unique personalities and cultural settings) to produce a text that is fully God's word. To say the Scriptures are inspired is to say they have their origin in God and are in every part God's word (compare 2 Tim. 3:16 wherein "inspired" is literally "God-breathed"; 2 Peter 1:21). On the other end of the spectrum, 'liberal' scholars hold that the text was less directly inspired and cite examples of apparent internal inconsistency within the biblical text—such as the reports of the building of the Ark (Deut 10:1–5; Exod 37:1–9), Paul's encounter with Christ (Acts 9:7; Acts 22:9), and the manner of Judas' death (Acts 1:16–19; Matt. 27:3–10—as well as contradictions with what is known of history (P. Achtemeier, 42). Inspiration is one form of revelation. Generally speaking, revelation pertains to the unveiling of something (i.e., of God and His purposes) while inspiration pertains to the way in which that revelation is conveyed (i.e., God speaking through human agents). Theories of inspiration differ greatly and include: 1. The *dictation theory of inspiration*: The sacred authors became lost in an ecstatic state and wrote while fully under God's control, as though in a trance. 2. A *limited view of inspiration*, seeing some aspects of Scripture as "more inspired" than others. 3. A *natural view of inspiration* understands the inspiration of Scripture in terms of the inherent religious genius of the human authors. 4. An *illumination theory of inspiration* holds that the Holy Spirit illumined for the writers of Scripture divine truths."[224]

J. I. Packer writes "In formulating the biblical idea of inspiration, it is desirable that four negative points be made. 1. The idea is not of mechanical dictation, or automatic writing, or any process which involved the suspending of the action of the human writer's mind. Such concepts of inspiration are found in the Talmud, Philo

[223] Enns, p. 160.
[224] Ireland, J. (2012). Inspiration, Doctrine of the History of. In (J. D. Barry & L. Wentz, Eds.)*The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

and the Fathers, but not in the Bible. The divine direction and control under which the biblical authors wrote was not a physical or psychological force, and it did not detract from, but rather heightened, the freedom, spontaneity and creativeness of their writing. 2. The fact that in inspiration God did not obliterate the personality, style, outlook and cultural conditioning of his penmen does not mean that his control of them was imperfect, or that they inevitably distorted the truth they had been given to convey in the process of writing it down. B. B. Warfield gently mocks the notion that when God wanted Paul's letters written 'He was reduced to the necessity of going down to earth and painfully scrutinizing the men He found there, seeking anxiously for the one who, on the whole, promised best for His purpose; and then violently forcing the material He wished expressed through him, against his natural bent, and with as little loss from his recalcitrant characteristics as possible. Of course, nothing of the sort took place. If God wished to give His people a series of letters like Paul's, He prepared a Paul to write them, and the Paul He brought to the task was a Paul who spontaneously would write just such letters' (The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, 1951, p. 155). 3. Inspiredness is not a quality attaching to corruptions which intrude in the course of the transmission of the text, but only to the text as originally produced by the inspired writers. The acknowledgment of biblical inspiration thus makes more urgent the task of meticulous textual criticism, in order to eliminate such corruptions and ascertain what that original text was. 4. The inspiredness of biblical writing is not to be equated with the inspiredness of great literature, not even when (as often) the biblical writing is in fact great literature. The biblical idea of inspiration relates, not to the literary quality of what is written, but to its character as divine revelation in writing."[225]

Geisler writes "From the biblical description of the process of inspiration, the necessary constituents of a theological definition of inspiration may be derived. There are three: 1. Divine causality. The prime mover in inspiration is God: 'No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God' (2 Peter 1:21). In other words, God moved, and the prophet mouthed the truths; God revealed, and man recorded His word. The Bible is God's word in the sense that it originates with Him and is authorized by Him, even though it is articulated by men. God speaks in their written records. 2. Prophetic agency. The prophets played an important role in the overall process of inspiration; they were the means by which God spoke. The word of God was written by men of God. God used persons to convey His propositions. In other words, as J.I. Packer perceptively observes, there God exercised 'concursive operation in, with and through the free working of man's own mind.'[226] He amplifies the concept further saying, We are to

[225] Packer, J. I. (1996). Inspiration. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.)*New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
[226] James I. Packer, *"Fundamentalism" and the Word of God*, p. 82; J.I. Packer, *God Has Spoken*, esp. pp. 45–124. Also see I. Howard Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration*, pp. 40–43.

think of the Spirit's inspiring activity, and, for that matter, of all His regular operations in and upon human personality, as (to use an old but valuable technical term) concursive; that is, as exercised in, through and by means of the writers' own activity, in such a way that their thinking and writing was both free and spontaneous on their part and divinely elicited and controlled, and what they wrote was not only their own work but also God's work.[227] God prepared the prophets by training, experience, gifts of grace, and, if need be, by direct revelation to utter His word. 'By it [inspiration], the Spirit of God, flowing confluently with the providentially and graciously determined work of men, spontaneously producing under the Divine directions the writings appointed them, gives the product a Divine quality unattainable by human powers alone.'[228] In inspiration, then, God is the primary cause, and the prophets are the secondary causes. Thus, the divine influence did not restrict human activity but rather enabled the human authors to communicate the divine message accurately. 3. Scriptural authority is the final product of God's causality and the prophetic agency. Hence, the Bible is a divinely authoritative book. God moved the prophets in such a way as to breathe out (literally, "spirate") their writings. In other words, God spoke to the prophets and is speaking in their writings. Although some might argue that the prophetic model of inspiration is inadequate,[229] in order to shift the basis of the believer's authority from Scripture to some other locus, Carl F. H. Henry rightly observes that 'the church is neither the locus of divine revelation, nor the source of divine inspiration, nor the seat of infallibility. Rather, the church has the task of transmitting, translating, and expounding the prophetic-apostolic Scriptures.'[230] The cause of inspiration is God, the means is the men of God, and the end result is the word of God in the language of men. Therefore, this definition of inspiration is suggested: *Inspiration is that mysterious process by which the divine causality worked through the human prophets without destroying their individual personalities and styles to produce divinely authoritative and inerrant writings*."[231]

B.B. Warfield writes "THE word "inspire" and its derivatives seem to have come into Middle English from the French and have been employed from the first (early in the fourteenth century) in a considerable number of significations, physical and metaphorical, secular and religious. The derivatives have been multiplied and their applications extended during the procession of the years, until they have acquired a very wide and varied use. Underlying all their use, however, is the constant

[227] Packer, *"Fundamentalism"*, p. 80.
[228] Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, pp. 154–60.
[229] Paul J. Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture: Problems and Proposals*, pp. 29–3, 74–75, 99–100, 122–23, and elsewhere. Clark Pinnock, *The Scripture Principle*, uncritically accepts this notion, stating, "The Bible is more than prophecy, and although direct divine speech is part of the record, there are many other kinds of communication as well, some of them more indirect and ambiguous" (p. 63), and indicating that "Paul J. Achtemeier has called attention to the inadequacy of the prophetic model for representing the biblical category of inspiration in its fulness" (p. 234 n. 8).
[230] Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, vol. 2: *God Who Speaks and Shows: Fifteen Theses, Part One*, pp. 13–15.
[231] Geisler, N. L., & Nix, W. E. (1986). *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Rev. and expanded., pp. 38–39). Chicago: Moody Press.

implication of an influence from without, producing in its object movements and effects beyond its native, or at least its ordinary powers. The noun "inspiration," although already in use in the fourteenth century, seems not to occur in any but a theological sense until late in the sixteenth century. The specifically theological sense of all these terms is governed, of course, by their usage in Latin theology; and this rests ultimately on their employment in the Latin Bible. In the Vulgate Latin Bible the verb *inspiro* (Gen. 2:7; Wisd. 15:11; Ecclus. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21) and the noun *inspiratio* (2 Sam. 22:16; Job 32:8; Ps. 17:16; Acts 17:25) both occur four or five times in somewhat diverse applications. In the development of a theological nomenclature, however, they have acquired (along with other less frequent applications) a technical sense with reference to the Biblical writers or the Biblical books. The Biblical books are called inspired as the Divinely determined products of inspired men; the Biblical writers are called inspired as breathed into by the Holy Spirit, so that the product of their activities transcends human powers and becomes Divinely authoritative. Inspiration is, therefore, usually defined as a supernatural influence exerted on the sacred writers by the Spirit of God, by virtue of which their writings are given Divine trustworthiness."[232]

Inspiration vs. Revelation

Inspiration is God revealing Himself through the Word of God which is His mind whereas revelation is God using a vehicle. Inspiration is the means God used to reveal Himself through the Bible whereas revelation is concerned with the divine origin of Scripture and the giving of truth to men.

Interpretation emphasizes the understanding of God's revelation to man. Through revelation, God reveals truth and by interpretation man understands this truth. Interpretation deals with understanding the revelation provided in Scripture whereas illumination refers to the ministry of the Holy Spirit helping the believer to understand this revelation from God in the Scriptures.

In revelation we have the vertical reception of God's truth while in inspiration we have the horizontal communication of that revelation accurately to others. The word of God in its original languages is the vehicle by which God reveals Himself to mankind. In other words, inspiration is the process by which God worked through the human authors without destroying their individual personalities, vocabularies and writing styles to produce divine authoritative and inerrant writings.

God reveals Himself to man in four ways: (1) by nature or creation (Psalm 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-20). (2) Human conscience (Romans 2:14-15). (3) The Living Word,

[232] Warfield, B. B. (2008). *The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield: Revelation and Inspiration* (Vol. 1, pp. 77–78). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 1:24; Heb. 1:1-3). (4) The Written Word, the Bible in its original languages.

God's will, purpose and plan for your life can only be found in the written Word, not in nature since nature cannot: (1) Give information about God's purpose for your life. (2) Give information about God's will for your life. (3) Give information about God's plan for your life. (4) Give the way of salvation.

God's will, purpose, plan and way of salvation are revealed to us: (1) in the written Word of God, i.e., the Bible. (2) By the Living Word of God, i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, the process goes like this: (1) revelation is the objective fact of God communicating to mankind (2) inspiration is the means by which God communicated to mankind (3) interpretation is the process of understanding what God has communicated.

The Holy Spirit is involved in every step. He is the member of the Trinity responsible for this revelation since He guided and directed the human authors of Scripture to put down in the original autographs God's complete and connected thought to mankind. So, the Spirit was the means by which God communicated His will to men. He is responsible for the inspiration of Scripture. He is also the one who guides the believer in the interpretation of this revelation and helps them to understand it so as to make application.

H. Lindsell writes "So technically, revelation preceded inspiration which has to do with the divine method of inscripturating the revelation whether what was written came to the writer by direct communication from God, from his own research, from his own experience or from extant records. Inspiration includes the superintending work of the Holy Spirit, but the human writers of Scripture were not automatons. Each writer had his own style. Each one used the Hebrew or the Greek language according to his own unique gifts and educational background. At the same time that God used human authors in harmony with their gifts He also indited holy Scripture."[233]

The Extent of Inspiration

Verbal inspiration is a view of inspiration that holds that the words themselves in the original languages of Scripture are truly God's words, inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is sometimes caricatured as a "dictation theory." But most conservatives today do not believe that God simply dictated His Word to scribes working like a modern secretary or a robot. God used the prophets and controlled them, but He did not violate their styles or personalities. The nearest thing to a theory of dictation is

[233] Tenney, Merrill C. *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible in Five Volumes*. page 288; Regency Reference Library, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1975.

the teaching of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent in 1545, which said in Latin that the Scriptures were "*Spiritu Sancto dictante*." But the Latin *dictante* does not mean "dictate" in the modern sense. It simply means "spoken" or "said."[234]

The expression "plenary" inspiration expresses the view of biblical inspiration that contends that God is the ultimate author of the Bible in its entirety. This means that God's superintending work in inspiration extends to the whole Bible and to each part of the Bible. Plenary inspiration guarantees that all that the church has come to affirm as Scripture is both authoritative and helpful for Christian belief and practice.[235]

The Bible portrays historical statements and details unknown to man and unconfirmed by human records (Gen. 1:11). Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of these events (Isa. 14; Ezek. 28). In Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, there are two accounts of Satan's fall. Satan existed long before man, yet we have in writing, with perfect accuracy, all that God wants us to know about Satan's fall. There are several accounts of the creation of the universe and these are found in the Scriptures from Genesis to Isaiah, and Colossians 1. We would have no way of knowing these events were it not for the fact that God Himself provided the information through inspiration so that we might know about eternity past.

The Bible is not a history book, but it does contain many historical accounts. All of these are necessary and are accurate. They form the basis and background for the communication of doctrine. There have been many archeological discoveries which demonstrate the perfect accuracy of the Scriptures.

Some places in the Bible have direct quotations from God. Sometimes, God would make known future events which man had no way of foreseeing or understanding at the time of their revelation.

Examples of prophecy: (1) Destruction of the powerful Edomites (Ezek. 25:12-14). (2) Fall of Tyre (3) Person and Work of Christ (Psa. 22; Isa. 53).

These prophecies were fulfilled perfectly. Future prophecies for the Tribulation, Second Advent of Christ and the Millennium will be perfectly fulfilled also.

The record of human or Satanic lies in the Bible does mean that falsehood is truth. Inspiration guarantees the accuracy of these lies such as the devil's lies in Genesis 3:1-5. The book of Ecclesiastes reveals human viewpoint. God did not approve of Solomon's human viewpoint, but it was recorded to reveal the thinking of one who is out of fellowship with God.

So "verbal" signifies the words of the original languages of Scripture whereas "plenary" means "full" or "complete" as opposed to partial. Thus, verbal plenary inspiration expresses the idea that each and every word in the original languages of Scripture are inspired by God who gave full expression to His thoughts in the

[234] Harris, R. L. (2002). *Exploring the basics of the Bible* (p. 9). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.
[235] Grenz, S., Guretzki, D., & Nordling, C. F. (1999). In *Pocket dictionary of theological terms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

original languages of Scripture. He influenced the very choice of the words used within the personality and vocabulary of the writers so that the Bible is not only the Word of God but also the words of men.

Charles Hodge has expressed the meaning of verbal inspiration well: It is meant that the Divine influence, of whatever kind it may have been, which accompanied the sacred writers in what they wrote, extends to the expression of their thoughts in language, as well as the thoughts themselves,—the effect being, that in the original autograph copies, the language expresses the thought God intended to convey with infallible accuracy, so that the words, as well as the thoughts, are God's revelation to us.[236]"[237]

Geisler writes "The Bible claims to be the verbal, infallible, and inerrant Word of God. Because divine authority extends to every part of Scripture, this is verbal plenary inspiration. Although the general claims of the New Testament explicitly refer to only the Old Testament, they may be applied to the New Testament as well, because it too is 'Scripture' and 'prophetic.' The divine nature of Scripture does not rule out the fact that it is also a human book, manifesting the variety of literary styles, figures of speech, and individual personalities of its authors. However, like Christ, the Bible is theanthropic, having both the divine and human elements united in one expression. As a result, God adapted His truth to finite understanding, but He did not accommodate it to human misunderstanding. Therefore, on the authority of Christ, the Scriptures are completely inerrant."[238]

The Scriptures claim that they are inspired by God the Holy Spirit. Thus, when approaching the subject of inspiration, one should let the Scriptures speak for itself.

2 Samuel 23:2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His Word was on my tongue." (NASB95)

Isaiah 59:21 "And as for Me, this is My covenant with them, says the Lord: "My Spirit which is upon you (Isaiah), and My Words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the Lord, "from now and forever." (NASB95)

Mark 12:36 "David himself said in the Holy Spirit, "the Lord said to My Lord, sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies beneath My feet." (NASB95)

Acts 28:25 "And when they (the unbelieving Jews in Rome) did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers." (NASB95)

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[236] Charles Hodge, source unknown.
[237] Duffield, G. P., & Van Cleave, N. M. (1983). *Foundations of Pentecostal theology* (p. 24). Los Angeles, CA: L.I.F.E. Bible College.
[238] Geisler, N. L., & Nix, W. E. (1986). *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Rev. and expanded., p. 64). Chicago: Moody Press.

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world (cosmic system), but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. (NASB95)

Ephesians 3:4 As a result of the public reading of this epistle you ought to be able to understand my technical knowledge about the mystery of the Christ, 5 which (mystery) in other generations was not made known to mankind as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by means of the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Hebrews 3:7 Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "today if you hear His voice." (NASB95)

1 Peter 1:12, "It was to them (Old Testament prophets) that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by means of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-things into which angels long to look."

Revelation 2:7 "He, who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation 2:11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 2:17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:6 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:13, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

Revelation 3:22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NASB95)

2 Timothy 3:16

Second Timothy 3:16 is considered by many as an internal argument for the inspiration of the Bible. If this verse is internal proof for the inspiration of the Bible, then we must have an accurate translation of what this text actually does say. However, there are differences of opinion regarding the translation of this verse.

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. (NASB95)

This verse contains the figure of asyndeton meaning that Paul is not using a connective word between his last statement in verse 15 and his statement here in verse 16. This figure emphasizes the solemn nature of Paul's statement with regards

to the Old Testament Scriptures which suggests that he is making an assertion about the Scriptures.

"**All Scripture is inspired by God**" is composed of the following: (1) nominative feminine singular form of the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), "**all**" (2) nominative feminine singular form of the noun *graphē* (γραφή), "**Scripture**" (3) nominative feminine singular form of the adjective *theopneustos* (θεόπνευστος), "**inspired by God**."

There are lot of difficult exegetical decisions that need to be made with regard to this verse. For instance, does *graphē* refers to various passages of Scripture or is it used in a collective sense. If the latter is the case, then what collection does it refer to? There is the question as to whether or not the adjective *pas* means "all" or "every?" Does *theopneustos* function as a predicate adjective or an attributive adjective? The latter would mean "God-breathed Scripture" whereas the former would mean "Scripture is God-breathed." Consequently, should the verb *eimi*, "**is**" which is omitted due to the figure of ellipsis, be placed after *graphē* or after *theopneustos*? The former would mean "Scripture is God-breathed" whereas the latter would mean "God-breathed Scripture is..." This results in a decision as to whether or not *kai* is between *theopneustos* and *ōphelimos* which would give us the translation "God-breathed and profitable" or is it functioning as an adjunctive adverb "also" resulting in the translation "God-breathed Scripture is also profitable."

In 2 Timothy 3:14-4:2, Paul is exhorting Timothy to continue to persevere and remain faithful in carrying out his duties as his delegate. Timothy is to persevere and remain faithful to the gospel which he has learned and become convinced of (2 Timothy 3:14). Paul reminds him that he was raised in the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15). In 2 Timothy 4:2, the apostle exhorts him to preach the gospel. His young delegate can be totally and completely assured that he is able to do this because the gospel message he proclaims originates from God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16) and not from human beings. Therefore, the Scriptures are profitable for Timothy and his ministry because it is God's Word. The teaching of the Judaizers which certain apostate pastors in Ephesus and Crete were listening to originates with Satan and the kingdom of darkness (1 Timothy 4:1; cf. Titus 1:14). In direct contrast to this, Timothy's message originates from God.

The noun *graphē* means "Scripture" and is used in a collective sense referring specifically to the Old Testament canon of Scripture since the New Testament was in the process of being written during the first century and was not completed until the end of the first century. This is indicated by the fact that the word is used in this way often in the New Testament. Also, Paul's statements in 2 Timothy 3:14-15 indicates this as well as since they refer to Timothy being raised in the Old Testament Scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that

from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

The word *graphē* functions as a nominative subject meaning it is performing the action of the verb *eimi* which is deliberately omitted because Paul is employing the figure of ellipsis for emphasis. The apostle Paul uses this figure here to emphasize the divine authorship of the Scriptures.

The entire statement πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος constitutes an equative clause for the simple reason that it requires an implied verb. Consequently, this makes the assertion that all scripture is profitable.

The noun *graphē* is modified by the attributive adjective *pas* which means "each and every" since it pertains to totality with emphasis upon a thing's individual components. When the adjective *pas* is used with a noun in the singular and without the definite article, it emphasizes the individual members of a class that is denoted by the noun. *Pasa* is used here without a definite article and with the singular noun *graphe*. Therefore, the adjective *pasa* is modifying the noun *graphe* and is used in a distributive sense referring to "each and every" portion of the Old Testament Scripture.

H. Wayne House writes "The first point that needs to be examined is whether πᾶσα should be translated 'all' or 'every.' The New American Standard Bible, The New Testament: A Translation in the Language of the People (Williams), The New Testament in Modern English (Phillips), The New Testament in the Language of Today (Beck), and the Revised Standard Version follow the Authorized Version in its translation of the word as 'all.' The American Revised Version as well as The New English Bible translate it 'every.' Bernard is quite persuaded that this word should be rendered 'every.' 'The absence of the article assures us that we must render "every Scripture" and not (with the Authorized Version) "all Scripture"; the thought is not of the Old Testament regarded as an organic whole, but of every individual "Scripture" therein.'[239] Referring to Bernard's statement, Guthrie, who leaves room for question, states the following: Bernard decides emphatically for 'every' on the basis of the absence of the article, but Simpson points out analogous cases where *pas* is used in a semi-technical phrase and where the meaning 'every' is ruled out, e.g. Acts 2:36 where 'all the house of Israel' is clearly demanded (see also Eph 2:21; 3:15; Col 4:12). Yet it may well be in all these exceptions the *pas* draws attention to the partitive aspect of the expression, and, if that is so, the present phrase may mean Scripture as viewed in each separate part of it.[240] In concurrence with the observation of Guthrie, πᾶς when used with an anarthrous noun is translated 'every' in order to

[239] J. H. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899), pp. 136-37.
[240] Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Tyndale Bible Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 163-64.

call attention to the individual members of the class denoted by the noun.[241] However, when the noun accompanying πᾶς is a proper noun or collective term,[242] the adjective may be translated 'the whole' or 'all.'[243] In agreement with the foregoing, Moule says that the translation 'every inspired Scripture' is most unlikely, and he suggests that the proper meaning is that 'the whole of Scripture is inspired.'[244] Although the American Revised Version and The New English Bible translated πᾶσα 'every' in 2 Timothy 3:16, they did not always translate it that way. In Matthew 3:15; Acts 2:36; 7:22 they translate it 'all.' An examination of γραφή in its more than fifty occurrences in the Greek New Testament reveals that it was considered a technical term or proper noun.[245] Thus when it occurred with πᾶς it did not need the article and therefore was translated 'all' or 'the whole.'[246] Hendriksen summarizes this point well. It is not true that the absence of the article compels us to adopt the translation of the A.R.V, 'every scripture.' The word Scripture can be definite even without the article (I Peter 2:6; II Peter 1:20). Similarly πᾶς =Λσραήλ means "all Israel" (Rom 11:26)…. But even if the rendering 'every scripture' be accepted, the resultant meaning would not differ greatly, for if 'every scripture' is inspired, 'all scripture' must be inspired also.[247] Thus it is concluded that when πᾶς is used with a technical noun it is better to render it 'all' rather than 'every.'"[248]

The NET Bible has the following note, "There is very little difference in sense between *every scripture* (emphasizing the individual portions) and 'all scripture' (emphasizing the composite whole). The former option is preferred, because it fits the normal use of the word 'all/every' in Greek (πᾶς, *pas*) as well as Paul's normal sense for the word 'scripture' in the singular without the article, as here. So *every scripture* means 'every individual portion of scripture.'"[249]

Mounce writes "The question is whether Paul is thinking of Scripture as a cohesive whole ('all') or as the sum total of its parts ('every'). Some argue that 'every' Scripture suggests that only some portions of Scripture are God-breathed

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[241] William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 636. There are twenty-one examples of πᾶς in the construction found in 2 Timothy 3:16, i.e., πᾶς + the noun + the adjective. Examples include Matthew 7:17 ("every good tree"); Matthew 12:36 ("every idle word"); and Ephesians 1:3 ("every spiritual blessing"). The other examples are Acts 23:1; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 1:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:17; 2 Timothy 2:21; 4:18; Titus 1:16; 2:10; 3:1; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:17; 3:16; and Revelation 8:7; 18:2, 12; 21:19 (J. W. Roberts, "Note on the Adjective after πᾶς in 2 Timothy 3:16, " *Expository Times* 76 [August 1965]: 359). While all these examples translate πᾶς by "every," none has a noun with the technical meaning as seen in γραφή as mentioned in the main discussion above.

[242] Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 491.

[243] Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 637.

[244] C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 95.

[245] John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 23: *Thessalonians-Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 109. Referring to 2 Timothy 3:16 Lange writes, "Although the article is wanting here, nevertheless, by virtue of the connection, it is not to be doubted a moment that the Apostle is speaking decidedly and exclusively of the γραφή of the Old Covenant, as of a well-completed whole…. In no case can the absence of the article in a word so frequently used as γραφή surprise us, since it is employed, in fact, almost as a proper name" (ibid.).

[246] Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), p. 296. The usual construction would be ὁ πᾶς but "the article is not used with πᾶς if the noun, standing alone, would have no article."

[247] William Hendriksen, *I -II Timothy* , *Titus*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1957), p. 301.

[248] (1980). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, *137*(545), 50–56.

[249] Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

('every Scripture that is inspired'), but this seems foreign to the text. Paul is encouraging Timothy to center his ministry on Scripture because it comes from God and will fully equip him for service. It is out of place within this context to introduce the note of the supposed unreliability of some of Scripture. Rather translating πᾶς as 'every' emphasizes that the origin of every single element of the OT comes from God."[250]

The adjective *theopneustos* appears only once in the Greek New Testament, here in 2 Timothy 3:16. It is a compound word composed of the noun *theos*, "God," and the verb *pneo*, "breathe, breathe into." Thus, its etymology suggests the word means "breathed by a god" or "divinely inspired." This word can be viewed in a passive sense emphasizing that Scripture's source is the breath of God meaning that it originates in and comes from God Himself. It can be viewed in an active sense emphasizing that the Scripture is filled with the breath of God meaning it is inspiring. This author chooses to render the word "God-breathed" rather than "inspired by God" since the word's original sense is passive and more importantly the context indicates a passive sense for the word.

B.B. Warfield demonstrates that in classical, Hellenistic Greek and patristic literature, the word is used in a passive sense, he writes "THE phrase, 'Given by inspiration of God,' or 'Inspired of God,' occurs, as is well-known, but once in the New Testament—in the classical passage, to wit, 2 Tim. 3:16, which is rendered in the Authorized Version, 'All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God,' and by the Revised Version, 'Every Scripture inspired of God *is*, etc.' The Greek word represented by it, and standing in this passage as an epithet or predicate of 'Scripture'—θεόπνευστος—though occurring here only in the New Testament and found nowhere earlier in all Greek literature, has nevertheless not hitherto seemed of doubtful interpretation. Its form, its subsequent usage, the implications of parallel terms and of the analogy of faith, have combined with the suggestions of the context to assign to it a meaning which has been constantly attributed to it from the first records of Christian interpretation until yesterday...We cannot think it speaking too strongly, therefore, to say that there is discoverable in none of these passages the slightest trace of an active sense of θεόπνευστος, by which it should express the idea, for example, of 'breathing the divine spirit,' or even such a quasi-active idea as that of 'redolent of God.' Everywhere the word appears as purely passive and expresses production by God. And if we proceed from these passages to those much more numerous ones, in which it is, as in 2 Tim. 3:16, an epithet or predicate of Scripture, and where therefore its signification may have been affected by the way in which Christian antiquity understood that passage, the impression of the passive sense of the word grows, of course, ever stronger. Though these passages may not be placed

[250] Mounce, William D., The Word Biblical Commentary, volume 46, Pastoral Epistles, page 566; Thomas Nelson, 2000.

in the first rank of material for the determination of the meaning of 2 Tim. 3:16, by which they may have themselves been affected; it is manifestly improper to exclude them from consideration altogether. Even as part bearers of the exegetical tradition they are worthy of adduction: and it is scarcely conceivable that the term should have been entirely voided of its current sense, had it a different current sense, by the influence of a single employment of it by Paul—especially if we are to believe that its natural meaning as used by him differed from that assigned it by subsequent writers. The patristic use of the term in connection with Scripture has therefore its own weight, as evidence to the natural employment of the term by Greek-speaking Christian writers. This use of it does not seem to occur in the very earliest patristic literature: but from the time of Clement of Alexandria the term θεόπνευστος appears as one of the most common technical designations of Scripture...If, then, we are to make an induction from the use of the word, we shall find it bearing a uniformly passive significance, rooted in the idea of the creative breath of God...Thus it appears that such a conception as 'God-breathed' lies well within the general circle of ideas of the Hellenistic writers, who certainly most prevailingly use the word. An application of this conception to Scripture, such as is made in 2 Tim. 3:16, was no less consonant with the ideas concerning the origin and nature of Scripture which prevailed in the circles out of which that epistle proceeded. This may indeed be fairly held to be generally conceded...And one is very likely to insist that, whatever may be its origin, this conception of the divine origination of Scripture was certainly shared by the New Testament writers themselves, and may very well therefore have found expression in 2 Tim. 3:16—which would therefore need no adjustment to current ideas to make it teach it. At all events, it is admitted that this view of the teaching of 2 Tim. 3:16 is supported by the unbroken exegetical tradition; and this fact certainly requires to be taken into consideration in determining the meaning of the word...That the words of Scripture are conceived, not only in Hebrews but throughout the New Testament, as the utterances of the Holy Ghost is obvious enough and not to be denied. But it is equally obvious that the ground of this conception is everywhere the ascription of these words to the Holy Ghost as their responsible author: *littera scripta manet* and remains what it was when written, viz., the words of the writer. The fact that all Scripture is conceived as a body of Oracles and approached with awe as the utterances of God certainly does not in the least suggest that these utterances may not be described as God-given words or throw a preference for an interpretation of θεόπνευστος which would transmute it into an assertion that they are rather God-giving words...The result of our investigation would seem thus, certainly, to discredit the new interpretation of θεόπνευστος offered by Ewald and Cremer (the active sense). From all points of approach alike we appear to be conducted to the conclusion that it is primarily expressive of the origination of Scripture, not of its nature and much less of its effects. What is

θεόπνευστος is 'God-breathed,' produced by the creative breath of the Almighty. And Scripture is called θεόπνευστος in order to designate it as 'God-breathed,' the product of Divine spiration, the creation of that Spirit who is in all spheres of the Divine activity the executive of the Godhead. The traditional translation of the word by the Latin *inspiratus a Deo* is no doubt also discredited, if we are to take it at the foot of the letter. It does not express a breathing *into* the Scriptures by God. But the ordinary conception attached to it, whether among the Fathers or the Dogmaticians, is in general vindicated. What it affirms is that the Scriptures owe their origin to an activity of God the Holy Ghost and are in the highest and truest sense His creation. It is on this foundation of Divine origin that all the high attributes of Scripture are built."[251]

House writes "The problem posed in the translation of this word is whether it is a passive verbal form or an active verbal form. If it is a passive form, the word is emphasizing that Scripture's source is the breath of God, that is, it originates in and comes from God. If the word has an active meaning, the emphasis is that the Scripture is filled with the breath of God, that is, it is inspiring. Cremer at one time believed that θεόπνευστος is a passive form, but in later editions of his lexicon he argued that it is active. A transference of meaning to inspired by God, given by God, can hardly be explained or vindicated; this meaning might, without straining the context, suit Ps.-Phocyl. 121, but certainly is inadmissible as an epithet of γραφή…. The signification, spirit-filled, breathing the Spirit of God, is in keeping with [the context]….[252] Cremer recognizes that θεόπνευστος was originally passive in meaning. He simply says that the sense is 'God-filled' rather than 'God-breathed' which, he argues, readily passed into the active sense of 'God-breathing' after the analogy of such words as ἄπνευστος or εὔπνευστος, which from 'ill-or well-breathed' came to mean 'breathing forth good or ill.'[253] Barth allows this Greek word to have a passive meaning but believes that it also has an active meaning: 'Scripture is given and filled and ruled by the Spirit of God and it is actively outbreathing and spreading abroad and making known the Spirit of God.'[254] However, one must realize that all words having a -πνευστος ending in compound form originally had the passive sense and that the active sense always is a derived one.[255] Such a compound may have both an original passive sense and a derived active sense, but not at the same time in a particular context as Barth is suggesting. Some evangelicals have either not understood the meaning of this compound word or they have been careless in their definitions. For example, Moore states that inspiration 'in the sense

[251] Warfield, B. B. (2008). *The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield: Revelation and Inspiration* (Vol. 1, pp. 229–280). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.
[252] Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, 4th ed., trans. William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 731. See Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, pp. 245-348, for a fuller discussion of γραφή and related material.
[253] Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon*, p. 731.
[254] Cited from Klaas Runia, *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pubishing Co., 1962), p. 131.
[255] Warfield, The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, p. 280.

of Scripture literally means "God-breathed." The writers of the Holy Writ were thus "breathed upon and in" by the Spirit of God.'[256] What Moore has missed is that 2 Timothy 3:16 does not say the writers were inspired but that Scripture is inspired ("Godbreathed" or "spirated"). This word is defined by the lexicon as 'inspired by God.'[257] The word is a compound of θεός and πνέω. Cremer states that the word cannot be traced to πνέω but only to ἐμπνέω since, as he says, the simple verb is never used of divine activity.[258] However, this is disproved in the Septuagint where examples contrary to his view may be found (see, e.g., Ps 147:18 and Isa 4:24).[259] Words that are compounded with -πνευστος are called verbal adjectives and are formed from verb stems. In the broadest sense, they are participles, since they partake of both verbal and adjectival qualities and their basic idea is passive.[260] To understand how θεόπνευστος was formed, one must observe that verbal adjectives have the ending -τος added to the verb stem of the first or second aorist passive.[261] Then -τος is joined to πνευ-, which is the first aorist stem of πνέω.[262] Since πνέω has an epsilon as a short final vowel, a sigma is united to the aorist passive stem, forming πνευσ.[263] Then -τος is added to the first aorist passive stem and compounded with θεός. Very definitely this word is passive in its original sense. Other words with the same ending are primarily passive in meaning (though a few nonpassive meanings may be found in lexicons). Liddell and Scott give several examples of verbal adjectives with the passive sense.[264] There is then no morphological or lexicographical reason why the Greek word in 2 Timothy 3:16 should not be translated with the passive 'God-breathed,' especially in view of the context."[265]

In 2 Timothy 3:16, the adjective *theopneustos* is functioning as a predicate nominative meaning it is making an assertion about each and every portion of Scripture, namely that it is God-breathed. The context indicates that the adjective *theopneustos* is functioning in a predicate relation to the noun *graphē*. The adjective *theopneustos* is in the second anarthrous predicate position to the noun *graphē*. This all indicates that Paul is making a solemn assertion regarding the divine origin of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Some argue that the word is used in an attributive sense which means "All God-breathed Scripture is also profitable." However, the apostle Paul's intent in the passage is to reaffirm the Old Testament Scriptures originated with God. He is making an assertion about the divine origin of the Old Testament Scriptures.

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[256] H. L. Moore, *Eternal Questions* (Cleveland, TN: White Wing Publishing House, 1968), p. 12.
[257] Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 357.
[258] Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon, p. 731.
[259] Cf. Warfield, The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, pp. 281-87.
[260] Robertson, *A Grammar*, pp. 157, 1095.
[261] William Watson Goodwin and Charles Burton Gulick, *Greek Grammar* (Waltham, MA: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1958), p. 147.
[262] Ibid., p. 153.
[263] Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, p. 160.
[264] Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, comps., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 790-92. Also see Warfield, *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*, pp. 281-82.
[265] (1980). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, *137*(545), 57–58.

Furthermore, we know the copula is omitted due to the figure of ellipsis. The most natural place for the copula to go would be between the subject and the first word that follows it. We need to remember when a writer uses this figure he assumes his readers understand where the copula should go. This would suggest that *theopneustos* has a predicate function.

Wallace writes "In the NT, LXX, in classical and Koine Greek, the overwhelming semantic force of an adj.-noun-adj. construction in an equative clause is that the first adj. will be attributive and the second will be predicate.[266] There are almost 50 instances in the NT and LXX in which the second adj. in such a construction is predicate and the first is attributive (39 of which involve πᾶς before the noun; most in the LXX) and none on the other side. The evidence is so overwhelming that we may suggest a 'rule': *In πᾶς + noun + adjective constructions in equative clauses the πᾶς, being by nature as definite as the article, implies the article, thus making the adjective(s) following the noun outside the implied article-noun group and, therefore, predicate.*[267] In the least, the evidence renders translations of this verse such as the NEB's ("every inspired scripture has its use") highly suspect."[268]

House writes "The most difficult problem in 2 Timothy 3:16 is whether this word is in the attributive position or the predicate position. Either one is grammatically permissible, so the decision ultimately must be made by determining how this word relates to its context. In the Greek construction πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ωηφέλιμος, the word 'is' may be understood immediately before θεόπνευστος thus making it a predicate adjective (with the clause translated "All Scripture is God-breathed and also profitable"), or immediately after θεόπνευστος thus making it an attributive adjective (with the clause translated, "All God-breathed Scripture is also profitable"). However, a copula or verb is not necessary for an adjective to be classified as a predicate adjective.[269] Cook says, 'If the translation were to be 'all God-breathed Scripture is also profitable,' the word order would normally be *pasa theopneustos graphe*.'[270] In other words Cook is saying that θεόπνευστος normally would be identified as an attributive adjective if it precedes its noun. However, anarthrous adjectives are not so easy to distinguish as to whether they are predicate or attributive adjectives; they may be either. An articular attributive adjective occurs before the noun and directly after the article, but this is not always true concerning

[266] There is possibly one exception to this in the NT and none in the LXX. I have found perhaps one or two exceptions in Hellenistic Greek (one in Josephus, one in the Didache), though none so far in Attic Greek. The research has not been exhaustive, but the odds are against taking θεόπνευστος as attributive.

[267] For a lengthier discussion of this text, cf. D. B. Wallace, "The Relation of Adjective to Noun in Anarthrous Constructions in the New Testament" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979) 51-61. The article in *NovT* with the same title is virtually identical with the thesis except that it lacks two parts: (a) an appendix listing all definite and questionable predicate adjectives in anarthrous constructions (73–102), and (b) a detailed discussion of some of the exegetically significant texts (46–61).

[268] Wallace, D. B. (1999). *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (p. 314). Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software.

[269] Robertson, *A Grammar*, p. 656.

[270] Cook, *Systematic Theology*, p. 36.

the anarthrous adjective. Although an articular attributive normally precedes the noun, the 'rule is that an anarthrous adjectival attributive usually follows its substantive.'[271] Robertson gives several examples of constructions in which the anarthrous adjectives follow the nouns they modify.[272] In a study of the construction, πας + noun + adjective, Roberts has convincingly demonstrated that usually in this exact sequence the adjective has the attributive sense. In all twenty-one exact parallels to 2 Timothy 3:16 the adjective is attributive, except 1 Timothy 4:4 in which there are intervening words between the adjectives and the noun. [273]Roberts also lists several examples from the Septuagint translation of the Pentateuch (Gen 1:21, 30; Exod 12:6; 18:26; Deut 1:39; 17:1) which have the same order and in which the adjectives are predominantly attributive. In view of Roberts's study one might assume that the question of whether the Greek word under discussion is a predicate adjective or an attributive adjective is a closed case. This is not true, however, for in 2 Timothy the noun has a technical meaning, which puts it in a classification different from those examples given above. The previous discussion on γραφή showed that it has the same force as a noun with an article, allowing the predicate adjective to follow. Thus, although a predicate adjective would normally precede the noun, this is not a necessary requirement. Winer wisely states that one should not insist on any invariable rule in the Greek sentence except that of spontaneity.[274] Many have condemned the American Revised Version and The New English Bible for translating θεοπνευστος as an attributive adjective. Several verses that have the same construction and yet are still translated predicatively (e.g., Rom 7:12; 1 Cor 11:30; 2 Cor 10:10) are sometimes cited in order to default the two above translations. An examination of these passages, though, reveals that they would be awkward in their contexts as attributives. In addition they do not have the same construction as that found in 2 Timothy 3:16. Thus defaulting the American Revised Version and The New English Bible by comparing them with texts having a similar construction must at least not be pressed. One of the main objections to the word being translated as a qualifying adjective is that the καὶ which follows it in the sentence would not be needed. Some have tried to solve this difficulty by not translating καὶ. This is done by The New English Bible: 'All God-breathed Scripture is profitable.' But it 'is just as arbitrary to leave out καὶ as it is to translate it here by also…. That an inspired composition was also useful, was intelligible of itself indeed.'[275] Alford, however, believes the adjunctive or ascensive use of this conjunction is perfectly permissible. Yet he does admit that the construction, as in 2

[271] F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 251.
[272] Robertson, *A Grammar*, p. 418.
[273] Matthew 7:17; 12:36; Acts 23:1; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 1:3; 4:29; Colossians 1:10; 2
[274] Cited from Robertson, *A Grammar*, p. 417.
[275] Lange, Thessalonians-Hebrews, p. 109.

Timothy 3:16, is an awkward one. He cites Luke 1:36; Acts 26:26; Romans 8:29; and Galatians 4:7 as New Testament examples of the ascensive use of the word.[276] These examples are acceptable evidence that καὶ might be used as an ascensive in 2 Timothy 3:16 without doing injustice to the construction. Alford believes that to accept it as a connecting word deprives the sentence of symmetry. In addition, he says that if it is a connective, the following words must be understood as the purposed result of the God-breathing as well as the ὠφέλεια of the Scriptures, which is hardly natural.[277] However, both views under discussion are acceptable. The main flaw among the two is not the ἵνα clause with καὶ as a connective of θεόπνευστος and ὠφέλιμος, but καὶ as an ascensive. The ἵνα is probably in this context introducing a result clause,[278] which can go smoothly with a phrase such as θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος; thus the sense is 'All Scripture is God-breathed and all Scripture is profitable.' From this discussion one may see that from a grammatical standpoint 'God-breathed' may be considered as either an attributive adjective or a predicate adjective. Both views have their weak and strong points and neither one is conclusive grammatically. How then is one to know which to choose? Robertson clarifies the difference between these two kinds of adjectives: 'The distinction between the attributive adjective and the predicate adjective lies in just this, that the predicate presents an additional statement, is indeed the main point, while the attributive is an incidental description of the substantive about which the statement is made.'[279] Is 'God-breathed' in 2 Timothy 3:16 to be considered as incidental and thus attributive? This writer thinks not! Θεόπνευστος is as much a main point as ὠφέλιμος. Paul had used πᾶσα γραφὴ in verse 16 in contrast to ἱερα γράμματα in verse 15 to show the additional value of apostolic Scripture. A 'reminder of its divine origin is perfectly appropriate in a passage intended to impress on his disciple its value both as authenticating the Christian message and as a pastoral instrumental.'[280] The term θεόπνευστος is not just an incidental description of γραφή; it is also a focal point of the passage. Paul first shows Scripture's origin and then he shows its practicality. Scripture's main attestation is that it is God-breathed, that is, it originates in God. So 'the emphasis is that Scripture partakes of the quality of the creative breath of God,'[281] and Scripture is profitable. This results in the (Christian) man being 'perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' If Scripture is not God-breathed, the believer has no equipment for the spiritual battles of life; and if all Scripture is not God-breathed, the Christian cannot be sure as to which portion of Scripture he may hold as infallible truth. The Authorized Version declares inspiration in 2

[276] Lange, Thessalonians-Hebrews, p. 109.
[277] Ibid., p. 396.
[278] Robertson, *A Grammar*, pp. 991-94.
[279] Ibid., p. 656.
[280] J. N. D. Kelley, *Pastoral Epistles*, Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 203.
[281] Cook, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 36-37.

Timothy 3:16, whereas the American Revised Version implies it. One cannot be dogmatic in deciding the correct translation of πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος, but with all things taken into consideration (syntax, word formation, and context) the balance of the argument is that 2 Timothy 3:16 should be translated, 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable…'"[282]

Dan Wallace makes a significant contribution to understanding this passage, he writes "We need to ask whether the adjective in a πᾶς-noun-adjective construction in an equative clause is normally predicate or attributive. However, since πᾶς is used in such constructions in the NT only a few times, it is necessary to expand our approach in two directions, though still concentrating on equative clauses: (1) We will touch on the slightly broader phenomenon of adjective-noun-adjective to see if this will help to inform the more specific πᾶς -noun-adjective construction. But since there are only six such constructions in the NT, we also should get a representative sampling of usage in extra-NT Greek. (2) We will examine the πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses in the LXX. The LXX is targeted for its special contribution because (a) the LXX is both Koine Greek and biblical Greek,[283] and (b) the LXX can be examined exhaustively with reference to the πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions via Hatch and Redpath's Concordance.[284] The contribution of extra-NT literature: Besides an exhaustive study of the general phenomenon of anarthrous noun-adjective constructions in the NT, I have looked at representative portions from Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Polybius, Josephus, select papyri, as well as the LXX. In the 5,290 lines of text I perused, only three yielded instances of the adjective-noun-adjective construction in equative clauses.[285] Two of these, coincidentally, were in Herodotus. In Book 1.8 we see τίνα... λόγον οὐκ ὑγιέα. This, however, is not an ideal parallel for there is an intervening word between the first (pronominal and attributive) adjective and the noun and a negative particle separating the second (predicate) adjective from the noun. In 1.6, however, we see a clearer example: πάντες ΄Ελληνες ἦσαν ἐλεύθεροι. Here the pronominal adjective is attributive while the second adjective is predicate. This affords an excellent parallel with 2 Tim 3:16, for those who affirm that θεόπνευστος is a predicate

[282] (1980). *Bibliotheca Sacra*, *137*(545), 58–61.

[283] By 'biblical Greek' I do not intend to convey agreement with Turner's conclusion "that Bibl. Greek is a unique language with a unity and character of its own" (J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4 vols, vol 3: *Syntax*, by N. Turner, 4).

[284] For purposes of this study, and the one on which it is based (Wallace, "The Relation of Adjective to Noun," 132), the standard manual editions of Nestle-Aland[25] and Rahlfs (for LXX) were used, though the results were checked against more critical works. It should be noted that the database was compiled before Nestle-Aland[26-27], *Gramcord*/*Accordance*, or the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* were available. Thus, all the work had to be done manually.

[285] The portions examined were: Homer *Odyssey* 1.1-62, *Iliad* 18.1-165; Herodotus Book 1.1-22, Book 2.1-6 (Stein's edition); Thucydides Book 1.1-14.3, Book 2.1.1-2.5 (Hude's edition); Demosthenes Book 1.1-28 (First Olynthiac), Book 9.1-46 (Third Philippic); Polybius *The Histories* 1.1.1-11.8; Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 15.1-99; *Elephantine Papyrus* 1,11.1-18; *Elephantine Papyrus* 2,11.1-18; *Cairo Zenon Papyrus* 59426.1-8; *Cairo Zenon Papyrus* 59251.2-22; *Elephantine Papyrus* 13.1-15; *Urkunde der Ptolemäerzeit* 59.1-33; *Urkunde der Ptolemäerzeit* 62.1-36; *Tebtunis Papyrus* 110.1-15; *Berlin Griechische Urkunde* 1103.2-30; and *Berlin Griechische Urkunde* 1121.1-46. In the LXX, I examined (apart from the specialized study on πᾶς-noun-adjectives which was culled, initially at least, from Hatch-Redpath) Gen 1:1-4:26; Exod 20:1-26; Lev 19:1-37; Deut 6:1-8:15; Psalms 1, 2, 17 (18), 21 (22), 31 (32), 38 (39), 50 (51), 70 (71) 118 (199), 149, 150; Isa 40:1-44:28; 49:1-53:12; Jonah 1:1-4:11; Zech 12:11-14:21.

adjective are also convinced that the location of the implied equative verb or copula (at least, as far as the translation is concerned) is between γραφή and θεόπνευστος. Herodotus' example offers proof that such an understanding can be legitimate in Greek.[286] The other reference is Zech 14:21 in which πᾶς is attributive and ἅγιον (ἅγιος in some witnesses) is predicate (ἔσται πᾶς λέβης...ἅγιον). Although no other examples were found in equative clauses, I did find two more precise parallels to the total construction in 2 Tim 3:16 in the LXX. By 'precise' I mean adjective-noun-adjective-καί-adjective (which, in 2 Tim 3:16, is πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος). In Deut 7:1 the construction is ἑπτὰ ἔθνη πολλὰ καὶ ἰσχυρότερα with ἑπτά functioning as an attributive and πολλὰ καὶ ἰσχυρότερα functioning as predicates. In Gen 2:9 the adjective preceding the noun is πᾶς (πᾶν ξύλον ὡραῖον εἰς ὅρασιν καὶ καλὸν εἰς βρῶσιν)—again, the adjectives following are predicate.[287] Therefore, in the only three parallels to 2 Tim 3:16 in equative clauses I discovered in extra-NT literature, the second adjective was always predicate and the first adjective was attributive. And in the only two constructions in extra-NT literature which paralleled the complete construction of adjective-noun-adjective-καί-adjective in 2 Tim 3:16, even though both parallels were in non-equative clauses, the adjectives following the noun were predicate while the adjective preceding the noun was attributive. Although the examples are not numerous, it might be significant that they all point in one direction. The phenomenon in the New Testament: Adjective-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses. I discovered only six instances in the NT, apart from those involving πᾶς, in which the construction in equative clauses was adjective-noun-adjective. In Matt 22:36 and Mark 12:28 (parallel passages) there may be ambiguity as to which adjective is predicate and which is attributive. However, in neither instance can both adjectives be construed as attributive. Various strands of grammatical, lexical, and historical evidence, in fact, suggest that in each case the preceding adjective is attributive and the following adjective is predicate.[288] In Jas 3:8 κακόν is a substantival adjective with ἀκατάστατον preceding it and serving in an attributive role. However, these two words form the main body of the clause, with μεστή serving in an appositional capacity (in a sense) to κακόν. Technically, κακόν is in the predicate with an implied subject, ἀκατάστατον is an attributive adjective modifying this substantival adjective, and μεστή, though functioning as a predicate adjective, is functioning thus in its own appositional phrase, not in the main clause. Rev 16:18 affords a similar example (τηλικοῦτος σεισμὸς οὕτω μέγας). The gospel of Luke furnishes better

[286] The placement of the verb and the sense of the construction, however, do not necessarily have a one-to-one correspondence. Note the example in Zech 14:21 as well as those listed in n. 34.

[287] These two texts are listed here for the sake of completeness, though their relevance to our target passage, because they involve non-equative clauses, may be minimal.

[288] For a discussion, see my thesis, "The Relation of Adjective to Noun in Anarthrous Constructions in the New Testament" (Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1979) 49-51.

examples. In 19:17 we see ἀγαθὲ δοῦλε... πιστός. The first adjective is attributive and the second adjective is predicate. However, the second adjective is in the following clause (though the noun is only implied in the verb). But in 4:24 we have οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν. Here the first (pronominal) adjective is attributive and the second adjective is predicate. Thus in constructions not involving πᾶς no example had both adjectives functioning as attributives. However, there was ambiguity in two texts as to which adjective was attributive and which was predicate; two others had the second adjective outside of the main clause; and only one was a clear instance of attributive-noun-predicate. The πᾶς constructions hopefully will give us a clearer picture. Πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses. Besides 2 Tim 3:16, there are at least four more similar constructions in the NT. In Luke 2:23 the construction is πᾶν ἄρσεν...ἅγιον...κληθήσεται. Here the pronominal adjective is attributive and the following adjective is predicate. In Jas 1:19 the construction is ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος ταχύς... βραδύς...βραδύς. Here the pronominal adjective is attributive and all three adjectives following the noun are predicates. This, then, is a step closer to the 2 Tim 3:16 construction, for it too involves more than one adjective following the noun. In Jas 4:16 we see πᾶσα καύχησις τοιαύτη πονηρά ἐστιν. This is the first clear instance in either the NT or extra-NT literature which we have examined in which both the preceding and trailing adjectives are attributive. Yet in this isolated example, the linguistic situation veers off from what we see in 2 Tim 3:16 in one very important point, viz., the presence of τοιαύτη as the trailing adjective. τοιούτος, as other pronominal adjectives, may stand outside of the article-noun group but still have an attributive relation to the noun (cf. αἱ δυνάμεις τοιαῦται in Mark 6:2). In fact, with this in mind, we could well argue that Jas 4:16 fits neatly with the 'predicate θεόπνευστος' view, for the following adjective, πονηρά, is predicate. In 1 Tim 4:4 the structure is even closer to that of 2 Tim 3:16: πᾶν κτίσμα θεοῦ καλόν, καὶ οὐδέν... Here it is obvious that the first adjective is attributive and the second is predicate. There is a further parallel in that the second adjective is joined by καί to the word in the predicate, οὐδέν. It might be objected that οὐδέν here is used substantivally and therefore does not afford an exact parallel with 2 Tim 3:16. However, the parallel is not at all diminished for ὠφέλιμος in 2 Tim 3:16, as οὐδέν here, could grammatically stand in the predicate alone. This text, then, is the closest parallel to 2 Tim 3:16 in the NT. The fact that it, too, is in a pastoral epistle adds weight to the view that θεόπνευστος in 2 Tim 3:16 is a predicate adjective. As with the extra-NT evidence, and the adjective-noun-adjective constructions within the NT, the πᾶς-noun-adjective construction suggests the same semantics: the first adjective is attributive and the second is predicate. We have found no clear exceptions to this principle.[289] But admittedly, the examples are few:

[289] There is one twofold example which seems, *prima facie*, to violate this principle. In Jas 1:17 πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον are clearly fully attributive constructions. However, what is not so clear is whether the clause is equative or non-equative. In the words following

altogether only fourteen adjective-noun-adjective constructions were found in the extra-NT and NT literature. Nevertheless, this monolithic trend can hardly be used in support of an attributive θεόπνευστος in 2 Tim 3:16. Πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses in the LXX: The singular semantic path down which our construction has gone has led me to propose, as a working hypothesis, the following 'rule': In πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses the πᾶς, being by nature as definite as the article, implies the article, thus making the adjective(s) following the noun outside the implied article-noun group and, therefore, predicate.[290] This hypothesis can be put through a rigorous test which is inductively complete and self-contained.[291] In perusing the more than 6,000 entries on πᾶς in Hatch-Redpath, I culled from them (what I believe to be) all the πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses. Altogether, I discovered thirty-six such constructions. Remarkably, in thirty-five instances the πᾶς was definitely attributive and the adjective(s) following the noun was/were definitely predicate. For example, πᾶσαι ψυχαὶ ἑπτά in Gen 46:25; πᾶσα θυσία ἱερέως ὁλόκραυτος ἔσται in Lev 6:23(16); πᾶς ἀνήρ ...δίκαιος in Prov 21:2; πᾶσα κεφαλὴ φαλακρά in Ezek 29:18.[292] On only one occasion was there ambiguity. In 2 Kings (4 Kingdoms) 19:35 (πᾶντες σώματα νεκρά) it was questionable as to which adjective was attributive and which was predicate.[293] But even here it was not possible to construe both adjectives as attributive. Thus this one possible exception to the 'rule' in no way supports an attributive θεόπνευστος in 2 Tim 3:16. On six occasions I discovered the construction πᾶς-noun-adjective-καί-adjective, which is an even stronger parallel to the construction in our target passage: ἦσαν δὲ πᾶσαι ψυχαί... πέντε καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα in Exod 1:5; πᾶν ἀρσενικόν...ὀκτακισχίλιοι καὶ ἑξακόσιοι in Num 3:28; πᾶν ἀρσενικόν... ἑξακισχίλιοι καὶ πεντήκοντα in Num 3:34; πᾶν ἀρσενικόν δύο καὶ εἴκοσι χιλιάδες in Num 3:39; ἦν πᾶς Ισραηλ χίλιαι καὶ ἑκατὸν χιλιάδες in 1 Chron 21:5; πᾶς δὲ τόπος... ἄβατος καὶ πυριφλεγὴς γινέσθω in 3 Macc 3:29. On each of

(ἄνωθέν ἐστιν καταβαῖνον) it is possible to treat the verb and the participle in separate clauses *or* as a periphrastic construction. If they are periphrastic (in which case ἄνωθεν would qualify πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δώρημα τέλειον rather than function predicatively to ἐστιν) then the whole clause would belong to the non-equative category. In light of the evidence amassed thus far, and in light of this distinct grammatical possibility, we cannot cite Jas 1:17 as a *clear* exception to the principle we have suggested.

[290] One objection to this principle at the outset might be concerned with its confinement to constructions involving πᾶς. Πᾶς, unlike most adjectives, does not need the article to make the noun any more definite. Thus it might also be added here that other pronominal adjectives which are equally definite would, in all probability, fit the 'rule' as well. We see this with the numeral εἷς in Eph 4:6, for example, in which the wording approximates a "Granville Sharp construction" (for which see my essay, "The Semantic Range of the Article-Noun-Καί-Noun Plural Construction in the New Testament," *GTJ* [1983] 61-63): εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατήρ. Here it is obvious that πατήρ refers to the same person as θεός (note also τοῦτο in Acts 5:31). But are there examples of pronominal adjectives in adjective-noun-adjective constructions? Significantly, of the six instances of adjective-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses we examined, the clearest parallel to the *structural* phenomenon in 2 Tim 3:16 was in Luke 4:24 (οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν). Here the pronominal adjective does indeed function attributively while the second adjective is predicate.

[291] By this I mean only that an entire body of literature (the LXX) can be examined exhaustively, rather than selectively, through the use of a concordance (Hatch-Redpath).

[292] Cf. also Gen 46:22, 26, 27; Exod 1:5; Lev 11:32, 34 (*bis*); 13:58; 15:4 (*bis*), 9, 17, 24, 26; 17:15; 27:11, 28; Num 3:28, 34, 39; Josh 21:26; Judg 20:17; 1 Sam 11:8; 1 Chron 2:4; 21:5; Prov 3:15; 8:1; Jer 9:26; Zech 14:21; Sirach 23:17; 3 Macc 3:29.

[76] Of course, if πάντες is not modifying the noun (which is quote probable, due to the lack of gender concord) then we would most naturally treat it substantivally as a pronoun.

[293] Of course, if πάντες is not modifying the noun (which is quote probable, due to the lack of gender concord) then we would most naturally treat it substantivally as a pronoun.

these occasions both adjectives following the noun were predicate. Hence, these verses add substantial weight as fairly precise parallels,[294] along with 1 Tim 4:4, to 2 Tim 3:16. The totality of this septuagintal evidence was so overwhelmingly in support of the 'rule' suggested in this paper that I felt compelled to pursue one more validation process. If it is true that the article is implied in the πᾶς in πᾶς-noun constructions in equative clauses, and that any adjective following the πᾶς-noun construction would be considered in the predicate, then it ought also be true that any adjective preceding the πᾶς-noun construction would be in the predicate. After all, if the πᾶς in such constructions implies the article, then it should not matter, ex hypothesi, which side of the article-noun group the adjective falls: either way, it should still be predicate. I tested this hypothesis by again examining the entries on πᾶς in Hatch-Redpath. I discovered ten adjective-πᾶς-noun constructions in equative clauses. In each instance the adjective preceding the πᾶς-noun group was clearly predicate.[295] To summarize the septuagintal evidence: thirty-five of thirty-six πᾶς-noun-adjective constructions in equative clauses definitely supported the 'rule.' One was questionable, though it in no way viewed both adjectives as attributive. All ten adjective-πᾶς-noun constructions supported the 'rule.' Altogether, in forty-six syntactical parallels to our passage, at least forty-five support a predicate θεόπνευστος and the one possible exception does not support an attributive θεόπνευστος."[296]

So, we can see here in 2 Timothy 3:16 that Paul is emphasizing with Timothy and the church which would read this epistle that the Old Testament Scriptures were God-breathed and thus are useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for

[294] It might be objected that these examples do not provide precise parallels because (1) in the first five instances, the καί joined two numerals in such a way that it would be impossible to treat these adjectives as bearing a different relation to the noun (e.g., if we were to consider πέντε in Exod 1:5 as attributive and ἑβδομήκοντα as predicate, we would get the nonsense reading of "all five people were also seventy"!); (2) in the last text cited (3 Macc 3:29), even though this passage does not involve the "numbers idiom," the verb is expressed (γινέσθω), rendering it more explicit than the construction in 2 Tim 3:16. In response, one should note that: (1) The very fact that the trailing adjectives in five of the examples can only be taken as predicates is hardly an argument *against* a predicate θεόπνευστος in 2 Tim 3:16. These instances may, in fact, be merely an extension—to the point of a set idiom—of the semantics of the πᾶς-noun-adjective construction we have already seen in the LXX. Further, all grammatical study must proceed on the basis of an indisputable semantic nuance for the particular construction under consideration. That all of the indisputable examples of the construction which is the concern of this paper affirm *only* that the adjective(s) following πᾶς-noun in an equative clause is/are predicate just might indicate that such was part of the warp and woof of hellenistic Greek. (2) Although the verb is expressed in 3 Macc 3:29, its location gives no hint as to whether the trailing adjectives should be treated as attributives or predicates. Hence, it affords a decent parallel to our target passage, for if the author of 2 Timothy had added a verb *after* ὠφέλιμος in 3:16 (paralleling exactly the construction in 3 Macc 3:29), the debate over the relation of θεόπνευστος to γραφή would hardly thereby have been settled. Further even when the verb does stand between noun and adjective, this is not a sure indicator that the adjective belongs in the predicate (cf., e.g., φῶς εἶδεν μέγα in Matt 4:16; τυφλοί εἰσιν ὁδηγοί in Matt 15:14; μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν in Rev 3:8). Again, we submit that neither the presence (or absence) of the verb, nor its location in the clause, is the primary factor which determines the relation of adjective to noun in any given instance. (3) Admittedly, most of our parallels from the LXX employ the copula while it is absent from 2 Tim 3:16. But to demand that the parallels be more precise than πᾶς-noun-adjective in an equative clause (especially since the presence and location of the verb are not decisive matters) just might define *any* parallels out of existence. I am reminded here of W. Grudem's recent insight in connection with the syntax of 1 Pet 3:19 ("Christ Preaching through Noah: 1 Peter 3:19-20 in the Light of Dominant Themes in Jewish Literature," *TrinJ* [1986] 22): ... it is exegetically illegitimate to demand parallel examples which are so narrowly specified that one would not expect to find many, if any, examples. (It would be similar to saying that ὧν, "of whom," in [1 Peter] 3:3 cannot refer to "wives" because there is no other example of a relative pronoun taking as its antecedent an articular feminine plural vocative...!) Consequently, though the parallels we have uncovered do not qualify for the accolade "exact parallels," they are as precise as the extant literature we have examined has turned up. In the least, it would appear that the burden of proof rests on the shoulders of the one who wishes to see *attributive* adjectives in such constructions.

[295] Deut 27:26; Prov 3:32; 11:20; 16:5; 22:11; Judith 16:16 (*bis*); Wisdom of Solomon 13:1; Sirach 25:19; 4 Macc 9:29.

[296] Daniel B. Wallace, The Relation of θεόπνευστος to γραφή in 2 Timothy 3:16; pages 4-9.

training in righteousness. In other words, though God used men to communicate with the human race through the Bible, the Bible itself originates with God and is not merely human book but also a divine book. Therefore, it is a unique book because it is both human and divine just like Jesus Christ who is both God and man.

J. I. Packer writes "According to 2 Tim. 3:16, what is inspired is precisely the biblical writings. Inspiration is a work of God terminating, not in the men who were to write Scripture (as if, having given them an idea of what to say, God left them to themselves to find a way of saying it), but in the actual written product. It is Scripture—*graphē*, the written text—that is God-breathed. The essential idea here is that all Scripture has the same character as the prophets' sermons had, both when preached and when written (cf. 2 Pet. 1:19–21, on the divine origin of every 'prophecy of the scripture'; see also Je. 36; Is. 8:16–20). That is to say, Scripture is not only man's word, the fruit of human thought, premeditation and art, but also, and equally, God's word, spoken through man's lips or written with man's pen. In other words, Scripture has a double authorship, and man is only the secondary author; the primary author, through whose initiative, prompting and enlightenment, and under whose superintendence, each human writer did his work, is God the Holy Spirit. Revelation to the prophets was essentially verbal; often it had a visionary aspect, but even 'revelation in visions is also verbal revelation' L. Koehler, Old Testament Theology, E.T. 1957, p. 103). Brunner has observed that in 'the words of God which the Prophets proclaim as those which they have received directly from God, and have been commissioned to repeat, as they have received them … perhaps we may find the closest analogy to the meaning of the theory of verbal inspiration' (Revelation and Reason, 1946, p. 122, n. 9). Indeed we do; we find not merely an analogy to it, but the paradigm of it; and 'theory' is the wrong word to use, for this is just the biblical doctrine itself. Biblical inspiration should be defined in the same theological terms as prophetic inspiration: namely, as the whole process (manifold, no doubt, in its psychological forms, as prophetic inspiration was) whereby God moved those men whom he had chosen and prepared (cf. Je. 1:5; Gal. 1:15) to write exactly what he wanted written for the communication of saving knowledge to his people, and through them to the world. Biblical inspiration is thus verbal by its very nature; for it is of God-given words that the God-breathed Scriptures consist. Thus, inspired Scripture is written revelation, just as the prophets' sermons were spoken revelation. The biblical record of God's self-disclosure in redemptive history is not merely human testimony to revelation but is itself revelation. The inspiring of Scripture was an integral part in the revelatory process, for in Scripture God gave the church his saving work in history, and his own authoritative interpretation of its place in his eternal plan. 'Thus saith the Lord' could be prefixed to each book of Scripture with no less propriety than it is (359 times, according to Koehler, op.cit., p. 245) to individual prophetic utterances which Scripture contains. Inspiration,

therefore, guarantees the truth of all that the Bible asserts, just as the inspiration of the prophets guaranteed the truth of their representation of the mind of God. ('Truth' here denotes correspondence between the words of man and the thoughts of God, whether in the realm of fact or of meaning.) As truth from God, man's Creator and rightful King, biblical instruction, like prophetic oracles, carries divine authority."[297]

Wiersbe writes "The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture is vitally important, and a doctrine that Satan has attacked from the beginning ("Yea, hath God said?" [Gen. 3:1]). It is inconceivable that God would give His people a book they could not trust. He is the God of truth (Deut. 32:4); Jesus is 'the truth' (John 14:6); and the 'Spirit is truth' (1 John 5:6). Jesus said of the Scriptures, 'Thy Word is truth' (John 17:17). The Holy Spirit of God used men of God to write the Word of God (2 Peter 1:20–21). The Spirit did not erase the natural characteristics of the writers. In fact, God in His providence prepared the writers for the task of writing the Scriptures. Each writer has his own distinctive style and vocabulary. Each book of the Bible grew out of a special set of circumstances. In His preparation of men, in His guiding of history, and in His working through the Spirit, God brought about the miracle of the Scriptures. We must not think of 'inspiration' the way the world thinks when it says, 'Shakespeare was certainly an inspired writer.' What we mean by biblical *inspiration* is the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit on the Bible's writers, which guaranteed that what they wrote was accurate and trustworthy. *Revelation* means the communicating of truth to man by God; *inspiration* has to do with the *recording* of this communication in a way that is dependable. Whatever the Bible says about itself, man, God, life, death, history, science, and every other subject is true. This does not mean that every statement in the Bible is true, because the Bible records the lies of men and of Satan. *But the record is true*."[298]

Peter Williams has the following comment, he writes "'All Scripture is God-breathed.' That means the Bible owes its origin and its contents to the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit. Peter puts it like this: 'No prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit' (2 Peter 1:20). Nobody but the most prejudiced person would deny that the Bible is a unique book if only because, after existing for centuries, it continues to be taught, bought, distributed and loved more than any other book that has ever been written. But its true uniqueness lies in its unity, which is the hallmark of its divine inspiration. For the Bible is not just one book but a whole library of thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. These were written over a

., p. 245) to individual prophetic utterances which Scripture contains. Inspiration, therefore, guarantees the truth of all that the Bible asserts, just as the inspiration of the prophets guaranteed the truth of their representation of the mind of God. (*op.cit. opere citato* (Lat.), in the work cited above

[297] Packer, J. I. (1996). Inspiration. In (D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard, & D. J. Wiseman, Eds.)*New Bible dictionary*. Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

[298] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 252–253). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

period of some fifteen centuries by more than forty authors all of whom were different, including kings (David, Solomon), philosophers (Ecclesiastes), poets (Psalms), farmers (Amos), statesmen (Daniel), priests (Ezekiel, Ezra), prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah), fishermen (Peter, John) and scholars like Paul. With such a variety of authorship over such a long period, one might expect the result to be a book that was no more than a mixed bag of ideas and inconsistencies. Instead, the Bible has a wonderful unity from Genesis to Revelation as it unfolds the single theme of God's plan of redemption. Human inspiration, on the other hand, is something quite different. If we were to take some of the great writings of the world such as Plato, Aristotle, Josephus, Dante, Shakespeare etc., and join them in a single volume, all we would have would be a series of disconnected ideas and contradictions. There would be no unity or theme to hold the different books together as a single whole. The inspiration of the Bible is also seen in its unique survival. All through history it has been a hated book for certain people because of its claim to be the word of the living God. But in spite of all attempts at times by emperors, dictators and totalitarian governments to destroy it by burning, confiscation and the imprisonment and persecution of those who read it and preach it, all such attempts have miserably failed—this remarkable book is still with us and is as widely dispersed as ever. During the Stalin era in Russia, the Marxist government derided the Bible as a book full of legends, myths, and old wives' tales. It even established an anti-Bible museum in Moscow to try and convince the people. Yet for all their derision, the authorities were so desperately afraid that people would read it and believe it, that they put them in prison and in labour camps for doing so. Why? Because they knew that this unique book had the power to change people's lives."[299]

Duane Litfin writes "Paul had just noted that the Scriptures are able to make one wise with regard to salvation, a lesson Timothy had learned long before. But now Paul wanted to reemphasize to Timothy the crucial role of God's inscripturated revelation in his present ministry. Thus, Paul reminded Timothy that **all Scripture is God-breathed** (*theopneustos*, "inspired"), that is, God's words were given through men superintended by the Holy Spirit so that their writings are without error. This fact was virtually taken for granted by the Jews."[300]

2 Peter 1:20-21

2 Peter 1:20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (NASB95)

[299] Williams, P. (2007). *Opening up 2 Timothy* (pp. 82–84). Leominster: Day One Publications.
[300] Litfin, A. D. (1985). 2 Timothy. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 757). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

"**Interpretation**" is the genitive feminine singular noun *epilysis* (ἐπίλυσις), which is a hapax legomenon. The basic idea behind the word is that of an "unfolding" which can indicate either an "explanation" or a "creation." It is sometimes used in extra-biblical Greek for an "interpretation." Other times it has the idea of "solution" or even "spell."

Here the context would indicate the word means "imagination" referring to an Old Testament prophet communicating a prophecy which is found in the Old Testament that is the product of his own imagination. Peter's statement in verse 21 would indicate this since in this verse he is emphasizing the divine origin of Old Testament prophecy.

Verse 20 is variously interpreted. There are three key terms here that help decide both the interpretation and the translation. As well, the relation to v. 21 informs the meaning of this verse. (1) The term "comes about" (γίνεται [*ginetai*]) is often translated "is a matter" as in "is a matter of one's own interpretation." But the progressive force for this verb is far more common. (2) The adjective ἰδίας (*idias*) has been understood to mean (a) one's own (i.e., the reader's own), (b) its own (i.e., the particular prophecy's own), or (c) the prophet's own. Catholic scholarship has tended to see the reference to the reader (in the sense that no individual reader can understand scripture, but needs the interpretations handed down by the Church), while older Protestant scholarship has tended to see the reference to the individual passage being prophesied (and hence the Reformation doctrine of *analogia fidei* [analogy of faith], or scripture interpreting scripture). But neither of these views satisfactorily addresses the relationship of v. 20 to v. 21, nor do they do full justice to the meaning of γίνεται. (3) The meaning of ἐπίλυσις (*epilusis*) is difficult to determine since it is a biblical *hapax legomenon*. Though it is sometimes used in the sense of interpretation in extra-biblical Greek, this is by no means a necessary sense. The basic idea of the word is *unfolding*, which can either indicate an explanation or a creation. It sometimes has the force of *solution* or even *spell*, both of which meanings could easily accommodate a prophetic utterance of some sort. Further, even the meaning *explanation* or *interpretation* easily fits a prophetic utterance, for prophets often, if not usually, explained visions and dreams. There is no instance of this word referring to the interpretation of *scripture*, however, suggesting that if *interpretation* is the meaning, it is the prophet's interpretation of his own vision. (4) The γάρ (*gar*) at the beginning of v. 21 gives the basis for the truth of the proposition in v. 20. The connection that makes the most satisfactory sense is that prophets did not invent their own prophecies (v. 20), for their impulse for prophesying came from God (v. 21).[301]

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n hapax legomenon A Greek phrase meaning "a thing said once," referring to words used only one time in the Greek NT

[301] Biblical Studies Press. (2006). *The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible*. Biblical Studies Press.

"**Moved**" is the nominative masculine plural present passive participle form of the verb *pherō* (φέρω), which means "to be moved, to be influenced, to be driven" since it pertains to causing one to follow a certain course in direction or conduct.

Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary defines the word influence: (1) Capacity or power of persons or things to produce effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (2) Action or process of producing effects on others by intangible or indirect means. (3) A person or thing that exerts influence.

If we were to paraphrase Webster's definition of the word, Peter is telling his readers that the Old Testament prophets were influenced by the omnipotence (intangible means) of the Holy Spirit's (Person) which enabled them to communicate in writing with perfect accuracy (effects), God the Father's sovereign will.

The present tense of the verb *pherō* can be interpreted as a gnomic present which is used to make a statement of a general, timeless fact. Thus, it would indicate that Peter is saying that the prophets of Israel "as an eternal spiritual truth" were influenced or moved by the Holy Spirit from God.

The present tense could also be interpreted as a customary or stative present indicating that the prophets of Israel existed in the state of being influenced or moved by the Holy Spirit from God.

The passive voice of the verb *pherō* means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the subject is of course the prophets of Israel. The agency is expressed and is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the passive voice indicates that the Old Testament prophets as the subject, received the action of being influenced by the Holy Spirit when they communicated their prophecies in writing.

The participle form of the verb could be interpreted as a temporal participle since in relation to its controlling verb *laleō*, "**spoke**" it answers the question "when?" This would indicate that the prophets spoke "while" being influenced or moved by the Holy Spirit from God. The participle form of this verb could also be interpreted as a causal participle meaning it indicates the cause or reason or ground of the action of the finite verb which is *laleō*, "**spoke**." This would indicate that the Old Testament prophets of Israel spoke from God because of being influenced by the Holy Spirit. The latter would appear to be the better interpretation because it is more explicit than the former in that it presents to the reader the explicit reason why the Old Testament prophets spoke from God. They spoke from God because of being influenced by the Holy Spirit.

The apostle Peter's statement in verse 20 means that the prophecies that were written by the prophets of Israel that appear in the Old Testament did not originate with them.

Wiersbe writes "In 2 Peter 1:20, Peter was not prohibiting the private study of the Bible. Some religious groups have taught that only the 'spiritual leaders' may

interpret Scripture, and they have used this verse as their defense. But Peter was not writing primarily about the interpretation of Scripture, but the origin of Scripture: it came by the Holy Spirit through holy men of God. And since it came by the Spirit, it must be taught by the Spirit. The word translated 'private' simply means 'one's own' or 'its own.' The suggestion is since all Scripture is inspired by the Spirit it must all 'hang together' and no one Scripture should be divorced from the others. You can use the Bible to prove almost anything if you isolate verses from their proper context, which is exactly the approach the false teachers use. Peter stated that the witness of the Apostles confirmed the witness of the prophetic Word; there is one message with no contradiction. Therefore, the only way these false teachers can 'prove' their heretical doctrines is by misusing the Word of God. Isolated texts, apart from contexts, become pretexts. The Word of God was written to common people, not to theological professors. The writers assumed that common people could read it, understand it, and apply it, led by the same Holy Spirit who inspired it. The humble individual believer can learn about God as he reads and meditates on the Word of God; he does not need the 'experts' to show him truth. However, this does not deny the ministry of teachers in the church (Eph. 4:11), special people who have a gift for explaining and applying the Scriptures. Nor does it deny the 'collective wisdom' of the church as, over the ages, these doctrines have been defined and refined. Teachers and creeds have their place, but they must not usurp the authority of the Word over the conscience of the individual believer."[302]

Anderson writes "In the ancient world many documents were produced. Some of the writers claimed that the gods were inspiring them to record significant things. Peter is telling his readers that the trustworthiness of Scripture is proved by the fulfillment in time and history of the Old Testament prophets' writings. If they had just made things up out of their own imaginations, subsequent events would have found them out, and their writings would have been forgotten long ago."[303]

In 2 Peter 1:20-21, the apostle Peter is emphatically denying that Old Testament prophecy originates from human initiative. He also equally emphatically asserts that Old Testament prophetic literature originates with God. Peter is teaching his readers that the Old Testament prophets were influenced by the omnipotence of the person of the Holy Spirit, which enabled them to communicate in writing with perfect accuracy, God the Father's sovereign will. The Old Testament prophets received the action of being influenced by the Holy Spirit when they communicated their prophecies in writing. The Old Testament prophets of Israel spoke from God because of being influenced by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can see that like Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 3:16, here in 2 Peter 1:20-21, Peter is asserting the divine

[302] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 445–446). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
[303] Anderson, C. (2007). *Opening up 2 Peter* (p. 51). Leominster: Day One Publications.

origin of the Old Testament canon. Not only this, but both men are teaching that God spoke to mankind through the instrumentality of men.

The Old Testament and Inspiration

The Old Testament prophets distinguish themselves in their writings and public speeches that they were God's spokesmen. They were of the conviction that they were speaking about God and His works as well as His sovereign will. They declared that the commands and prohibitions which they issued to Israel originated from God Himself. The fulfillment of prophecy demonstrated this fact.

The Old Testament contains many references to individual instances of inspiration, and some of these seem to imply direct dictation. The book of Exodus and Deuteronomy record Moses receiving the tablets of stone inscribed "by the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18; 24:4; compare Deuteronomy 31:9; 31:22). The prophets of Israel who followed Moses as covenant enforcers state that they spoke the word of God: "the word of Yahweh came to Samuel" (1 Samuel 15:10); "the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Gad" (2 Samuel 24:11); "the word of Yahweh came to Solomon" (1 Kings 6:11); "the word of Yahweh came to Elijah" (1 Kings 18:1; 21:17, 28), "the word of Yahweh came to Isaiah" (Isa 38:4).

There are many passages which refer to prophets writing down the words they received from God (compare 1 Samuel 10:25; Jeremiah 36; Isaiah 8:1; and Ecclesiastes 12:12). Therefore, these passages imply that the original authors saw at least some instances of inspiration as being by direct dictation regardless of whether they viewed canonical works as a whole as having been dictated.

Jesus' View of Scripture

Throughout His ministry, Jesus of Nazareth appealed to the Old Testament Scriptures while teaching and considered them authoritative because they were the Word of God. This is never more evident than in John 10:34-35.

John 10:34-35 Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? 35 If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)." (NASB95)

In this passage, the Lord when defending Himself from attacks from His enemies quotes the Old Testament. Specifically, He quotes Psalm 82:6 and then says that this "Scripture can never be broken." This statement makes clear that He considered the Old Testament canon as being the supreme authority in judging matters.

Jesus again declares the Old Testament as from God in the Sermon on the Mount discourse.

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (NASB95)

Notice again Jesus appeals to the authority of the Scripture and says that it is eternal and indestructible implying it is from God since God is eternal and indestructible. He also appealed to Scripture when dealing with the temptations of Satan (Luke 4).

Throughout the Gospels, one can see Jesus asking the question "Have you never read in the Scriptures?" Our Lord's confidence in the Old Testament canon also appears in Matthew 19:4 when addressing the issue of divorce. He appeals to the account of Adam and Eve in Genesis to reaffirm God's original design for marriage.

We can see that throughout the Gospels, Jesus testified that whatever is written in the Old Testament is the Word of God. He not only was of this conviction before His resurrection but also after it (Luke 24:25-46).

The Inspiration of the Old Testament within the New Testament

The New Testament frequently refers to the Old Testament as "scripture" (Matthew 21:42.) which clearly implies a well-known body of literature considered authoritative both by the Christian and Jewish communities. Jesus Christ Himself referred to this authoritative literature in the same manner as did His contemporaries (Matthew 19:4).

The apostle Paul does the same (Romans 1:17 et. al.). They both introduce quotations from the Old Testament with the phrase "it is written." First Corinthians 15:3–7 is an early Christian creed which demonstrates how the orthodox Jewish view of Scripture was brought over into even pre-Pauline Christianity since it twice describes the death and resurrection of Christ with the words "according to Scripture" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

The Inspiration of the New Testament.

In his epistles, the apostle Paul often declares the authoritative nature of his own writings (see 1 Corinthians 12:28; 7:25; 14:37; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14; Galatians 1:8–11; Ephesians 2:20; 3:5).

The second epistle of the apostle Peter which was considered by many one of the latest New Testament letters, combines the commands of the apostles of Jesus Christ

together with the words of the Old Testament prophets in the sense that both are authoritative (2 Peter 3:2). In this epistle, Peter states that his fellow apostle Paul wrote according to the "wisdom that was given him (2 Peter 3:15).

The book of Revelation written by the apostle John also makes direct claims to its own authority in that it promises blessings to those who obey its precepts (Revelation 1:3), and warning those who might add to or take away from it (Revelation 22:10).

Fourteen Affirmations about the Spirit in Romans 8:1-28

In Romans 8:1-28, the apostle Paul makes fourteen affirmations about the Holy Spirit that constitute His work in the life of the believer.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus. 2 Because, the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ, who is Jesus, has set you free from the sin nature's authoritative power as well as spiritual death. (Author's translation)

In Romans 8:1, another merciful act is revealed in that the justified sinner is never under any condemnation whatsoever as a result of being placed in union with Christ. Romans 8:2 affirms that the life-giving Spirit's authoritative power, by means of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, has set them free from the authoritative power of the sin nature as well as spiritual death.

Romans 8:3 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 and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:3-4 affirms that the Father's purpose for sacrificing His Son was so that the righteous requirement of the Law, i.e., perfect obedience would be fulfilled in an experiential sense in those Christians who are not conducting their lives in submission to the sin nature but in submission to the Spirit.

Romans 8:5 For you see those who at any time exist in the state of being in submission to the flesh are, as an eternal spiritual truth, preoccupied with the things produced by the flesh. However, those in submission to the Spirit, the things produced by the Spirit. 6 In fact, the mind-set produced by the flesh is, as an eternal spiritual truth temporal spiritual death. However, the mind-set produced by the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth life as well as peace. (Author's translation)

The third affirmation about the Spirit is that submission to the Spirit is the basis for experiencing eternal life and the peace of God, i.e., fellowship with God and failure to submit to the Spirit is loss of fellowship with God.

Romans 8:9 presents the fourth affirmation.

Romans 8:9 However, all of you, without exception are, absolutely not, as an eternal spiritual truth, existing in the state of being in bondage to the flesh but rather in subjection to the authority of the Spirit, if in fact-and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, who is God does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does. However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument anyone does not possess at all the Spirit proceeding from Christ, then this one, as an eternal spiritual truth, by no means belongs to Him. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:9 affirms that the indwelling presence of the Spirit is the distinguishing mark of a Christian in contrast to the unbeliever who is not indwelt by the Spirit.

Romans 8:10 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument Christ does, as an eternal spiritual truth, exist in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, on the one hand, the body is, as an eternal spiritual truth dead because of the sin nature while on the other hand, the Spirit is, as an eternal spiritual truth, life in all of you because of righteousness. (Author's translation)

Paul teaches in the protasis of a first class condition that appears in Romans 8:10 that the Christian is indwelt by Christ. Then, in the apodosis, he teaches that while on one hand, the Christian's body is dead due to the sin nature but on the other hand, the Spirit is life and peace because of imputed righteousness. Therefore, the fifth affirmation about the Spirit is that the Spirit, who is inherently eternal life indwells the Christian and thus eternal life indwells the Christian because the Christian possesses the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Romans 8:11 presents the sixth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:11 However, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument the Spirit, proceeding from the One (the Father) who raised the unique Person of Jesus from the dead ones, does dwell in all of you. Of course, He does! Then, the One (the Father) who raised Christ from the dead ones, will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who does permanently dwell in all of you. (Author's translation)

Therefore, we can see that in Romans 8:11 Paul teaches that the Spirit will transform the mortal body of the Christian at the resurrection of the church, thus giving them a resurrection body to replace their present bodies that contain the sin nature.

The seventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:13.

Romans 8:12 Indeed, therefore, spiritual brothers, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, are debtors, by no means to the flesh, that is, a lifestyle in submission to

the flesh 13 because, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument, you, at any time, live in submission to the flesh, then, you will certainly die. However, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit, you, at any time, put to death the actions produced by the body, then, you will certainly cause yourself to live. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:13 affirms that the Christian puts to death the deeds of the sin nature and experiences eternal life by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

In Romans 8:14, we have the eighth affirmation about the Spirit.

Romans 8:14 Because, all of us who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, led by means of the Spirit, who is God, these are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God's sons. (Author's translation)

The eighth affirmation about the Spirit is that the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.

The ninth and tenth affirmations are found in Romans 8:15.

Romans 8:15 Because by no means have all of you received the Spirit who brings about slavery resulting in fear again. On the contrary, all of you have received the Spirit who brings about the adoption as sons by means of whom, we, as an eternal spiritual truth, cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Author's translation)

The ninth affirmation is that the Spirit adopted the Christian "Roman style" into the family of God. The tenth affirmation is that the Spirit is the means by which the Christian cries out to God and addresses Him as "Abba! Father!"

The eleventh affirmation is found in Romans 8:16.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, bears witness to our human spirit that we are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God's children. (Author's translation)

This passage teaches that the Spirit bears witness to the Christian's human spirit that they are a child of God.

The twelfth affirmation about the Spirit appears in Romans 8:23.

Romans 8:23 Furthermore, not only this, because we ourselves, as an eternal spiritual truth, possess the first fruit, namely, the Spirit, we ourselves also always groan within ourselves. Consequently, we are always eagerly waiting for the adoption as sons, the redeeming of our body. (Author's translation)

This passage teaches that the twelfth affirmation about the Spirit is that He is both the evidence and the guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The thirteenth affirmation is presented by Paul in Romans 8:26-27.

Romans 8:26 Furthermore, in the same way, the Spirit, as an eternal spiritual truth, also assists with our weakness because we are totally uncertain as to what to pray for in accordance with that which is, as an eternal spiritual

truth, absolutely essential but rather the Spirit Himself, as an eternal spiritual truth, intercedes on behalf of us with inexpressible groanings. 27 That is, the one who, as an eternal spiritual truth, searches our hearts, knows perfectly and intimately what is eternally the Spirit's mind-set because He always intercedes on behalf of the saints in accordance with God the Father's will. (Author's translation)

Romans 8:26-27 affirms that the Spirit assists the Christian in his weakness because the Christian does not always know what to pray for by interceding on behalf of the Christian in accordance with the Father's will, with inexpressible groanings to the Father.

Then, lastly the fourteenth and final affirmation about the Spirit is presented by Paul in verse 28.

Romans 8:28 In fact, we know without a doubt that for the benefit of those who are characterized as divinely loving God the Father, He (the Spirit), as an eternal spiritual truth, always works each and every circumstance together for the good, for the benefit of those who are, as an eternal spiritual truth, the chosen ones, in accordance with His predetermined plan. (Author's translation)

The fourteenth affirmation about the Spirit that is contained in Romans 8:1-28 is that the Spirit works both positive and negative circumstances together for the good, i.e., conforming the Christian into the image of Christ.

The Holy Spirit in First John

First John 2:20-27

The Holy Spirit is mentioned several times in First John. The first two occurrences are found in 1 John 2:20 and 27.

1 John 2:20 However, each one of you possess an anointing from the Holy One. Consequently, each one of you possess knowledge (of the truth). (Author's translation)

The apostle John's declaration in 1 John 2:20 stands in contrast with his previous declarations in 1 John 2:19 regarding the antichrists, in which he asserts that they were non-believers. Now, here in 1 John 2:20, the apostle John asserts that each one of the recipients of this epistle possessed an anointing from the Holy One which is a reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which they received at the moment of regeneration from the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the contrast is between the recipients of this epistle being believers as evidenced by the fact that they possessed this anointing from the Holy One and the antichrists being non-believers because they did not possess this anointing.

This "anointing" is figurative language for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit who empowers or enables the believer to understand and obey the truth of God's Word and to discern false doctrine. Therefore, the word is a synonym for the indwelling of the Spirit.

In the Old Testament, kings, priests, and prophets were anointed with oil, symbolizing their empowerment by the Holy Spirit and authority to accomplish the appointed tasks given to them by God. Therefore, when John uses this word *chrisma*, "**anointing**," he is using Old Testament language for the empowerment from the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's will.

This "**anointing**" is John's terminology for what Paul called the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who serves as the believer's true teacher and mentor. The Holy Spirit's purpose during the church-age, therefore, is to indwell every believer in order to provide a temple for the indwelling of the Shekinah Glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, which serves as the principle of victory over the indwelling old sin nature. He provides the believer the spiritual capacity to understand the Word of God, since the Spirit serves as the believer's true teacher and mentor in place of the absent Christ (cf. John 16:13-16). He mediates the person of Christ in the believer.

This anointing, which is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit as our true teacher and mentor, protects the believer from the lies of the cosmic system, which are promoted by Satan's false teachers. He would protect the recipients of First John from the antichrists and their false doctrine pertaining to the person of Jesus Christ.

1 John 2:27 However, this anointing which each of you received from Him lives within each of you. Consequently, each of you have absolutely no need that anyone teach you. Quite to the contrary, because His anointing teaches each one of you about everything, namely what is true so that it is never a lie likewise in the same way, it has taught each of you, continue to make it your habit of living in fellowship with Him. (Author's translation)

1 John 2:27 begins with an adversative clause which stands in contrast with the declarative statement here in 1 John 2:26. The latter asserts that the antichrists were attempting to deceive the recipients of this epistle who were believers living in the Roman province of Asia in the last decade of the first century A.D. The former asserts that the anointing which is mentioned in 1 John 2:20 which each of them received at the moment of their justification from Jesus Christ, the Holy One, lives in them. Therefore, the contrast is between these antichrists and the recipients of this epistle. The implication is that there is a contrast between the lies of the antichrists and the possession of truth by the recipients of this epistle because of this anointing, which is a reference to the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

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So here in 1 John 2:27, John is mentioning one of the post-conversion ministries of the Holy Spirit, namely teaching the believer the doctrines of Christ (cf. John 14:26; 1 Co. 2:10-16). God the Holy Spirit teaches the believer through the Word of God (John 14:26; 15:26).

The believer must be aware of the fact that there is a distinction between the "indwelling" of the Spirit and the "filling" of the Spirit. The former is taught in John 14:16, Romans 8:9, 11, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:18-20, 2 Corinthians 6:16 and 1 John 2:20, 26-28.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit occurs at the moment of justification and is *permanent* meaning it cannot never be lost due to sin (Rm. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16). The Scriptures teach that the Spirit still indwells Christians when they sin indicating that the indwelling of the Spirit can never be lost due to sin. This is unlike the filling of the Spirit which can be lost due to sin but regained through the confession of sin (1 John 1:9) and maintained by obedience (1 John 2:3-6).

That the Spirit still indwells a believer when they sin is implied in that in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, Paul commands the Corinthian believers, some of which were involved in gross sexual immorality, to flee immorality on the basis that the Spirit indwells their bodies. Furthermore, the indwelling of the Spirit is "permanent" because the Lord Jesus taught in John 14:16-17 that the Spirit will be with them forever, thus obedience is not a condition for the indwelling of the Spirit.

Only in the Old Testament could the indwelling of the Spirit be lost as was the case with King Saul. In fact, in Psalm 51:11, David prayed that God would not take away the Spirit from him. So, prior to the day of Pentecost the indwelling of the Spirit was temporary whereas from that day on until the conclusion of the church age, it is permanent.

The indwelling presence of the Spirit in the Christian is evidence of the Christian's justification. It is also proof of the Christian's salvation and of their position in Christ and identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve as a sign that the Christian is a child of God. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve as assurance for the Christian that he or she is eternally secure. It also serves as encouragement to the Christian when he or she endures underserved suffering. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve also as motivation for the Christian to grow to spiritual maturity. It is the basis for the Christian to give number one priority to their relationship with God rather giving it to people. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serves as a reminder to the Christian that they possess divine omnipotence available to them to grow to maturity and to endure undeserved suffering. It is also a guarantee that the Christian possesses eternal life and will live with God forever. The indwelling of the Spirit and Christ serve as a guarantee that the Christian will receive a resurrection body.

The "indwelling" of the Spirit is the principle of victory over the old sin nature. The "filling" of the Spirit is the function of victory over the old sin nature. The word "principle" means that the "indwelling" is the reason or the basis for our victory over the old sin nature. The word "function" refers to how we are to operate to gain a moment-by-moment victory in our lives over the old sin nature.

The "filling" of the Spirit is "dynamic," whereas the "indwelling" is "static." The Christian is commanded to be "filled" with the Spirit whereas they are never commanded to be "indwelt" by the Spirit. When you are filled with the Spirit you are appropriating by faith the indwelling presence of the Spirit.

In 1 John 2:20, the prepositional phrase *apo tou hagiou* (ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου), "**from the Holy One**" and the prepositional phase *ap' autou* (ἀπ' αὐτοῦ), "**from Him**" in 1 John 2:27 both express the fact that Jesus Christ is the source from which the recipients of this epistle received this anointing. This is not a reference to the Father since Jesus taught His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit to indwell them (cf. John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26; 16:5-15). Notice in John 14:16-17, 26, 15:26, 16:5-15, the Lord Jesus Christ told His disciples including John that He would ask the Father to send them the Holy Spirit. Thus, He is the source of the believer receiving the Holy Spirit to permanently indwell them since His request for this from the Father on their behalf prompted the Father to send the Spirit in the first place. In other words, His prayer is the source of the Father sending the Spirit to indwell those who trust in His Son as Savior. Thus, this would indicate that "**the Holy One**" is not

a reference to the Holy Spirit but rather the "**anointing**" refers to Him. In fact, this title is ascribed to Jesus Christ in John 6:69. Consequently, this would also indicate that the "**anointing**" is not a reference to the Word of God.

The adversative clause which begins 1 John 2:27 is followed by a result clause which presents the result of this anointing of the Holy Spirit living in the recipients of this epistle. It asserts that each of the recipients of this epistle have absolutely no need that anyone teach them. Therefore, this result clause is teaching that they never need anyone to teach them such as the proto-Gnostic teachers as a result of receiving this anointing which they received at the moment of their conversion. This is indicated by John's statements in 1 John 2:20-21. In verse 20, John taught that they possessed an anointing from the Holy One Jesus Christ so that each of them possessed knowledge. In verse 21, he assures them that they knew the truth. Therefore, these two verses teach that the recipients of the epistle possessed knowledge of the truth because of the anointing they possessed which is the Spirit of truth. Consequently, the reference to teaching the recipients of this epistle speaks of receiving instruction regarding truth since 1 John 2:20-21 teach that they possessed knowledge of the truth because of this anointing and John refers to this anointing again here in 1 John 2:27. Thus, since John is associating this anointing with possessing knowledge of the truth, and this anointing is a referred again here in 1 John 2:27, the reference to being taught the truth speaks of the antichrists teaching the recipients of this epistle.

When John tells the recipients of this epistle that they have absolutely no one to teach them, he is not saying that they have no need of a pastor-teacher since he would not have written this epistle in which he taught them. He was emphasizing with them that the Holy Spirit was their divine teacher. John is addressing the situation with the false teachers when he makes this statement that they have absolutely no need for anyone to teach. He has the proto-Gnostic teachers in mind when he makes this statement. Thus, he is implying that they have no need for these false teachers. Also, Ephesians 4:11-16, Romans 12:7 and 1 Corinthians 12:28 teach that God has given certain men the gift of apostleship and teaching to instruct the church. The Holy Spirit uses these men to instruct the church or in other words, He is using these men as His instrument to teach truth to the church.

Next, we have a strong emphatic adversative clause which stands in direct contrast to the idea of the recipients of the epistle needing someone to teach them the truth. It makes the assertion that this anointing they received at justification teaches them about everything. Therefore, the contrast is between the recipients of this epistle needing to be taught the truth from the antichrists with that of their having no need of anyone to them because they are indwelt by the Spirit.

"**About everything**" refers to the Spirit inspired apostolic teaching concerning the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ and His Saviorhood. This is indicated by John's

teaching in 1 John 2:18-27 which exhorts the recipients of this epistle to continue to reject the proto-Gnostics' teaching concerning Jesus of Nazareth and to continue to obey his apostolic teaching concerning Jesus. John asserts in 1 John 2:18-23 that these teachers are antichrists since they reject that Jesus is the Christ and therefore the Son of God.

John then explains what he means by the prepositional phrase "**about everything**." He goes on to describe in a positive and negative sense the characteristics of the content of what this anointing teaches the recipients of this epistle. He uses a positive assertion followed by a negative one to do so. The latter is the direct result of the other. The positive assertion maintains that the content of what this anointing taught is true. This means that the Spirit's teaching is expressing truth. It describes what the Holy Spirit's anointing teaches as being according to reality or fact. The negative assertion which is the result of this positive maintains that what the Spirit teaches is never a lie. This means that what the Spirit teaches the believer never deviates from or perverts the truth unlike the teaching of the proto-Gnostic teachers who taught that Jesus Christ was not a human being.

Then, the apostle John presents an assertion which is in addition to this adversative clause which taught that this anointing teaches the recipients of this epistle about that which is true, and never does it teach a lie. The first reason stated that they must obey this command because the Holy Spirit's anointing teaches them about everything, namely about that which is true so that it never teaches a lie. Now, the second reason is implied and asserts that the Holy Spirit's anointing has taught them in the past which is the basis for obeying the command to continue to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

This addition is in the form of a comparative clause which is also telling the reader how they were to obey the command to continue to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit. It is comparing the recipients of this epistle being taught the truth in the past by the Holy Spirit and the manner in which they were to obey the command to continue to make it their habit of living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, John is saying here that the recipients of this epistle were to continue making it their habit of obeying this command "in the same manner" or "just as" the Spirit had taught them in the past. In other words, they were to obey this command by obeying the Spirit's teaching. They were to continue to live in fellowship with the Spirit by obeying His teaching and specifically Spirit inspired apostolic teaching. This will protect them from the false doctrine they were being exposed to at the time of writing.

The recipients of this epistle were already obeying this command in 1 John 2:27 since the apostle John affirms in 1 John 2:12-14 that the recipients of this epistle were remaining faithful to his apostolic teaching and thus were already obeying this command which he more than likely had taught them many times in the past.

If the recipients of this epistle continued to make it their habit of obeying this command in 1 John 2:27 to live in fellowship with the Spirit by continuing to obey His teaching, which is communicated through the apostles of Jesus, they would be filled with the Spirit which is a command issued by Paul in Ephesians 5:18. They would also be obeying the command to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in them.

First John 3:24

The Holy Spirit is mentioned explicitly for the first time in First John in 1 John 3:24.

1 John 3:24 Consequently, the one who at any time does conscientiously obey His commands is living in fellowship with Him. Correspondingly, He Himself is living in fellowship with him. Simultaneously, by means of this, each one of us can at any time confirm that He is living in fellowship with any one of us: By means of His Spirit whom He has bestowed upon each one of us as a gift. (Author's translation)

Therefore, 1 John 3:24 is teaching that living in fellowship with the Father is the direct result of conscientiously obeying the Father's commands. In other words, they are first living in fellowship with the Father as a result of being declared justified by the Father through faith in the name of His Son Jesus Christ. Secondly, they are living in fellowship with the Father as a result of obeying the command to love their fellow-believer as Jesus Christ has loved them. Now, when John asserts that the obedient believer is living in fellowship with the Father, he means that they are experiencing eternal life.

1 John 3:24 teaches that the condition for experiencing fellowship with God is obedience to God's Word. It reveals the importance on the part of the believer to be obedient to the voice of the Spirit of truth, who speaks to the believer regarding the will of the Father through the communication of the Word of truth. The believer who is obedient to the Spirit of truth will experience fellowship whereas the disobedient believer will not.

Now, in 1 John 3:24, the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" is interpreted by some as anaphoric and some interpret it as kataphoric. The former means that it is referring to something in the immediate preceding context whereas the latter means that it is pointing to something to follow in the immediate context. If it is anaphoric, then this would indicate that the believer living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them is by means of obedience to the Father's commands, which are mentioned in 1 John 3:22 and are identified for the reader in 1 John 3:23.

This author believes that the Holy Spirit inspired the Father's commands, which the believer is to conscientiously obey. Thus, when the believer is obeying the

Father's commands, He is in effect obeying the Spirit because the Spirit inspired John's apostolic teaching and all of Scripture, both Old and New Testaments. Therefore, because of this, one can view this prepositional phrase as being both anaphoric and kataphoric.

However, it is better to interpret this prepositional phrase kataphoric because if it isn't then, there is absolutely no reason to mention the Spirit to the reader. If John's intention was to say that by means of conscientious obedience to the Father's commands, the believer can confirm that they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them, then there is absolutely no reason to mention the Spirit here. It has to be the Spirit John is referring to by this prepositional phrase.

Now, if one compares the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" with the statement *ek tou pneumatos hou hēmin edōken* (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος οὗ ἡμῖν ἔδωκεν), "**by the Spirit whom he has given us**"), John is teaching that the Spirit is the instrumentality which the Father uses to confirm with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with Him and vice versa. However, the preposition ek is not only expressing but also source emphasizing that not only is the Spirit the instrumentality the Father uses to confirm with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with them and vice versa, but also, He is the source of this confirmation.

Therefore, the apostle John is teaching that when the believer is living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa when they conscientiously obey the Father's commands, simultaneously the Spirit is confirming for them that this is the case and He is the source of this confirmation. In other words, at the same time, the believer is conscientiously obeying the Father's Spirit inspired commands, the Holy Spirit is confirming they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa.

The Spirit confirms with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa because through this obedience, the Spirit is reproducing the character of Christ in their life, i.e., the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:22-23). Through, their obedience, He also provides the believer the omnipotence required to live the Christian way of life which demands a supernatural means of execution. The believer's obedience to the Father's Spirit inspired commands is the result exercising faith in these commands (cf. Heb. 11:8), and which faith appropriates for them the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Matt. 21:21-22). The Spirit confirms with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them through the fulfillment of their prayer requests, which they offered up to the Father. He also confirms with them that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them by enabling them to experience a peace which is beyond human comprehension (cf. Phil. 4:6-7).

The Spirit is able to confirm the obedient believer is experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa because He inspired these commands which originate with

the Father. In other words, the Spirit communicates these commands to the believer through John's apostolic teaching which is inspired by the Holy Spirit and originates from the Father and was communicated to them by the Son through the Spirit.

To "confirm" means, "to acknowledge with definite assurance." Therefore, John is teaching that by means of the Holy Spirit any believer can have definite assurance that they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them when they conscientiously obey the Father's Spirit inspired commands.

To "confirm" also means, "to establish the truth, accuracy, validity or genuineness of, corroborate; verify." Thus, by means of the Spirit they can establish the truth, the validity or genuineness of, corroborate and verify as to whether or not they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them when they conscientiously obey the Father's Spirit inspired commands.

First John 4:1-6

The Holy Spirit is mentioned several times in 1 John 4:2-6 in relation to the proto-Gnostic teachers who are described as "antichrists" in 1 John 2:18, and unbelievers in 1 John 2:19 and "false prophets" in 1 John 4:2 because they reject John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching that Jesus of Nazareth is God's Son.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, each and every one of you must continue making it your habit of not trusting in every spirit. But rather, if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that any of you are to confirm they possess the characteristic originating from the one and only God (the Father) and each one of you know that you must, then each one of you must continue to make it your habit of thoroughly and critically examining these spirits because many false prophets are traveling about in the world. (Author's translation)

"**Every spirit**" is the noun *pneuma* refers to a particular viewpoint which is communicated by a teacher through instruction. Specifically, it refers to the false teaching propagated by the antichrists John mentions in 1 John 2:18-19 who are describes by him as false prophets here in 1 John 4:1. This word pertains to the doctrine which they antichrists or false prophets communicated which was contrary to the Spirit inspired teaching of the apostles and originates with Satan's cosmic system.

This interpretation is indicated by several factors. The first is that John associates this word *pneuma* with false prophets here in verse 1. Secondly, he associates *pneuma* with confessing or rejecting that Jesus Christ became a human being. Thus, the word is related to what one teaches about the person of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, the word *pneuma* is being contrasting with the Holy Spirit in verses 2, 3 and 6. Connected to this, in verse 6, the word is associated with error and contrasted with the Holy Spirit who teaches truth. Lastly, when *pneuma* is used with relation to the

false prophets, it is said to have originated with the *kosmos*, "**the world**" in verse 5, which speaks of the cosmic system of Satan which is opposed to Jesus Christ and thus opposed to the Father and the Spirit.

Now, these "**false prophets**" in 1 John 4:1 who John describes as "**antichrists**" in 1 John 2:18 and asserts never were believers in the first place were never justified because they rejected the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ which is indicated by the prologue of this epistle and John statements here in 1 John 4:1-6. The reason why these antichrists departed from the fellowship of the Christian community was that they rejected the incarnation and resultant hypostatic union of the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ. This is also indicated by John's statements in 1 John 2:22-23.

1 John 4:2 By means of this, any one of you can at any time confirm the Spirit's teaching who is the one and only God: Any spirit which does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ appearing in a human body does possess the characteristic which originates from this the one and only God who is the Spirit. (Author's translation)

The apostle John in 1 John 4:2 solemnly presents to the recipients of First John the specific teaching or doctrine which will help them to identify whether any teacher and his teaching does originate from God the Holy Spirit or from the devil. Simultaneously, it would also identify for them the means by which they can critically examine any teacher's doctrine in order to determine if they and their teaching originate from God the Holy Spirit or from the devil. This doctrine is the hypostatic union since John asserts that any spirit which does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ appearing in a human body does possess the characteristic of truth which originates from God the Holy Spirit. "**Any spirit**" refers to a particular viewpoint which is communicated publicly by any teacher through instruction. Therefore, John is teaching that this doctrine is the means by which the recipients of First John can confirm that any teacher's doctrine does possess the characteristic which originates with God the Holy Spirit or not.

In 1 John 4:2, the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *homologeō*, "**does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ**" does not mean that these teachers must acknowledge the existence of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, it speaks of having exercised faith in the Spirit inspired gospel and apostolic that Jesus of Nazareth who is the Christ is the incarnate Son of God. In other words, it is an expression of faith that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God and thus one's personal Savior. This phrase speaks of a person exercising faith in the Spirit's testimony through the gospel and the apostles' teaching that Jesus Christ is in the incarnate Son of God.

Faith in the doctrine of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ is a mark of a child of God since it demonstrates they have thus been declared justified by the Father. The Scriptures teach that the sinner receives the imputation of divine righteousness

as a gift at the moment of conversion or in other words, justification. They experience this righteousness by exercising faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ through appropriating by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. So, the justified sinner appropriates the righteousness of God provided for them through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by exercising faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in 1 John 4:2, the apostle is teaching that if any teacher does not acknowledge by faith the doctrine of the hypostatic union, then their teaching does originate with the Holy Spirit. The hypostatic union is foundational to Christianity and thus can't be compromised. If the Son of God did not become a human being, then there is not Savior for sinful humanity since the latter need a mediator between them and a holy God. Jesus Christ reconciled all of sinful humanity through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross. If the Son of God does not become a human being and suffer on the cross for all of sinful humanity, then there is no one to propitiate the Father whose holiness requires that sin and sinners be judged. There would be no one to reconcile them to the Father and no one to redeem out of the slave market of sin.

The noun *Christos*, "**Christ**" in 1 John 4:2 emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Son of God delivered the believer from the sin nature, personal sins, the devil and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and eternal condemnation through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths and resurrection. Thus, this word is a technical word designating Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Savior for all of sinful humanity who is unique as the incarnate Son of God and totally and completely guided and empowered by the Spirit as the Servant of the Father. Consequently, the word denotes the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, thus He is the deliverer of the human race in three areas through His death, resurrection, ascension and session: (1) Satan (2) Cosmic System (3) Old Sin Nature.

If a sinner rejects the teaching that Jesus is both God and a human being, then they can never be saved since salvation is based upon the person and work of Jesus Christ on the cross. An eternal relationship with God is based upon this fact since if the Son of God did not become a human being, then there is absolutely no sacrifice for sins. If there is no solution to mankind's sin problem, then there is no possibility of human beings having a relationship and fellowship with the Trinity.

Thus, we can see why John wrote the prologue to the epistle the way he did.

1 John 1:1 We are now proclaiming to each of you what has always existed from eternity past, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we observed for ourselves, even what we touched with our hands concerning the Word which is truly life. 2 In other words, this life was revealed. As noted previously, we have seen so therefore we are now proclaiming by testifying to

each of you this life, which is eternal, which because of its eternal nature has always existed face to face with the Father. Indeed, it was revealed to each one of us. 3 What we have seen as well as heard, we are now proclaiming to each of you in order that each of you would also continue to regularly experience fellowship with each of us. Also, our fellowship is in fact with the Father as well as with His Son, who is Jesus, who is the Christ. 4 Thus, we ourselves are now communicating in writing concerning each of these things in order to cause our joy to exist in a maximum state. (Author's translation)

If a believer rejects that Jesus is both God and man, then they will not experience fellowship with God since the hypostatic union is the basis for fellowship with the triune God. If the Son did not become a human being, then there would be no possible way for sinners to experience fellowship with a holy God since His death as a human being provides sinners the forgiveness of sins. His death and resurrection as a human being provided sinners deliverance from eternal condemnation, enslavement to the devil and the sin nature, personal sins, physical and spiritual death, and condemnation from the Law. It also provided the opportunity to experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with a holy God. None of this would be possible if the Son did not become a human being and die on the cross and rise from the dead three days later. Furthermore, to deny that Jesus of Nazareth is both God and man is to deny the resurrection since the resurrection demonstrates that Jesus is God (cf. Rom. 1:1-4). To deny the deity of Christ is to deny the doctrine of the Trinity.

In the same way, if a non-believer rejects that Jesus is both God and man, then they will never experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with God since the hypostatic union is the basis for this relationship and fellowship with the triune God. If the Son did not become a human being, then there would be no possible way for sinners to experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with a holy God since His death on the cross as a human being provides sinners the forgiveness of sins. His death and resurrection as a human being provided sinners deliverance from eternal condemnation, enslavement to the devil and the sin nature, personal sins, physical and spiritual death, and condemnation from the Law. It also provided the opportunity to experience an eternal relationship and fellowship with a holy God. None of this would be possible if the Son did not become a human being and die on the cross and rise from the dead three days later. Furthermore, to deny that Jesus of Nazareth is both God and man is to deny the resurrection since the resurrection demonstrates that Jesus is God (cf. Rom. 1:1-4). To deny the deity of Christ is to deny the doctrine of the Trinity.

1 John 4:3 On the other hand, any spirit, which does not acknowledge this same Jesus (as the Christ appearing in human flesh) by no means possesses the characteristic which originates from this the one and only God (who is the

Spirit). Specifically, this (type of spirit) does possess the characteristic which can be described as antichrist, which each and every one of you have heard about through instruction is certain to come. In fact, it now presently exists in the state of already being in the world. (Author's translation)

1 John 4:3 contains an adversative clause which is followed by an epexegetical clause and then an emphatic clause. The adversative clause asserts that any spirit, which does not acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ appearing in human flesh by no means possesses the characteristic which originates with God the Holy Spirit. This characteristic of course is truth. This assertion stands in direct contrast with the previous assertion in 1 John 4:2, which teaches that any spirit which does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ appearing in a human body does possess the characteristic which originates with God the Holy Spirit. Again, this characteristic is truth.

In verse 2, the apostle John is solemnly presenting to the recipients of First John the specific teaching or doctrine which will help them to identify whether any teacher and his teaching does originate from God the Holy Spirit or from the devil. Simultaneously, it would also identify for them the means by which they can critically examine any teacher's doctrine in order to determine if they and their teaching originate from God the Holy Spirit or from the devil. This doctrine is the hypostatic union since John asserts that any spirit which does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ appearing in a human body does originate from God the Holy Spirit. The word "spirit" in verses 2 and 3 refers to a particular viewpoint which is communicated publicly by any teacher through instruction. Therefore, John is teaching that this doctrine is the means by which the recipients of First John can confirm that any teacher's doctrine does possess the characteristic of truth which originates from the character and nature of God the Holy Spirit or if it does not possess this characteristic.

When John speaks of acknowledging Jesus as the Christ appearing in a human body in 1 John 4:2, he does not mean that these teachers must acknowledge the existence of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, it speaks of having exercised faith in the Spirit inspired gospel and apostolic that Jesus of Nazareth who is the Christ is the incarnate Son of God. In other words, it is an expression of faith that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God and thus one's personal Savior. This phrase speaks of a person exercising faith in the Spirit's testimony through the gospel and the apostles' teaching that Jesus Christ is in the incarnate Son of God.

Faith in the doctrine of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ is a mark of a child of God since it demonstrates they have thus been declared justified by the Father. The Scriptures teach that the sinner receives the imputation of divine righteousness as a gift at the moment of conversion or in other words, justification. After justification, they experience this righteousness by exercising faith in the gospel of

Jesus Christ through appropriating by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. So, the justified sinner appropriates the righteousness of God provided for them through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by exercising faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This adversative clause at the beginning of 1 John 4:3 is followed by an epexegetical clause which identifies specifically for the recipients of First John the character of the teaching which rejects Jesus of Nazareth as the God-man Savior. It describes this type of teaching as possessing the characteristic which can be described as that which is antichrist. In other words, this type of teaching is characterized as being opposed to Jesus Christ.

Then, in 1 John 4:3, the apostle John then reminds the recipients of First John that each one of them have heard about this type of false doctrine through instruction. This would mean that each one of the recipients of First John without exception were warned about such false doctrine through instruction. John then asserts that in the past they were taught through instruction that this would certainly take place in the future.

The apostle John then emphasizes that this doctrine, which rejected Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man Savior, was already in existence when John wrote First John. That this was the case is manifested by the recipients of First John being exposed to the doctrine of the proto-Gnostic teachers whom John describes in 1 John 2:18 as "antichrists" and unregenerate in 1 John 2:19 and "false prophets" in 1 John 4:2. They taught "docetic" Gnosticism which rejected the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth.

1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour. To be specific, as each of you heard that Antichrist is certain to come, in fact, now, many antichrists are in existence. Each of us can confirm from this that it is the last hour. 19 They departed from us but in fact they were never a part of our fellowship because if and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument, they had been a part of our fellowship, they would have in fact remained with us. On the contrary, this departure took place in order that they would demonstrate that each one of them are by no means a part of our fellowship. 20 However, each one of you possess an anointing from the Holy One. Consequently, each one of you possess knowledge (of the truth). 21 I am by no means writing to each of you at the present time that each of you are ignorant of the truth but in fact that each of you are possessing knowledge of it and in addition that never does any lie originate from the truth. 22 Who is the worst type of liar? It is none other than the person who at any time does say, "Jesus is unequivocally not the Christ." This person is the antichrist: the person who unequivocally rejects the Father as well as His Son. 23 Anyone who does at any time reject the Son,

unequivocally does not possess a relationship with the Father. The person who does at any time acknowledge the Son, does possess a relationship with the Father also. (Author's translation)

These verses further describe in detail the individuals who adhere to and propagate the teaching that Jesus of Nazareth is not the God-man Savior and which false doctrine is mentioned here in 1 John 4:3. 1 John 2:18 and 22 like 1 John 4:3 describes those who propagate this false doctrine about the person of Jesus Christ as "antichrist." 1 John 2:19 and 23 teach that they are unregenerate or in other words, they are non-believers since verse 19 asserts that they never belonged to the Christian community and verse 23 states that they never possessed a relationship with the Father since Jesus Christ is the mediator between sinful human beings and a holy God. 1 John 2:22 describes them as the worst type of liar.

In 1 John 4:3, the term "**antichrist**" describes teaching which is opposes Jesus Christ by rejecting John's apostolic teaching concerning His person. The chief tenants of these false teachers who rejected the apostolic teaching concerning Jesus Christ can be deduced from the nature of the warnings throughout First John. They denied the following: (1) that Jesus Christ was the Son of God (2:22, 5:1, 5) (2) that the Son of God had become a human being (4:2) (3) the authority to Jesus' commands (2:4) (4) their own possession of an old sin nature (1:8, 10) (5) salvation through the work of Christ on the Cross (2:2) (6) the mandate for believers to love one another (2:9), (7) righteous conduct through obedience to the command to love one another as a requirement of fellowship with God (1:6; 2:29; 3:6, 10) (8) the responsibility to live as Jesus had lived during His First Advent (2:4, 6; 3:7) (9) the nature of the company of believers as a community of fellowship with the Father, the Son and with one another (1:3, 2:11) (10) the authority of John as the proclaimer of the message that had originated from God in eternity past (1:5) (11) that the members of the church who did not follow the false teachers were in the truth (2:20-21).

This false doctrine concerning the person of Jesus Christ was an "incipient" form of Gnosticism since it was not a full-blown threat to orthodox Christianity in the mid to late part of the first century as it did become in the middle of the second century. Specifically, it is called "docetic" Gnosticism.

1 John 4:4 Each and every one of you, dear children, does possess the characteristic originating from this, the one and only God (who is the Spirit). Consequently, each of you are victorious over them because the one in each of you is greater than the one in the world. (Author's translation)

The apostle John solemnly affirms with and commends the recipients of First John that they were remaining faithful to his Spirit inspired apostolic teaching concerning the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Consequently, he is affirming and thus encouraging them that they were in fact experiencing fellowship with himself and

the Trinity which is the overriding concern of this epistle (cf. 1 John 1:3). John does this by asserting that each of the recipients of First John did possess the characteristic originating from this, the one and only God, which is a reference to the Holy Spirit. This of course implies that they accepted by faith John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching which declares that Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man Savior, which is indicated by John's assertions in 1 John 4:2-3.

1 John 4:5 Each one of them does possess the characteristic originating from the world. Because of this each of them does speak from the world's viewpoint. Consequently, the world does obey them. (Author's translation)

1 John 4:5 contains three assertions regarding the false prophets who are mentioned by John in 1 John 4:1. The first asserts that the character of these false prophets originates with the world, which refers to Satan's world system and organization which is totally opposed to Jesus Christ. This assertion stands in contrast to the first assertion in 1 John 4:4 which states that the character of the recipients of First John originates with God the Holy Spirit.

John's statements in 1 John 4:6 identifies what characterizes each group. This verse asserts the Spirit inspired apostolic teaching concerning the person of Jesus of Nazareth is truth. Consequently, those who obey this teaching will be characterized by truth. On the other hand, the teaching of these false prophets is described by the noun *planē* (πλάνη), which means "deception, deceit." Consequently, those who adhere to their false doctrine are characterized by deceit.

Therefore, the first assertion in 1 John 4:5 stands in contrast with the first assertion in 1 John 4:4. The latter asserts that the recipients of First John are characterized by truth whereas the former asserts that the false prophets are characterized by deceit.

The second assertion which appears in 1 John 4:5 presents the basis or the reason why these false prophets speak from the perspective or viewpoint of Satan's world system and organization. This indicates that they communicate their teaching from the viewpoint or perspective of Satan's world system and organization because they are characterized by deceit.

The third and final assertion which appears in 1 John 4:5 presents the result of the second assertion and states that the people enslaved to Satan's world system and organization obey the false doctrine communicated by these false prophets. This indicates that each of these false prophets does speak from the perspective of Satan's world system and organization because they are characterized by deceit, which originates from the world, consequently, members of the human race enslaved to the world obey these false prophets.

There is a progression with each of these assertions in 1 John 4:5. This verse indicates that deceit and deception originate from Satan's world system and organization which is totally opposed to Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. The

doctrine of these false teachers is deceitful and lies because they have been deceived and enslaved to this world system and organization. Members of the human race obey the false doctrine communicated by these false teachers since they too like the false teachers are enslaved to and deceived by this world system and organization whose leader is the devil. In other words, verse 5 reveals the hierarchal structure of Satan's kingdom. Of course, Satan and his angels are at the top followed by these false prophets who are used by Satan and his angels to communicate lies regarding the person of Jesus Christ to members of the human race. Unregenerate members of the human race are enslaved to sin and Satan and are deceived by sin and Satan. The false prophets are used by Satan to feed them lies in order to prevent them from exercising faith in Jesus Christ in order to enter the kingdom of God.

1 John 4:6 Each one of us does possess the characteristic originating from the one and only God (who is the Spirit). The one who at any time does know God (the Holy Spirit) experientially does obey any one of us. Whoever at any time absolutely does not possess the characteristic originating from this the one and only God (who is the Spirit) by no means obeys any one of us. By means of this, any one of us can at any time confirm the Spirit's teaching which is truth as well as the spirit which is deceit. (Author's translation)

1 John 4:6 contains four assertions. There is an interpretative problem in each of these four assertions, which revolves around the reference for the first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* which appears in the first three assertions and the first person plural form of the *ginōskō* in the fourth assertion.

There are three possible interpretations: (1) It refers to the apostles only. (2) It refers to the apostles and all other Christian teachers as opposed to the false teachers. (3) It refers to all Christians.

There are several factors which contribute to the interpretation of this pronoun as a reference to John and the recipients of First John and all Christians. The first is that the purpose of 1 John 4:1-6 is to help the recipients of First John identify teaching which originates with the Holy Spirit and that which originates with Satan's kingdom. Secondly, every member of the Christian community and not just apostles, pastor-teachers and evangelists are obligated to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, every person in the Christian community and not just those with the gift of teaching or evangelism are obligated to adhere to the Spirit's testimony that Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man Savior of the world.

However, it is the view of this author that the first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō* is a reference to John and his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists. There are several reasons for this interpretation. The first is the presence of the verb *akouō* in the second and third assertions in this verse. This verb speaks of obedience to a particular teaching. Secondly, in 1 John 4:4, John employs the second person plural form of the personal pronoun *su* but in 1 John 4:6, he uses the

first person plural form of the personal pronoun *egō*. The former is used to affirm that the recipients of First John possessed the characteristic of truth which originates with God the Holy Spirit. The latter would therefore appear to indicate a contrast between the recipients of First John and the apostle John and his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists that He is the God-man Savior since in both verses he is speaking of possessing the characteristic of truth which originates with the Holy Spirit. Why would John assert in 1 John 4:4 that the recipients of First John possessed the characteristic of truth which originates with God the Holy Spirit but not include himself in this assertion as he does in 1 John 4:6? In other words, why would John repeat himself? Why assert again that the recipients of First John possessed truth since he already affirmed this in 1 John 4:4? Why not assert in 1 John 4:4 that he along with the recipients of First John possessed truth in their lives?

The only reasonable explanation as to why John uses *hēmeis* (ἡμεῖς), "**us**" in 1 John 4:6 and *Hymeis* (Ὑμεῖς), "**you**" in 1 John 4:4 is that he wanted to make a distinction between himself and his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists and the recipients of First John. But more than this, he employs *hēmeis* (ἡμεῖς), "**us**" in 1 John 4:6 and not *hymeis* (Ὑμεῖς), "**you**" because he wants to express a contrast between those who faithfully communicated the Spirit's testimony about the person of Jesus Christ and those who did not do so. The former would include himself and his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists whereas the latter would be the false prophets who are mentioned by John in 1 John 4:5.

The first person plural form of this verb *ginōskō* in the fourth and final assertion refers to John and the recipients of First John and all Christians since by using this verb John is attempting to instruct the recipients of First John as to how they and all Christians can be assured that a particular teaching originates with God the Holy Spirit or Satan. By using the first person plural form of this verb rather than the second person plural form of this word, the apostle John is identifying with his readers that he is subject to this spiritual truth which he presents here in 1 John 4:6. It is expressing is unity and solidarity with the recipients of First John. The latter is emphasizing no exceptions, which indicates that the spiritual truth presented here in verse 6 is emphasizing that there are no exceptions which means that it is applicable to every Christian including the apostle John.

In the first assertion which appears in 1 John 4:6, John states that he and each one of his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists who obey the Spirit's testimony concerning Jesus Christ does possess the characteristic originating from the one and only God. In the fourth assertion in this verse, John identifies this characteristic as truth. They possessed the characteristic of truth as a result of accepting by faith the Spirit's testimony that Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man Savior is truth. In the fourth and final assertion in 1 John 4:6, John identifies the Spirit's teaching as truth and identifies the teaching of the false prophets as deceit. Therefore, as was the case in

the first assertion in 1 John 4:4, the characteristic of truth is referred to here in 1 John 4:6 since he associates truth with the Holy Spirit and the deceit with the false prophets.

Again, this first assertion in 1 John 4:6 is emphasizing a contrast between John and the recipients of First John and the false prophets whose teaching is described in 1 John 4:5 as originating from Satan's world system and organization which is totally opposed to Jesus Christ.

When the apostle John mentions God in this first assertion, he is referring to the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by its articular construction which is anaphoric which means that the article is pointing back to the use of this word in verse 4 indicating that it retains the same referent and meaning when it is used here in verse 6. In 1 John 4:4, the noun *theos* refers to the Holy Spirit which is indicated by its articular construction which is anaphoric which means that the article is pointing back to the use of this word at the end of verse 3 indicating that it retains the same referent and meaning when it is used here in verse 4. In 1 John 4:3, the noun *theos* again refers to the Spirit which is indicated by its articular construction which is anaphoric which means that the article is pointing back to the use of this word at the end of verse 2 indicating that it retains the same referent and meaning when it is used here in verse 3. In 1 John 4:2, the noun *theos* appears twice and in both instances the word refers to the Holy Spirit and not the Father or the Son. The articular construction of this word when it appears a second time in verse 2 indicates that it retains the same referent and meaning when it is used the first time in the verse. The first time the noun *theos* occurs in 1 John 4:2, it is functioning as an epexegetical genitive which means that this word refers to the "same thing" as the substantive to which it is related, which is *pneuma*, "the Spirit." The genitive of apposition typically states a specific example that is a part of the larger category named by the head noun. It is frequently used when the head noun is ambiguous or metaphorical. Here the genitive form of the noun *theos* stands in apposition to the articular accusative form of the noun *pneuma*. The latter is ambiguous in the sense that the reader cannot be sure if John is speaking of the Father or the Spirit. It also needs clarifying since he uses the word in 1 John 4:1 with regards to false doctrine which is taught by false prophets. Therefore, this type of genitive indicates John is identifying the Spirit as being God. Consequently, the word is affirming the deity of the Spirit.

Therefore, we can see that this epexegetical use of the noun *theos* when it is used for the first time in 1 John 4:2 indicates that the referent of the articular construction of this word later in this verse and in 1 John 4:3-4 and 6 is the Holy Spirit and not the Father or the Son. The articular construction of the word the second time the word occurs in 1 John 4:2 and then in 1 John 4:3-4 and 6 is anaphoric meaning it is pointing back to the previous usage of the word indicating the word is retaining the same meaning and referent. Therefore, the articular construction of this word in each

instance indicates that the Holy Spirit is the referent of this word all the way back to epexegetical use of this word the first time it appears in 1 John 4:2.

Further indicating that the referent of *theos* in each of these instances is that 1 John 4:2-6 presents a contrast between the Holy Spirit and the spirits which come from Satan's kingdom. In fact, in 1 John 4:6, the apostle John asserts that those people who obey the teaching of John and the recipients of First John possess the characteristic which originates from God and those who don't are not from God. Then, he asserts that by means of this obedience or disobedience, the recipients of First John can confirm the teaching of the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit. Therefore, in 1 John 4:2-6, John is instructing the recipients of First John as to how they can confirm if a particular teaching originates from God the Holy Spirit or from Satan. The truth originates from the former and deceit and falsehood from the latter.

However, we must remember that if the believer knows God the Holy Spirit experientially or in other words, is experiencing fellowship with Him, they are also experiencing fellowship with both the Father and the Son as well.

The implication of this first assertion is that the apostle John and his fellow faithful apostles, teachers and evangelists were sent from God because they possessed the truth of God in their lives, which would be manifested by the practice of truth, which in turn would be manifested by the practice of divine righteousness and love.

The apostle John solemnly presents a second assertion in 1 John 4:6 which states that the person who at any time does know God experientially does obey John and each of his faithful communicators who obeyed the Spirit's testimony about Jesus of Nazareth that He is the God-man Savior. Again, the reference to God in this second assertion is a reference to the Holy Spirit. This is indicated again by the word's articular construction which is again anaphoric which means that the article it is pointing back to the use of the word earlier in verse 6. This would mean that it is retaining the same meaning and referent when it is used here a second time in the verse.

When John speaks of knowing God the Holy Spirit experientially, he is speaking of a member of the Christian community experiencing fellowship with Him in the sense of personally encountering the Holy Spirit. This takes place through the process of experiencing sanctification by means of obedience to His teaching in the Word of God. Consequently, they are affected by this encounter with the Holy Spirit which results in more of the character of Jesus Christ. Only a believer can know the triune God experientially since only a believer can experience fellowship with the Trinity. Therefore, John is teaching in this second assertion, that only the believer, who obeys the teaching of John and each of his fellow faithful communicators of the Spirit's testimony about Jesus Christ, is experiencing fellowship with the Holy Spirit and thus with the Father and the Son.

The third assertion which appears in 1 John 4:6, states that whoever at any time absolutely does not possess the characteristic originating from the one and only God by no means obeys John or his fellow faithful communicators of the Spirit's testimony about Jesus of Nazareth. Again, the characteristic John is referring to is truth and his reference to God speaking of God the Holy Spirit. This third assertion stands in contrast with the second assertion. The contrast between those who obey the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which is communicated by the apostle John and his fellow faithful communicators of the Spirit's testimony concerning Jesus, and those who don't obey this teaching, which would be the false prophets and those people who obey their teaching.

The "whoever" in the third assertion can refer to a non-believer of course, but also a believer since the latter like the former can be deceived by false doctrine because they have a volition and a sin nature like the non-believer and can be deceived by Satan and his world system and organization like the non-believer. Thus, being a child of God does not protect you from being deceived by false doctrine originating from Satan's kingdom. The child of God must exercise faith in the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God in order to maintain fellowship. When they sin, they are to confess these sins to the Father as John instructed in 1 John 1:9 in order to be restored to fellowship. Then, they must obey the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God in order to maintain that fellowship. The child of God who habitually disobeys the Spirit's teaching and instead obeys false doctrine on a habitual basis will be disciplined by God (cf. Heb. 12:4-13; Rev. 3:19).

The fourth and final assertion which appears in 1 John 4:6 teaches that by means of the first three assertions in this verse, the child of God can confirm the Spirit's teaching which John describes is truth and the spirit which is deceit. The first three assertions in this verse are not only the means but also the source from which any member of the Christian community can confirm the Spirit's teaching which is truth and the spirit whose teaching is deceit or deception. By source, this author means that by these three assertions, the child of God can determine or identify the source of a particular teacher's doctrine, whether it originates with the Holy Spirit or Satan and his kingdom.

Therefore, if we compare this fourth assertion with the first, the apostle John is teaching the recipients of First John that they can confirm if a particular teacher is being used by the Holy Spirit or by the devil by whether or not they possess the characteristic of truth as a result of obeying the Holy Spirit's teaching. They will manifest this characteristic through the practice of divine righteousness (cf. 1 John 2:28-3:10), which constitutes the practice of divine love (cf. 3:11-18).

If we compare the fourth assertion with the second, he is teaching that they can confirm if a particular teacher is being used by the Holy Spirit or by the devil by whether or not they know God experientially, which refers to experiencing

fellowship with God. If they are experiencing fellowship with God, then they are obeying the Spirit's teaching and if not, they are being obeying the devil. Therefore, if we compare these two assertions, he is also teaching that the child of God can confirm if a teacher is obeying the Spirit by whether or not they obey his teaching and that of his fellow faithful apostles, teachers and evangelists since he asserted that each of them possessed the truth of God in their lives. This is confirmed by their godly conduct.

If we compare the fourth assertion with the third, John is teaching that the child of God can confirm if a teacher is obeying the Spirit and is being used by the Spirit or obeying the devil and being used by him by whether or not they possess the characteristic of truth. These two assertions teach that the teacher who does not possess the truth of God in their life which will be manifested by their conduct is by no means obeying the Spirit's teaching, which John and his fellow apostles, pastors and evangelists were faithfully communicating to the Christian community. If these teachers do not possess God's truth in their lives which will be manifested in their conduct, then they are by no means obeying John's teaching or the teaching of any of his fellow apostles, pastors and evangelists who were faithfully communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Christian and non-Christian communities.

Therefore, John is teaching in 1 John 4:6 that a false teacher who is being used by Satan's kingdom and is obeying false doctrine originating from Satan will manifest this in their life by their ungodly conduct. On other hand, the teacher who is being used by the Holy Spirit and is obeying the Spirit will manifest this in their life by their godly behavior. In other words, obedience to the Spirit's teaching will manifest itself in godly behavior while on the other hand, disobedience will manifest in ungodly behavior.

Notice in 1 John 4:6, John is emphatically asserting that the person who obeys his teaching and the teaching of his fellow apostles, teachers and evangelists, who were faithfully communicating the Spirit's testimony concerning Jesus Christ, are obeying the Holy Spirit. John can make this assertion in emphatic terms because their godly conduct manifests the fact that they were obeying the Spirit. By practicing divine righteousness which constitutes practicing divine love, they were manifesting the fact that they were obeying the Spirit and not the devil like the false prophets he mentions and describes in 1 John 4:2-3 and 5.

Therefore, to summarize, 1 John 4:1-6 teaches that if a person obeys John's apostolic teaching about Jesus that He is the Christ and the incarnate Son of God, then they are obeying the Spirit. On other hand, those who reject this teaching are disobeying the Spirit. Therefore, since John is teaching in this passage that the Spirit inspired John's apostolic teaching about Jesus of Nazareth, we can infer in 1 John 4:14 that the Spirit was testifying through John and his fellow-eyewitnesses that the

Father manifested His love by sending His Son to save the world. This interpretation is also supported by Jesus' teaching in John 15:26-27.

John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning." (ESV)

Notice in this passage, the Lord is teaching His disciples the close connection between bearing witness to Jesus and the Spirit doing so as well. He associates the two. Therefore, the implication is that the Spirit would be the one testifying through Jesus' disciples that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

First John 4:13

The Holy Spirit was last mentioned in 1 John 4:13.

1 John 4:13 By means of this, each one of us can at any time confirm that we are living in fellowship with Him and correspondingly, He Himself is living in fellowship with us. Specifically, by means of His Spirit as a source who He has bestowed upon each one of us as a gift. (Author's translation)

1 John 4:13 contains three assertions. The first teaches that the child of God can at any time confirm they are living in fellowship with the Father by means of obeying the command to love one another. The second corresponds to the first and teaches that they can at any time confirm the Father is living in fellowship with them by means of obeying the command to love one another. The third identifies specifically for the recipients of First John the means by which they can confirm at any time they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa. It asserts that it is by means of the Spirit as a source whom the Father bestowed upon them as a gift at the moment of justification that they can have this confirmation. Therefore, this third assertion is related to the command to love one another. The implication is that when the child of God obeys this command, they will be able to confirm that they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa. This epexegetical clause is thus identifying the ministry of the Holy Spirit as the ultimate source behind the command to love one another. The Spirit confirms with the child of God that they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa when they obey the Spirit inspired command to love one another.

John is emphasizing with these assertions the critical importance of obeying the command to love one another since it is the means by which the child of God can confirm that they are living in fellowship with the Father. He is also emphasizing the critical importance of the Holy Spirit in this confirmation since He confirms with the child of God that they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa when they obey His command to love one another. The Spirit reproduces God's

attribute of love in the believer who obeys His command to love one another. This reproduction of the love of God in the child of God is called "the fruit of the Spirit" by the apostle Paul in Galatians 5:22.

1 John 4:13 contains an interpretative problem which revolves around the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ), "by this." This author interprets the demonstrative pronoun *houtos* as anaphoric which means that it is pointing back to John's teaching in 1 John 4:12. Specifically, it is pointing back to the second assertion in this verse. If you recall, 1 John 4:12 contains three assertions. The first states that absolutely no one at any time has observed God the Father. The second teaches that if the child of God does divinely love their fellow-child of God, then God the Father is living in fellowship with them. The third presents the result of the second and asserts that God's attribute of love is accomplishing its purpose. This means that God the Father accomplishes His purpose for revealing His attribute of love through the sacrifice of His Son on the cross if the believer obeys the command to love one another. This interpretation is indicated by John's teaching in 1 John 4:9-10.

Therefore, this author interprets the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ) in in relation to the first and second assertions in 1 John 4:13 as teaching that obeying the command to love one another is the means by which the believer can confirm they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them. The third identifies the Holy Spirit as the ultimate source and means by which this confirmation takes place. By obeying the command to love one another, they are able to confirm they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa and specifically, they are able to receive this confirmation by obeying the Spirit who issued this command and was given to them at the moment of their justification. The command to love one another originates from the Father and was communicated to the child of God through Jesus Christ by the Spirit. Thus, when the child of God obeys this command, they are obeying the Holy Spirit who reproduces God's attribute of love in them.

The Spirit confirms with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa because through this obedience, the Spirit is reproducing the character of Christ in their life, i.e., the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:22-23). Through, their obedience to His command to love one another, He also provides the believer the omnipotence required to manifest God's attribute of love. The believer's obedience to the Father's Spirit inspired command to love one another is the result exercising faith in this command (cf. Heb. 11:8), and which faith appropriates for them the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Matt. 21:21-22). The Spirit confirms with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them through the fulfillment of their prayer requests, which they offered up to the Father. He also confirms with them that they are experiencing fellowship with

the Father and the Father with them by enabling them to experience a peace which is beyond human comprehension (cf. Phil. 4:6-7).

The Spirit is able to confirm the obedient believer is experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa because He inspired this command to love one another, which originates with the Father. In other words, the Spirit communicates this command to the believer through John's apostolic teaching which is inspired by the Holy Spirit and originates from the Father and was communicated to them by the Son through the Spirit.

Therefore, in 1 John 4:13, this prepositional phrase *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" indicates the means by which the recipients of First John and John can confirm for themselves that they are living in fellowship with God and the Father is living in fellowship with them. Consequently, this prepositional phrase and the second assertion here in 1 John 4:13 is making explicit what is stated in the second assertion in 1 John 4:12. Namely, it teaches that practicing God's attribute of love in relation to one's fellow-believer is the means by which the believer can confirm that the Father is living in fellowship with them.

The demonstrative pronoun *houtos* is interpreted by some expositors as being kataphoric and is thus pointing to the two ὅτι (*hoti*) clauses which follow it. The first is interpreted by them as an indirect discourse clause related to γινώσκομεν (*ginōskomen*) and giving the content of *what* believers know: "**that we abide in him and he in us**." They interpret the second ὅτι clause as epexegetical which means that it is explaining *how* believers can confirm that they reside in God and God remains in them: "**that he has given us of his Spirit**." This author agrees with their interpretation of the second ὅτι clause.

Therefore, this interpretation would teach that the believer knows that they are living in fellowship in the Father and vice versa by means of the ministry of the Spirit who He gave to them at their justification. In other words, it teaches that the Spirit is the means by which the believer can know or confirm that they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa. This interpretation would therefore have 1 John 4:13 echoing 1 John 3:24, which asserts that the one who at any time does conscientiously obey the Father's commands is living in fellowship with Him. Correspondingly, the Father is living in fellowship with him. Simultaneously, by means of obedience to these commands, the child of God can at any time confirm that the Father is living in fellowship with them. Specifically, by means of His Spirit whom He has bestowed upon each one of us as a gift they can confirm this.

Theologically, this is an accurate statement. In fact, this is what the epexegetical clause is teaching here in 1 John 4:13. However, it is the view of this author that this kataphoric interpretation *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" totally and completely ignores the preceding context. Specifically, it ignores 1 John 4:7-12 which emphasizes the critical importance of obeying the command to love one

another and thus manifesting God's attribute of love in relation to one's fellow child of God. In other words, the kataphoric interpretation would leave no connection to 1 John 4:7-13. This would be inconsistent with the tenor and heart of First John which is that obedience to the command to love one another is the means by which the believer can experience fellowship with the Triune God. The chiastic structure of this epistle marks 1 John 3:11-18 as the heart of the epistle, which speaks of the critical importance of loving one another.

Furthermore, 1 John 4:14-19 speaks again of the Father manifesting His love by sending His Son to be the Savior of the world (verse 14). It also emphasizes that one must trust in Jesus Christ as Savior in order to experience fellowship with the Father and vice versa (verse 15). It also speaks of the child of God accepting by faith the Father's love for them (verse 16). It also asserts that God is love and that whoever practices divine love lives in fellowship with God and vice versa (verse 16). This pericope also maintains that by living in fellowship with God through the practice of His love, God's attribute of love accomplishes its purpose for being manifested through the sacrifice of His Son (verse 17). Consequently, the child of God who practices love will have confidence at the Bema Seat (verse 17). 1 John 4:14-19 also asserts that there is no fear when practicing divine love since it casts out fear of rebuke at the Bema Seat (verse 18). Lastly, it teaches that the child of God can practice this divine love because God first exercised His love for their benefit (verse 19).

Therefore, both the immediate preceding context and verses 14-19 which follow this prepositional phrase *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" in 1 John 4:13 would indicate that the command to love one another is the forefront of John's mind. In other words, 1 John 4:7-12 and 1 John 4:14-19 also would indicate and strongly suggest that this prepositional phrase in 1 John 4:13 is speaking of the command to love one another and specifically obedience to it.

Also, as we pointed out earlier the anaphoric interpretation of *houtos* would indicate that the second assertion in 1 John 4:13 makes explicit the second one which appears in 1 John 4:12. Furthermore, this interpretation like the kataphoric interpretation would also have 1 John 4:13 echoing 1 John 3:24 since both teach obedience to the Spirit command to love one another is the means by which the believer can confirm they are living in fellowship with the Father and vice versa.

Therefore, the anaphoric interpretation of this prepositional phrase *en toutō* (Ἐν τούτῳ), "**by means of this**" is preferred by the author for three reasons. First, it takes into consideration the immediate preceding context, namely 1 John 4:7-12. Secondly, it takes into consideration the immediate context to follow, namely 1 John 4:14-19. Thirdly, the kataphoric interpretation ignores the thrust of John's argument in these verses.

In 1 John 4:13, the apostle John is once again employing the verb *menō* (μένω) which expressing the idea of the child of God living in fellowship with the Father by means of obedience to the Spirit inspired command to love one's fellow-child of God. This verb is also expressing the idea of the believer being alive in the Father. It is also speaking of the believer maintaining himself or herself in the Father or finding their subsistence in Him. The concept of occupying a place or dwelling in a place is found here in this verse in that the Christian is occupying or dwelling in the Father. The idea of attaining eternal life is also expressed here by this verb in that the Christian experiences eternal life while in fellowship with Father. The concept of conducting one's life is also present in that John is saying that the believer must conduct their life in fellowship with Father. The idea of having a life rich in experience is expressed by the verb *menō* as well in the sense that experiencing fellowship with Father or conducting one's life in fellowship with Him by obeying His command to love one another is a life rich in experience.

By using this verb, John is referring back to the Lord's vine and the branches metaphor recorded in John 15:1-16 since the verb appears in John 15:4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 16. The language of John in 1 John 2:3-6 where he uses verbs such as *tēreō* (John 15:10), *menō* and the noun *entolē* (John 15:10, 12) are taken from the language of our Lord in His vine and the branches metaphor, which John recorded in his Gospel. This metaphor used by the Lord Jesus in John 15 illustrates the importance of remaining in fellowship with Him. The prepositional phrase ἐν τούτῳ, "in Him" that appears 2 times in 1 John 2:3-5 and ἐν αὐτῷ in 1 John 3:6 are clearly alluding to our Lord's use of the prepositional phrase ἐν ἐμοὶ, "in Me," which appears 6 times in our Lord's vine and the branches metaphor in John 15:1-11. However, we must remember that John is not using the vine and the branches metaphor here in 1 John 3:6. In John 15:1-16 the verb *menō* should be translated "remain" since the Lord is using the analogy of a branch "remaining" on a vine in order to bear fruit. However, here the best translation of the verb in 1 John 3:6 is "live" since it parallels the verb *peripateō* in 1 John 2:6 which speaks of conducting one's life in a particular manner.

This is the first time in First John that the apostle John employs this verb μένω with the prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ to express the concept of living in fellowship with Father. He has used them several times already to express the concept of experiencing fellowship with Jesus Christ since he uses this expression in the same manner in 1 John 2:6, 28, 3:6 and 24. In each of these verses, the verb μένω and the prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ, "**in Him**," refers to the state of experiencing fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ by means of obedience to His teaching. However, here in 1 John 4:13, they are used for the first time in relation to the believer experiencing fellowship with the Father which of course is through obedience to the Son's Spirit inspired command to love one another and which command originates with Him. Fellowship with the Father is through the Son and

the Spirit. If the believer is experiencing fellowship with the Son, they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Spirit. If they are experiencing fellowship with the Son, they are experiencing fellowship with both the Father and the Spirit as well.

Although John does not employ the noun κοινωνία, "fellowship" in these four verses, these prepositional phrases do refer to fellowship with the Trinity. In fact, in each prepositional phrase the preposition *en* is functioning as a marker of association expressing the idea of living in fellowship with Jesus Christ in 1 John 2:6, 28, 3:6 and 28 and of living in fellowship with the Father here in 1 John 4:13. In 1 John 2:6, 28, 3:6 and 28, they are synonymous with our Lord's expression "in Me," which appears in His Vine and the Branches Metaphor recorded in John 15. 1 John 4:13 echoes 1 John 3:24.

One must realize that experiencing fellowship with God is in effect experiencing one's eternal relationship with the Triune God and one's union and identification with Jesus Christ. One must not blur the distinction between our eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God though both are obviously related. One also must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience.

When I say one must not blur the distinction between one's eternal relationship with God and fellowship with God, I mean that though they are related, they are different. They are related because fellowship with God is experiencing one's eternal relationship with God. They are different in that sin does not cause one to lose one's eternal relationship with God, but it does cause one to lose fellowship with God.

Let me use an analogy. I entered the Wenstrom family at physical birth. When I disobeyed my parents, I lost fellowship with them. I was sent to my room. They didn't disown me, but they refused to have fellowship with me until I did two things. Once I confessed I was wrong to them. Then, I had to do what I was told. The same is true in God's family, if we sin, God will not have fellowship with us. He doesn't disown us when we sin. He disciplines us because He loves us (Hebrews 12:4-11; Revelation 3:19). We are still in His family. When we confess our sins to our heavenly Father, we are restored to fellowship with Him and when we obey Him we maintain that fellowship with Him.

When I say, we must not blur the distinction between one's position in Christ and one's experience, mean that committing sin (mental, verbal, or overt) prevents us from experiencing our position in Christ as well as sanctification and yet it does not cause us to lose our position in Christ. In fact, to experience fellowship with God is to experience one's union and identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Also, as was the case in 1 John 3:24, the apostle John here in 1 John 4:13 is bringing out the concept of reciprocation when he asserts that the believer is living in fellowship with the Father and the Father is living in fellowship with them as a

result of obeying the Spirit inspired command of the Lord Jesus Christ to love one another as He loves, and which command originated with the Father.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the noun reciprocation, "a mutual exchange, a return in kind or of like value; alternating motion."

They define the verb reciprocate, "to give and take mutually; to return in kind or degree, compliment gracefully; to make a return for something."

If we paraphrase these definitions and apply them to what John is teaching here in 1 John 4:13, we could say the following: With reference to the believer's relationship with the Father, there is to be a mutual exchange, a give and take between the believer and the Father. The believer must obey the Father's command to love one another, if the Father is to reciprocate and live in fellowship with them.

Now, there is another exegetical problem contained in 1 John 4:13, namely, it is concerned with the function of the conjunction *hoti* which this author interprets as being employed with the indicative form of the verb *didōmi*, "**he has given**" in order to form an epexegetical clause. This would mean that this word introduces a clause which identifies specifically the means by which the child of God can at any time confirm they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them.

On the other hand, many expositors and most English translations interpret this word as causal (ESV, NASB95, NRSV, NIV, TEV). This would mean that it is expressing the reason why the believer can confirm they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them by means of their obedience to the command to love one another.

The exegetical interpretation of *hoti* is substantiated by the prepositional phrase *ek tou pneumatos autou* (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), which is contained in this epexegetical clause. This prepositional phrase identifies the Spirit as not only the means by which the believer can confirm they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and the Father with them when they obey the command to love one another but that He is also the source of this confirmation. Furthermore, this interpretation is substantiated by John's use of the expression *ek tou pneumatos hou hēmin edōken* (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος οὗ ἡμῖν ἔδωκεν) in 1 John 3:24, which means "**by means of His Spirit as a source whom He has bestowed upon each one of us as a gift**." Notice, this expression is nearly identical to the expression *ek tou pneumatos autou dedōken hēmin* (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν), which appears in 1 John 4:13. The differences between the two are rather slight. First, the intensive personal pronoun *autos* appears in 1 John 4:13 in relation to the prepositional phrase *ek tou pneumatos* (ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος) and speaks of the Father. However, it does not appear in 1 John 3:24 in relation to this prepositional phrase. Secondly, 1 John 3:24 contains the relative pronoun *hos* before the verb *didōmi*. On other hand, 1 John 4:13 does not have the word though it is clearly implied. 1 John 4:13 contains the intensive pronoun *autos* while 1 John 3:24 does not. In 1 John 3:24, *hēmin* (οὗ ἡμῖν) appears

before *didōmi* whereas in 1 John 4:13, it appears after it as the last word in the sentence. Lastly, the verb *didōmi* in 1 John 4:13 is in the third person singular *perfect* active indicative form whereas in 1 John 3:24 it appears in the third person singular *aorist* active indicative form. Despite, these slight differences, both expressions are asserting the same thing, namely the Father gave the Spirit to the believer as a gift.

1 John 3:24 Consequently, the one who at any time does conscientiously obey His commands is living in fellowship with Him. Correspondingly, He Himself is living in fellowship with him. Simultaneously, by means of this, each one of us can at any time confirm that He is living in fellowship with any one of us: By means of His Spirit whom He has bestowed upon each one of us as a gift. (Author's translation)

As is the case in 1 John 4:13, the noun *pneuma*, "the Spirit" in 1 John 3:24 refers to the Holy Spirit and is the object of the preposition *ek* which is functioning as a marker of means with the implication of something proceeding from or out of the source. Therefore, this prepositional phrase is not only expressing the means but also the source. It is emphasizing that not only is the Spirit the instrumentality the Father uses to confirm with the believer that they are experiencing fellowship with the Father and vice versa, but also, He is the source of this confirmation. The word is indicating that the Holy Spirit is in the instrumentality the Father uses to confirm with the believer that they are living in fellowship with each other as a result of the believer conscientiously obeying His commands.

Therefore, in both verses, 1 John 3:24 and 4:13, the Spirit is conceived as impersonal in the sense that He is the instrument the Father uses to confirm with the obedient believer that they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father is living in fellowship with them. Specifically, the Spirit is the instrument the Father uses to confirm with the obedient believer that they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father is living in fellowship with them when the believer obeys the command to love one another. The command to love one another originated with the Father and was communicated to the apostles by the Son through the Spirit and was communicated to the church by the Spirit.

Thus, John is teaching in both verses that the child of God can confirm they are living in fellowship with the Father and the Father with them by means of obeying the command to love one another because the Spirit inspired this command. He also reproduces the Father's attribute of love in the believer when they obey this command.

Now, 1 John 3:24 contains the first and 1 John 4:13 contains the fourth of six explicit references to the Holy Spirit in First John (cf. 1 John 4:2, 6, 13; 5:6, 8). He is described by John in 1 John 2:20 and 27 as "**the anointing**."

1 John 5:6 This person is the one who appeared publicly by means of water as well as blood-Jesus Christ. Absolutely not by means of this water only but rather by means of this water as well as by means of this blood. Correspondingly, the Spirit is the one who testifies (about Jesus Christ) because the Spirit possesses eternally and inherently the characteristic, which is unique to Himself as deity, which is truth. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:6 marks a transition from 1 John 5:3-5 to 1 John 5:7-12. The former teaches that the child of God's faith that Jesus of Nazareth is the Father's one and only Son appropriates the conquering power of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session, which conquer Satan's world system and organization. The latter teaches that the Spirit who indwells the child of God testifies that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God and as a result of possesses a relationship with the Father and the Son and also possesses eternal life.

1 John 5:6 begins with a declarative statement which asserts that Jesus Christ is the person who appeared publicly by means of water as well as blood. Then, the apostle John employs a correlative clause which serves to reaffirm in emphatic terms the previous declarative statement. It states that Jesus Christ absolutely did not appear publicly by means of this water only but rather by means of this water as well as by means of this blood.

The assertion that Jesus Christ appeared publicly by means of water and blood is caused a lot of consternation among interpreters of this verse. Most of the problem revolves around the reference to water. The same prepositional phrase *en hudati*, "by water" appears three times in the gospel of John and in each instance, it is used in relation to John the Baptist (John 1:26, 31, 33). Jesus was baptized by John in these passages. When Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:13–17). Simultaneously, John 3:32-44 records John bearing witness that the Spirit descended like a dove and rested on Jesus, which was the Father's manner of identifying for John the Baptist that Jesus was His Son. Therefore, this author interprets the reference to "**water**" as referring to John the Baptist baptizing Jesus of Nazareth in the Jordan River, which marked the beginning of the latter's public ministry, which lasted for approximately three and a half years.

Some argue that this reference to water is referring to Jesus baptizing people rather than being baptized by John the Baptist. The problem with this view is that John 4:2 asserts that Jesus never baptized anyone but only His disciples. Furthermore, this view does fit with the context of 1 John 5:6-8 since these verses are asserting that the Spirit, water and blood testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and Savior of the world. Thus, these verses are emphasizing

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the importance with adhering to the apostolic teaching concerning the person of Jesus Christ. His baptizing people, which He never did, does not contribute to identifying who He was. However, when John baptized Him, the Father and the Spirit both identified Him as being the Son of God and Savior of the world. Furthermore, Jesus baptizing people by no means testified to the fact that He was God's Son and the Savior.

Another interpretation of the water here in 1 John 5:6 is that it is a reference to natural birth with the water being an allusion to either male semen or amniotic fluid.

Kruse explains this view, he writes "it has been argued that coming 'by water' is a reference to natural birth, water being an allusion either to male semen or amniotic fluid. Witherington lists Prov 5:15–18 and Song of Songs 4:12–15 as OT texts where water relates to birth (semen in one place, amniotic fluid in the other) as well as a number of texts from other Jewish and ancient Near Eastern literature.[304] If it is correct to interpret Jesus' coming 'by water' as a reference to his natural birth, then the author and the secessionists would have agreed that Jesus' humanity was real. However, it is quite clear that this was not something about which they agreed (4:2; cf. 2 John 7). Further, when the author wants to emphasize the reality of Jesus' humanity elsewhere in 1 John, he does not speak of Jesus coming 'by water' (*en hydati*) but coming 'in the flesh' (*en sarki*) (4:2; cf. 2 John 7). For this reason, it is unlikely that the reference to Jesus coming *en hydati* here constitutes an affirmation of his real humanity."[305]

Some interpreters argue that the water and the blood must be taken together since ancient Jewish sources believed that the human body is composed of water and blood. Thus, the water and the blood is synonymous with Jesus coming "in the flesh" and refers to the human nature of the Son of God. The problem with this view is that in 1 John 5:7-8, John does not take the water and blood together since in these verses he is thinking of them as two different items.

Lastly, some interpret the water as alluding to water baptism. However, this view does not fit the context of 1 John 5:6-8 since again these verses are asserting that the Spirit, water and blood testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and Savior of the world. Thus, these verses are emphasizing the importance with adhering to the apostolic teaching concerning the person of Jesus Christ. The sacrament of baptism does not contribute to identifying who Jesus was. It does not testify to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of the world.

The "**blood**" is a reference to Jesus of Nazareth's physical death on the cross, which marked the end of His public ministry. Consequently, together, they refer to Jesus Christ's three and a half years public ministry. As His death drew near the Father is recorded as saying in John 12:28 that "I have both glorified (My name) and

[304] Ben Witherington, III, 'The Waters of Birth: John 3:5 and 1 John 5:6–8', *NTS* 35 (1989) 155–58.

[305] Kruse, C. G. (2000). *The letters of John* (p. 176). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans Pub.; Apollos.

will glorify it again." Also, the Father brought about supernatural darkness during the last three hours of the crucifixion followed by an earthquake, which tore the temple veil in two (Matt. 27:45, 50-53). Consequently, a centurion cried out "Truly, this was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54). Also supporting this interpretation that the blood is a reference to Jesus' physical death on the cross is that the only other reference to His blood in First John is 1 John 1:7 where it is used of His death on the cross.

Some argue that the reference to the blood is referring to the Lord's Supper. This too does not fit the context of the passage or the historical context. John is again refuting the docetic Gnostic teachers who rejected the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. John's reference to the testimony of Spirit, water and the blood is related to the person of Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper does not contribute to identifying who Jesus was. It does not testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God and Savior of the world.

Others contend that the water and the blood is a reference to the water and blood which poured out of Jesus' chest after a spear was thrusted into His side after He died physically (John 19:34-35). The problem with this view is that in John's gospel, the order is reversed from 1 John 5:6 in that it says blood and water poured out of Jesus' chest. Also, the gospel of John is giving John's testimony about the death of Christ whereas 1 John 5:6-8 is presenting the testimony concerning the person of Jesus Christ. More importantly, this view does not take into account that 1 John 5:6 asserts that Jesus Christ "appeared publicly" by water and blood. The blood and water pouring out of His chest after His death does not testify to the public ministry of Jesus as the incarnate Son of God and Christ.

Therefore, it is the view of this author that the reference to water in 1 John 5:6 is alluding to His baptism which marked the beginning of His public ministry and the reference to blood as alluding to His death on the cross, which marked the end of this ministry. This was the interpretation of Tertullian.

D.E. Hiebert writes "The view that 'water and blood' are shorthand references to the inauguration and consummation of the public ministry of the incarnate Christ is in accord with John's added assertion, 'not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood' (v. 6b). John insisted that the realities denoted by 'water and blood' cannot be separated in dealing with the coming and work of Jesus Christ. Clearly John was countering the heretical views of the false teachers. His refusal to separate the two realities of Christ's baptism and crucifixion may well be a denial of two kinds of incipient Gnosticism. Docetic Gnosticism denied that Jesus Christ really had a human body; He only appeared to be a real man. This was a blatant denial of the reality of the Incarnation; since He did not have a real body, He could not be viewed as having experienced the physical sufferings of the crucifixion. It was also a denial of the heretical views of Cerenthus, a late contemporary of the

Apostle John at Ephesus.[306] Cerenthus separated the man Jesus from the spiritual Christ. He regarded Jesus as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary; he taught that the divine Christ came on the man Jesus at His baptism, empowered His ministry, but left Him before His crucifixion. The man Jesus suffered and rose again, but the divine Christ remained impassible. John denied all such attempts to sever the divine-human nature of the incarnate Christ, Jesus the Son of God."[307]

D.L. Akin writes "The 'water and blood' refer to the terminal points in Jesus' earthly ministry: his baptism (water)[308] and his crucifixion (blood). This is the best interpretation and is followed by most scholars. Historically, Jesus 'came' into his power by the 'water' of his baptism and even more so by the 'blood' of his cross. Unlike the previous two views, this explanation fits the historical context of John's epistle. John writes this letter to counter the Gnostic tendencies of the false teachers. These false teachers, who at one time were part of the fellowship (2:19), were denying the humanity of Jesus, and so John emphasizes the reality of the Incarnation. John's further qualification that Jesus came 'not by water only, but by water and blood' is likely a direct renunciation of the false teaching (perhaps that of Cerinthus) that claimed that Jesus was born an ordinary human being but became God's special agent when the heavenly Christ descended upon him at his baptism. The heavenly Christ abandoned him before his death and, consequently, it was only the earthly Jesus who died on the cross. In seeking to refute this teaching, John emphasizes that it was Jesus Christ who experienced both baptism and crucifixion. Marshall eloquently explains the importance of John's teaching. 'As soon as we reduce the death of Jesus to that of a mere man, so soon do we lose the cardinal point of the New Testament doctrine of the atonement, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself; in the last analysis, the doctrine of the atonement means that God himself bears our sins and shows that the final reality in the universe is his sin-bearing, pardoning love, but if Jesus is not the Son of God, his death can no longer bear this significance. So-called theologies, which reduce talk of the incarnation to the status of myth, may be attractive to modern men, but they take away our assurance that God's character is sin-bearing love.'[309]"[310]

John Stott writes "True, 'water' and 'blood' remain strange and surprising word symbols, and we can only guess that they were thus used in the theological controversy which had engulfed the Ephesian church. At least this meaning of the expression tallies with what Irenaeus disclosed of the heretical teaching of Cerinthus

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[306] Irenaeus *Heresies* 3. 3. 4.
[307] Hiebert, D. E. (1990). An Expositional Study of 1 John Part 9 (of 10 parts): An Exposition of 1 John 5:1–12. *Bibliotheca Sacra*, *147*, 224.
[308] B. Witherington III, takes "water" as referring to the physical birth of Jesus ("The Waters of Birth: John 3.5 and 1 John 5.6–8," *NTS* 35 [1989]: 160). M. C. De Boer interprets "through water and blood" epexegetically ("through water, that is, blood"; "Jesus the Baptizer: I John 5:5–8 and the Gospel of John," *JBL* 107 [1988]: 103). Kruse (*Letters of John,* 178) takes water as a reference to Jesus' ministry of baptism, and not his experience of baptism.
[309] Marshall, *Epistles of John,* 233–34.
[310] Akin, D. L. (2001). *1, 2, 3 John* (Vol. 38, pp. 196–197). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

and his followers. They distinguished between 'Jesus' and 'the Christ.' They held that Jesus was a mere man, born of Joseph and Mary in natural wedlock, upon whom the Christ descended at the baptism and from whom the Christ departed before the cross. According to this theory of the false teachers, Jesus was united with the Christ at the baptism but became separated again before the cross. It was to refute this fundamental error that John, knowing that Jesus was the Christ before and during the baptism and during and after the cross, described him as 'the one who came through water and blood.' Neither word has the definite article. The author is stressing the unity of the earthly career of Jesus Christ. He who came (from heaven, that is) is the same as he who passed 'through' water and blood. For further emphasis he adds (using the definite article this time before each noun, and changing the preposition from *dia*, 'through', to *en*, 'in'), 'not with the water only', since the heretics agreed that at least he was the Christ at his baptism, 'but with the water and (with) the blood' (RV, RSV). 'The statement is as precise as grammar can make it' (Brooke), and it is disappointing that neither the NEB nor the NIV expresses this precision. For full measure, in opposition to the heretics' differentiation between Jesus and the Christ, John adds that the one who so came was *Jesus Christ*, one person who was simultaneously from his birth to his death and for evermore (*this is the one*, present tense) both the man Jesus and the Christ of God."[311]

The reason why John is emphatic that Jesus Christ appeared publicly by water and blood which is a reference to His baptism and death respectively is that the false teachers whom John describes in this epistle taught that the divine Christ descended on the human Jesus at His baptism but left him before His crucifixion. Consequently, they denied that one Person, Jesus Christ appeared publicly by water and blood.

Cerinthus was well-known in the late first century A.D. as propagating this false doctrine about Jesus Christ. Here in 1 John 5:6, the apostle John makes crystal clear that this doctrine does not originate from the Holy Spirit.

These false teachers were actually proto-Gnostic teachers whom John describes as "antichrists" (cf. 1 John 2:18), and non-believers (cf. 1 John 2:19) as well as "false prophets" (cf. 1 John 4:2).

The chief tenants of these false teachers can be deduced from the nature of these warnings. They denied the following: (1) that Jesus Christ was the Son of God (2:22, 5:1, 5) (2) that the Son of God had become a human being (4:2) (3) the authority to Jesus' commands (2:4) (4) their own possession of an old sin nature (1:8, 10) (5) salvation through the work of Christ on the Cross (2:2) (6) the mandate for believers

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S S V, RS RV Revised Version, 1884.
V V V RSV Revised Standard Version: Old Testament, 1952; New Testament, [2]1971.
e), and it is disappointing that neither the Brooke A. E. Brooke, *Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*, The International Critical Commentary (T. & T. Clark, 1912).
B B B NEB The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, [2]1970.
V V V NIV New International Version: Old Testament, 1978; New Testament, [2]1978.
[311] Stott, J. R. W. (1988). *The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 19, p. 178). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

to love one another (2:9), (7) righteous conduct through obedience to the command to love one another as a requirement of fellowship with God (1:6; 2:29; 3:6, 10) (8) the responsibility to live as Jesus had lived during His First Advent (2:4, 6; 3:7) (9) the nature of the company of believers as a community of fellowship with the Father, the Son and with one another (1:3, 2:11) (10) the authority of John as the proclaimer of the message that had originated from God in eternity past (1:5) (11) that the members of the church who did not follow the false teachers were in the truth (2:20-21).

This false teaching the apostle John was seeking to protect the recipients of this epistle from, were propagating an "incipient" form of Gnosticism since it was not a full blown threat to orthodox Christianity in the mid to late part of the first century as it did become in the middle of the second century.

Gnosticism is a system of false teachings that existed during the early centuries of Christianity. Its name came from the Greek word for knowledge, *gnosis*. The Gnostics believed that knowledge was the way to salvation. For this reason, several writers of the New Testament condemned this incipient form of Gnosticism as false and heretical.

Gnosticism was the product of the combination of Greek philosophy and Christianity. Its central teaching was that spirit is entirely good and matter is entirely evil. From this unbiblical dualism emerged five important errors: (1) Man's body, which is matter, is therefore evil. It is to be contrasted with God, who is spirit and therefore good. (2) Salvation is the escape from the body, achieved not by faith alone in Christ alone but by special knowledge (the Greek word *gnosis*, "knowledge," hence Gnosticism). (3) Christ's true humanity was denied in two ways: (a) Some taught that Christ only appeared to have a body, a view called Docetism, from the Greek *dokeo*, "to seem," and (b) Others taught that the deity of Christ joined the man Jesus at His baptism and left Him before He died, a view called Cerinthianism, after its most prominent spokesman, Cerinthus. This view is the background of much of 1 John (see 1:1; 2:22; 4:2-3). (4) Since the body was considered evil, it was to be treated harshly. This ascetic form of Gnosticism is the background of part of the letter to the Colossians (2:21-23). (5) Paradoxically, this dualism also led to licentiousness. The reasoning was that, since matter-and not the breaking of God's law (1 Jn. 3:4)-was considered evil, breaking this law is of no moral consequence.

Our knowledge of Gnosticism comes from several sources. First, there are the Gnostic texts, which are known as the New Testament Apocrypha. These texts are not recognized as Scripture because they contain teachings, which differ from those in the Bible. Then, there are the refutations of the Gnostics by the early church fathers. Some of the more important ones are Irenaeus, Against Heresies; Hippolytus, Refutations of All Heresies; Epiphanius, Panarion; and Tertullian, Against Marcion.

There were at least two types of Gnostic thought: (1) Iranian: This branch developed in Mesopotamia and reflects a horizontal dualism associated with Zorastrian worship and is epitomized in its later Gnostic form of Manichaeism. In this pattern light and darkness, the two primal principles or deities, are locked in a decisive struggle. (2) Syrian: This type arose in the area of Syria, Palestine and Egypt and reflects a much more complex vertical dualism. In this system, the ultimate principle is good, and the task of the Gnostic thinkers is to explain how evil emerged from the singular principle of good. The method employed is the identification of some deficiency or error in the good.

The Gnostics accepted the Greek idea of a radical dualism between God (spirit) and the world (matter). According to their worldview, the created order was evil, inferior, and opposed to the good. God may have created the first order, but each successive order was the work of anti-gods, archons, or a demiurge (a subordinate deity). The Gnostics believed that the earth is surrounded by a number of cosmic spheres (usually seven), which separate man from God. These spheres are ruled by *archons* (spiritual principalities and powers) that guard their spheres by barring the souls who are seeking to ascend from the realm of darkness and captivity, which is below to the realm of light, which is above.

Gnosticism denied Christ's true humanity in two ways: (1) Some taught that Christ only appeared to have a body, a view called Docetism, from the Greek *dokeo*, "to seem," and (2) Others taught that the deity of Christ joined the man Jesus at His baptism and left Him before He died.

In contrast to these Gnostic claims, John demonstrates in 1 John that he, the other apostles and disciples were eyewitnesses to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the incarnate Son of God or in other words, that He was God in the flesh. John reveals that he and the other apostles knew the incarnate Word of life through experience. They heard Him speak, they saw Him and touched His human body. Thus, their testimony concerning the historicity of the incarnate Word of God refutes the Gnostic heresy.

The earliest of the Gnostics known to us by name is Cerinthus, the antagonist of the apostle John. It seems to be beyond reasonable doubt that these two encountered each other at Ephesus. Irenaeus relates on the authority of those who heard the story from Polycarp how the apostle and Cerinthus met in the public baths in that city. When John discovered that Cerinthus was in the same building with him, he instantly left, exclaiming that he could not remain while Cerinthus, the enemy of God and of man, was there. From the accounts, which have been preserved of Cerinthus and of his teaching, it can be gathered that he taught that the world was created not by the Supreme God, but by an inferior power, and that he also taught a Docetic theory of the Incarnation. Caius of Rome, a disciple of Irenaeus, records that Cerinthus held that there would be a millennium of unrestrained sensuality.

Dionysius of Alexandria (c 260 AD) more than confirms this, he writes "Thus so far as they go, the historical data harmonize with the internal evidence of the Epistle (of John) itself, in giving the impression that the different tendencies it combats are such as were naturally combined in one consistently developed Gnostic system, and that the object of its polemic is, throughout, one and the same."[33]

In 1 John 5:6, the apostle John employs another declarative statement which corresponds to the emphatic correlative clause, which preceded it. It states that the Spirit is the person who testifies about Jesus Christ. Therefore, the correspondence between these two assertions is that Jesus Christ appearing publicly by means of His baptism and by means of His death and the Spirit's testimony about Jesus of Nazareth that He is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ. Both ideas correspond to each other since the Spirit's testimony about Jesus took place through His entire three and a half year ministry which began with His baptism and ended with His death on the cross.

The apostle John mentions the Spirit's testimony here in 1 John 5:6 in conjunction with the water and the blood, which speak of Jesus Christ's baptism and death, respectively. Thus, the water and the blood mark the beginning and the end of Jesus Christ's public ministry. The Spirit testified during Jesus Christ's ministry that He was the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Therefore, John writes the baptism and death of Jesus Christ and the Spirit all testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Furthermore, the Spirit testifies to the truth of the first statement in 1 John 5:6 that the Jesus Christ appeared publicly by means of water and blood since He inspired John to write this and this doctrine originates from Him.

Notice, that John does not explicitly state that the Holy Spirit testifies about the person of Jesus Christ. Though it is implied from the contents of First John since 1 John 4:1-6 teaches that the Spirit's teaching is identified by the confession that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God. Thus, false teaching is identified by the failure and refusal to make this confession. Furthermore, throughout First John, the Spirit has testified that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ. This is true of the entire Greek New Testament, which throughout asserts the same about Jesus.

1 John 5:6 ends with a causal clause which presents the reason for the assertion that the Spirit is the one who testifies about Jesus Christ. It states that the Spirit possesses eternally and inherently the characteristic, which is unique to Himself, which is truth.

God is "the God of truth" (Isa 65:16). The psalmist declared, "Your law is truth" (119:142), "all Your commandments are truth" (119:151), and "the entirety of Your

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word is truth" (119:160). God has the monopoly on truth since it is an attribute that helps to compose His divine essence (Psalm 31:5). Those who live according to truth are living in reality whereas those who reject truth are living in unreality and under the lie of Satan. Because of His perfect nature and will, God has to speak and act in truth; He cannot lie (1 Sam 15:29; Heb 6:18; James 1:17-18). The Lord Jesus Christ is the truth of God since He is the Word of God incarnate (John 1:14). All Jesus said was true, because He told the truth which He heard from God (John 8:40). He promised His disciples that He would send "the Spirit of truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13)-a Mentor and Teacher who would abide in them forever (John 14:16), testify about Jesus (John 15:26), guide them into all truth (John 16:13), and glorify Jesus (John 16:14).

God is truth. The Spirit is truth and Jesus is truth (John 14:6). Jesus and the revelation, which the Spirit of truth gave through His apostles, are the final, ultimate revelation and definition of truth about God, man, redemption, history, and the world. God and truth tied together just as sinful man is characterized by living a lie (Rm. 3:3-7). This attribute of truth is expressed in the Word of God and is manifested in history through the fulfillment of prophecy both in the Person and Work of Christ and the church and Israel. The unbeliever lives a lie because he is enslaved to the father of lies, Satan. The believer has been delivered from the power of the lie at the moment he exercises faith alone in Christ alone who is the way, the truth and the life (Jn. 14:6).

Truth in the New Testament is divine reality or revelation. The practice or application of the absolute truth of the Word of God is a response to God's revelation of Himself and the Work of Christ at the Cross. Obedience to truth begins with the thought process. The believer must learn and apply truth to his thought process before he can have it manifest itself in words and actions (cf. Rom. 12:1-3). Truth is of course connected to the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus calls him "the Spirit of Truth" (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; Jn. 16:7-11). The Holy Spirit supernaturally directed the human authors of Scripture without coercing them, or destroying their literary style, personal vocabulary, or personality, God's complete and connected thought was recorded in perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, thus the original languages bear the authority of divine authorship as the exact mind and will of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21). The Holy Spirit makes the absolute truth of the Word real and understandable to both the believer and unbeliever (Jn. 16:7-11). At the moment of hearing the Gospel, the Holy Spirit makes the issue of salvation and Christ as Savior real to the unbeliever or understandable in order that he might make a decision to either accept or reject Christ as Savior.

After conversion, the Holy Spirit again makes the Word of God understandable to the believer so that he might make the proper application in their own life. God the Holy Spirit reveals the will of the Father to the believer through the

communication of the Word of God whether by the believer's divinely ordained pastor-teacher or other believer's operating under the royal priesthood. The believer's responsibility is to exercise faith in the Word of God meaning they must trust or take God at His Word. Faith is characterized by obedience to the Father's will as reveal by the Holy Spirit through the communication of the Word of truth. It is both assent to truth and dependence upon the truth found in the Word of God and which the Holy Spirit to the believer reveals.

God's truth is found in His revelation of Himself in the Person of Christ and the mind of Christ, which is the Word of God. Truth in man is in response to truth in God and is to be acquired on the basis of a gift from God. This gift comes by way of biblical instruction and also by way of the working of the believer's true Mentor and Teacher, God the Holy Spirit in the life of believer.

The believer's sanctification is accomplished by means of truth (John 17:17). They are to let the Word of Christ, which is truth, richly dwell in their soul (Colossians 3:16). They are therefore to diligently study the Word of truth to enrich their fellowship with the Lord and their worship of Him (2 Timothy 2:15). The believer is also commanded to speak the truth to his fellow believer by means of God's love (Ephesians 4:15). Truth will set the believer free from sin and Satan (John 8:31). Believers are to love each other according to the Word of truth (1 John 3:18). They are to worship the Father by means of truth (John 4:23-24).

The truth of God is revealed to man in three ways: (1) By nature or creation (Psalm 19:1-6; Rom. 1:19-20). (2) The Living Word, i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:16). (3) The Bible in its original languages (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

First John 5:7-8

1 John 5:7 Therefore, three are testifying: 8 the Spirit, the water as well as the blood. Indeed, these three are in agreement. (Author's translation)

1 John 5:7-8 contains two assertions. This first assertion declares that the Spirit, the water and the blood are testifying. The second advances upon and intensifies the first assertion and states that these three are in agreement with regards to their testimony.

The first assertion in 1 John 5:7-8 presents the result or the inference from the previous assertions recorded in 1 John 5:6, which contains four assertions. The first assertion in 1 John 5:6 declares that Jesus Christ is the person who appeared publicly by means of water as well as blood. The former speaks of Jesus Christ's baptism whereas the latter refers to His death on the cross. This declarative statement is followed by an emphatic correlative clause which serves to reaffirm it in emphatic terms. It states that Jesus Christ absolutely did not appear publicly by means of this

water only but rather by means of this water as well as by means of this blood. The third assertion which appears in 1 John 5:6 corresponds to the preceding emphatic correlative clause. It states that the Spirit is the person who testifies about Jesus Christ. Therefore, the correspondence between these two assertions is that Jesus Christ appearing publicly by means of His baptism and by means of His death and the Spirit's testimony about Jesus of Nazareth that He is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ. Both ideas correspond to each other since the Spirit's testimony about Jesus took place throughout His entire three and a half year ministry which began with His baptism and ended with His death on the cross. The apostle John mentions the Spirit's testimony here in 1 John 5:6 in conjunction with the water and the blood, which speak of Jesus Christ's baptism and death, respectively. Thus, the water and the blood mark the beginning and the end of Jesus Christ's public ministry. The Spirit testified during Jesus Christ's ministry that He was the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Therefore, as John writes the baptism and death of Jesus Christ and the Spirit all testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Furthermore, the Spirit testifies to the truth of the first statement in 1 John 5:6 that the Jesus Christ appeared publicly by means of water and blood since He inspired John to write this and this doctrine originates from Him. The fourth and final assertion is a causal clause which presents the reason for the assertion that the Spirit is the one who testifies about Jesus Christ. It states that the Spirit possesses eternally and inherently the characteristic or attribute which is unique to Himself as deity, which is truth.

The water and the blood are being personified here as witnesses to the incarnation and subsequent hypostatic union of Jesus Christ. They are personified as witnesses to the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is eternal life incarnate and thus the incarnate Son of God and the Christ.

In 1 John 5:6, "**the water**" refers to John the Baptist baptizing Jesus of Nazareth in the Jordan River, which marked the beginning of the latter's public ministry, which lasted for approximately three and a half years. John 1:26, 31 and 33 record Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist. When Jesus was baptized, the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:13–17). Simultaneously, John 3:32-44 records John bearing witness that the Spirit descended like a dove and rested on Jesus, which was the Father's manner of identifying for John the Baptist that Jesus was His Son.

The "**blood**" is a reference to Jesus of Nazareth's physical death on the cross, which marked the end of His public ministry. This interpretation is indicated by several factors. First, as Jesus' death drew near the Father is recorded as saying in John 12:28 that "I have both glorified (My name) and will glorify it again." Also, the Father brought about supernatural darkness during the last three hours of the crucifixion followed by an earthquake, which tore the temple veil in two (Matt.

27:45, 50-53). Consequently, a centurion cried out "Truly, this was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54). Also supporting this interpretation that the blood is a reference to Jesus' physical death on the cross is that the only other reference to His blood in First John is 1 John 1:7 where it is used of His death on the cross.

Consequently, together, the water and the blood refer to Jesus Christ's three and a half years public ministry. Therefore, the reference to water in 1 John 5:6 is alluding to His baptism which marked the beginning of His public ministry and the reference to blood as alluding to His death on the cross, which marked the end of this ministry.

John mentions Jesus Christ's baptism and death on the cross because the proto-Gnostic teachers, whom John describes as "antichrists" (1 John 2:18), and non-believers (1 John 2:19) and "false prophets" (1 John 4:2), taught that the divine Christ descended on the human Jesus at His baptism but left him before His crucifixion. Consequently, they denied that one Person, Jesus Christ appeared publicly by water and blood. Cerinthus was well-known in the late first century A.D. as propagated this false doctrine about Jesus Christ. Here in 1 John 5:6-8, the apostle John makes crystal clear that this doctrine does not originate from the Holy Spirit.

In 1 John 5:6, the apostle John states that the Spirit is the person who testifies about Jesus Christ. This assertion corresponds to the emphatic correlative clause which preceded it and asserted that Jesus Christ by no means appeared publicly by means of the water only but rather by means of the of water as well as by means of the blood. Therefore, the correspondence between these two assertions is that Jesus Christ appearing publicly by means of His baptism and by means of His death and the Spirit's testimony about Jesus of Nazareth that He is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ. Both ideas correspond to each other since the Spirit's testimony about Jesus took place through His entire three and a half year ministry which began with His baptism and ended with His death on the cross. His baptism and death marked the beginning and the end of His public ministry. The Spirit testified during Jesus Christ's ministry that He was the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Therefore, as John asserts in 1 John 5:7-8 the baptism and death of Jesus Christ and the Spirit all testify that Jesus of Nazareth is the incarnate Son of God and the Christ, the Savior of the world. Furthermore, the Spirit testifies to the truth of the first statement in 1 John 5:6 that the Jesus Christ appeared publicly by means of water and blood since He inspired John to write this and this doctrine originates from Him.

1 John 5:11 identifies the content of the testimony of the baptism and death of Jesus Christ and the Spirit.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (ESV)

Therefore, the baptism and death of Jesus Christ as well as the Spirit all were in agreement in testifying that God the Father gave John and the recipients of First John eternal life and this life is an attribute of His Son, Jesus Christ. Consequently, they are testifying that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ (cf. 1 John 2:22; 4:2; 5:1) and the incarnate Son of God (cf. 1 John 3:8; 4:15; 5:5), which John has been asserting throughout First John. Since Jesus is eternal life incarnate, He is the Son of God since eternal life is an attribute of God. Since Jesus is eternal life incarnate, then He is the Christ and Savior of the world since God the Father provided salvation for all of sinful humanity by sending His Son into the human race to become a human being in order to redeem and reconcile sinful humanity to Himself.

1 John 5:10 is therefore, parenthetical to John's argument.

Therefore, 1 John 5:6-12 are reiterating the contents of the prologue which asserts that Jesus Christ is eternal life incarnate.

1 John 1:1 We are now proclaiming to each of you what has always existed from eternity past, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we observed for ourselves, even what we touched with our hands concerning the Word which is truly life. 2 In other words, this life was revealed. As noted previously, we have seen so therefore we are now proclaiming by testifying to each of you this life, which is eternal, which because of its eternal nature has always existed face to face with the Father. Indeed, it was revealed to each one of us. 3 What we have seen as well as heard, we are now proclaiming to each of you in order that each of you would also continue to regularly experience fellowship with each of us. Also, our fellowship is in fact with the Father as well as with His Son, who is Jesus, who is the Christ. 4 Thus, we ourselves are now communicating in writing concerning each of these things in order to cause our joy to exist in a maximum state. (Author's translation)

Notice, in 1 John 5:8 that the Holy Spirit is given priority over the water and the blood. In other words, He is mentioned first before the water and the blood. The reason for this is that the Spirit testified through the baptism of Jesus of Nazareth that He was God the Father's one and only Son. He also testified through the death of Jesus on the cross that He was God's one and only Son as the centurion testified through the Spirit after Jesus' physical death (cf. Matt. 27:54).

The second assertion in 1 John 5:7-8 advances upon and intensifies the previous assertion that the water, the blood and the Spirit testify that God the Father gave His children eternal life, and this life is an attribute of His Son. The advancement and intensification are that John goes from identifying the water, the blood and the Spirit who are giving this testimony to asserting that these three agree in their testimony.

By presenting three witnesses who testified that Jesus Christ is eternal life incarnate, the apostle John is employing a principle taught in the Mosaic Law that the truth of a matter can only be confirmed on the basis of two or more witnesses.

Deuteronomy 19:15 "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. 16 If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, 17 then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who will be in office in those days. 18 The judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness and he has accused his brother falsely, 19 then you shall do to him just as he had intended to do to his brother. Thus, you shall purge the evil from among you. 20 The rest will hear and be afraid and will never again do such an evil thing among you. 21 Thus you shall not show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." (NASB95)

Deuteronomy 17:6 "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. 7 The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So, you shall purge the evil from your midst. 8 If any case is too difficult for you to decide, between one kind of homicide or another, between one kind of lawsuit or another, and between one kind of assault or another, being cases of dispute in your courts, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God chooses. 9 So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. 10 You shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the Lord chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you. 11 According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left." (NASB95)

The Lord Jesus Christ cited this Old Testament principle of two or more witnesses to establish a matter (Matthew 18:16; John 8:17) and the early first century apostolic church was governed by it (2 Corinthians 13:1).

This law of multiple witnesses is alluded to in other passages in the New Testament (Matthew 18:19-20; 27:38; Mark 6:7; Luke 9:30, 32; 10:1; 24:13; John 20:12; Acts 1:10; Hebrews 6:18; Revelation 11:3-4).

Is John fully justified in personifying inanimate objects such as water and blood as witnesses along with the Holy Spirit? Indeed, he is justified since in John 5:36 Jesus declared that His own works bear witness to Him. In Hebrews 11:4, the author asserted that Abel's sacrifice which was the result of his faith still speaks today. Also, in Genesis 31:48 a heap of stones put up by Jacob and Laban were called to be a "witness" (cf. Josh. 22:10, 27; 24:27).

Conclusion

We have come to the end of our study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was involved with the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. He is the divine author of Scripture.

We also noted in the Scriptures that the Spirit made the presentation of the gospel understandable to every person so that they can make a decision to accept or reject Jesus Christ as Savior, which is "common" grace. He also performs various ministries on behalf of the child of God at their justification such "efficacious grace," which means that the Spirit makes effective for salvation the child of God's faith in Jesus Christ at their justification. We also noted that he regenerates the child of God at their conversion in that He gives them eternal life by appropriating all the benefits of Jesus Christ's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Related to this of course is the baptism of the Spirit which means that at the moment of justification, the Holy Spirit identified the justified sinner with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. The Spirit also sealed the believer at their justification, which means that the Holy Spirit identified the child of God as God's possession, which consequently guarantees their protection from Satan. We also noted that the Holy Spirit permanently indwells each and every church age believer and this began at their justification. At the believer's justification, the Holy Spirit gives them a spiritual gift for the purpose of serving the body of Christ as well as to serve the Father and the Son.

Then, the filling of the Spirit which also took place at the believer's justification. However, the child of God no longer experiences the filling of the Spirit when they sin after justification. However, this experience is restored through the confession of sin to the Father and maintained by obedience to the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God. The filling of the Spirit speaks of being influenced by the Spirit, and the Spirit influences the child of God by His teaching in the Word of God. The child of God who obeys the Spirit's teaching in the Word of God is filled with the Spirit or in other words, they are influenced by the Spirit.

The unbeliever can sin against the Spirit by blaspheming Him (Matt. 12:22-32) and by resisting Him (Acts 7:51). The former was the sin of the unregenerate in rejecting the Spirit's testimony about the person and work of Jesus Christ as Savior. In fact, it is actually a lifelong rejection of the Spirit's testimony about the Lord. The latter was the sin of unregenerate Jews who rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The believer sins against the Spirit by grieving Him (Eph. 4:30), lying to Him (Acts 5:3) and quenching or extinguishing Him (1 Thess. 5:19). Grieving the Holy Spirit is a sin that is directed towards His Person and takes place in the life of the

believer when his thoughts, words and actions are influenced and governed by the cosmic system of Satan and the old sin nature. It prevents the Christian from being filled with the Spirit and from walking according to the Spirit. Quenching the Spirit, is also figurative language for hindering the various post-justification ministries of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the child of God. When the child of God sins and gets out of fellowship, they are hindering the activity of the Spirit in their lives. Lying to the Spirit was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira when they acted the part of gracious givers when in fact they were not. So, the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was lying to the Holy Spirit and this sin was manifested in their hypocrisy before the congregation.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7 that the Holy Spirit working through church age believers, whom, He indwells, restrains evil and specifically the manifestation of the Antichrist. Also, we noted the fourteen affirmations regarding the person and work of the Holy Spirit, which Paul presents in Romans chapter eight. Lastly, we also noted that the apostle John's description of the work of the Holy Spirit in First John. It is the author's prayer that this extensive article on the Holy Spirit will be a blessing to the body of Christ and would be used mightily by the Spirit to benefit the church and bring glory to both the Father and the Son.

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