

EXEGESIS AND EXPOSITION OF EPHESIANS 3:16

Pastor William E. Wenstrom Jr.

WENSTROM BIBLE MINISTRIES

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Original Text of Ephesians 3:16

Ephesians 3:16 ἵνα δῶ ὑμῖν κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. (NA28)

The Content of Paul's Second Intercessory Prayer

Ephesians 3:16 I pray that according to the wealth of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person. (NET)

Ephesians 3:16 is composed of the following: (1) conjunction *hina* (ἵνα), “**that**” (2) third person singular aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), “**he may give**” (3) dative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σύ), “**you**” (4) preposition *kata* (κατά), “**according to**” (5) articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), “**the wealth**” (6) genitive feminine singular form of the noun *doxa* (δόξα), “**of glory**” (7) genitive masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), “**His**” (8) dative feminine singular form of the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), “**power**” (9) aorist passive infinitive conjugation of the verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω), “**to be strengthened**” (10) preposition *dia* (διά), “**through**” (11) articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), “**Spirit**” (12) genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), “**His**” (13) preposition *eis* (εἰς), “**in**” (14) adverb of location *esō* (ἔσω), “**inner**” (15) accusative masculine singular form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος), “**person.**”

We begin our exegesis of Ephesians 3:16 by noting that Paul is using the figuring of ellipsis because he is deliberately omitting the first person singular present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *proseuchomai* (προσεύχομαι), though it is implied from the context.

Here in Ephesians 3:16, the verb *proseuchomai* (προσεύχομαι) refers to the intercessory prayer of the apostle Paul offered up to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle but without reference to the fact that it is intercessory. Thus it simply refers to prayer in its general sense or the simple act of making a prayer to the Father without reference to its content. The context indicates it refers to Paul's intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this letter because the contents of Ephesians 3:16-21 makes this clear.

Of course, the apostle Paul is the referent of the first person singular form of this verb.

The direct object of this verb is the clause *hina dō hymin kata to ploutos tēs doxēs autou dynamei krataiōthēnai dia tou pneumatōs autou eis ton esō anthrōpon* (ἵνα δῶ

ὑμῖν κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον), “**that according to the wealth of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person.**” (NET)

The present tense of the verb *proseuchomai* is a customary present used to signal an action that is to regularly occur indicating that Paul “made it his habit of” or “regularly” interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle.

The middle voice of the verb is an intensive middle, which indicates that the subject acts for himself or herself or in their own interest. Thus, it is focusing attention on the subject. Therefore, this would indicate that Paul made it his habit of “occupying himself” with interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle.

The indicative conjugation of the verb *proseuchomai* is declarative presenting the assertion that Paul made it his habit of interceding in prayer on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The conjunction *hina* (ἵνα) means “**that**” is employed with the subjunctive mood of the third person singular aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), “**he may grant.**” Together, they form a direct object clause which presents the content of the main verb *proseuchomai*, which we noted is omitted but implied.

The dative second personal plural form of the personal pronoun *su* (σὺ) means “each and every one of you as a corporate unit” or “all of you without exception” since it not only refers to the recipients of the epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions expressing Paul’s concern for each and every one of them.

This word is a dative of interest or advantage or benefaction, which indicates the person interested in the verbal action or more specifically, the person is the beneficiary of the verbal action. Therefore, this indicates that Paul’s intercessory prayer to the Father here in Ephesians 3:16-21 is “for the benefit of” of “on behalf of” each and every one of the recipients of the epistle as individuals and as a corporate unit.

The first person plural aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) means “to give” since the word pertains to causing someone to have something in an abstract or physical sense. Here the former is in view since it speaks of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner person according to the wealth of His glory.

The referent of the first person singular form of this verb is of course the Father.

The aorist tense of the verb *didōmi* is a constative aorist, which views the action as a whole but does take any interest in the internal workings of the action and

describes the action in summary fashion. Therefore, it is describing in summary fashion the act of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner person according to the wealth of His glory.

The active voice of this verb is a causative active which means that the subject is not directly involved in the action but may be said to be the ultimate source or cause of it. The subject here is of course the Father. Therefore, the causative active voice of this verb would indicate that the Father is not the direct cause of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle being strengthened with power according to the wealth of the His glory. The context reveals that the Holy Spirit is directly involved in this action of strengthening the recipients of this epistle with power as indicated by the prepositional phrase *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), “**through his Spirit.**” (NET) As we will note, the latter expresses the fact that the Holy Spirit is the Father’s personal intermediate agency who will strengthen the recipients of this epistle with power. Therefore, the causative active voice is expressing the idea of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the epistle to be strengthened with power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit in the inner person according to the wealth of His glory.

The noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος) means “wealth” since the word pertains to a high point on any scale and having the implication of value as well as abundance.¹ It speaks of plentiful supply of something.² The word is 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 wealth or prosperity of the Father.

The articular construction of this word is monadic which means that this word is a one of a kind noun and therefore, its referent is unique. This is further indicated by the fact the word’s genitive adjunct *tēs doxēs autou* (τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), “**of his glory,**” (NET) which indicates that the entire expression *to ploutos tēs doxēs autou* (τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), “**the wealth of his glory**” (NET) contains a monadic idea. Therefore, the articular construction of the noun *ploutos* is expressing the idea that this wealth is unique to the Father’s glory.

The noun *doxa* (δόξα) pertains to the honor, which is accorded to, or the splendor which characterizes, a person or thing.³ The noun refers to the honor, which is accorded to that which characterizes the Father and the splendor which characterizes Him. It speaks of the fact that the Father is a transcendent being in that He exceeds

¹ 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. 685). United Bible Societies.

. **someh. someh.** = something

² 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. 832). University of Chicago Press.

³ Fenlason, A. C. (2014). [Beauty](#). In D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Lexham Press.

the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience. Specifically, it is related to the manifestation of the Father's transcendent character and nature, which exceeds the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience and has been manifested through both the work of His Son and the Holy Spirit.

The referent of the genitive masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), “**His**” refers of course to God the Father. It functions as a genitive of possession indicating that this glory “belongs to” the Father in that it manifests His holy character and nature.

This noun *doxa* (δόξα) functions as a genitive of production, which takes place when the genitive substantive “produces” the noun to which it stands related. In context, this noun stands related to the articular accusative neuter singular form of the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), “**the wealth.**” Therefore, this type of genitive expresses the idea that the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature, “produces” His wealth, i.e., the abundance of His spiritual and temporal resources.

The noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος) is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which is functioning as a marker of correspondence indicating being in conformity or agreement with something. In other words, it is marking the agreement of two things. Therefore, this prepositional phrase *kata to ploutos tēs doxēs autou* (κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), “**according to the wealth of his glory**” (NET) indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through the person and work of both the Son and the Spirit is “in agreement with” the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, this preposition indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature as manifested by the work of the Son and the Spirit is “the equivalent of” or “identical to” the Holy Spirit who is able to strengthen the church age believer by means of power in their inner person or new nature.

The verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω) means “to become strengthened, to become powerful or strong” in a spiritual sense.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:19 and 3:7, the noun *dunamis* (δύναμις) here in Ephesians 3:16 means “power” referring to the exercise of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by the *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), “**through his Spirit,**” (NET), which modifies it.

This word functions as a marker of means, which indicates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is “the means by which” the recipients of this letter will be strengthened for the benefit of their inner person or new Christ nature according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature as manifested by the work of the Son and the Spirit. Therefore, this expresses the idea that Paul is praying that the recipients of this letter will be

strengthened in their inner person or new nature according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through the work of the Son and the Spirit, "by means of" power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit.

The verb *krataioō* (κραταίω) functions as complementary infinitive which means that it is completing the thought of the third person singular aorist active subjunctive conjugation of the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι), "**he may grant**" because it identifies for the reader what Paul is asking the Father in prayer to grant the recipients of this letter.

The aorist tense of this verb *krataioō* (κραταίω) is a constative aorist, which views the action as a whole but does not take any interest in the internal workings of the action and describes the action in summary fashion. Therefore, it is describing in summary fashion the act of the recipients of this letter, who were Gentile Christians living in the Roman province of Asia, being strengthened or becoming strong spiritually for the benefit of their inner person or Christ nature by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit.

The passive voice of the verb *krataioō* (κραταίω) means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. Here the agency is expressed by the prepositional phrase *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), "**through his Spirit.**" (NET) Therefore, this indicates that these Gentile church age believers living in the Roman province of Asia would receive the action of being strengthened with power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of their new indwelling Christ nature. This is according to the wealth produced by the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of the Father's transcendent character and nature through the work of both His Son and the Holy Spirit.

The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα) means "Spirit" and refers of course to the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is employed with genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), "**his**" to denote possession. The latter is expressing the relationship between the Father and the Spirit. This construction emphasizes the Spirit is in a relationship with the Father and is also distinguishing the Spirit from the Father.

The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), "**Spirit**" is the object of the preposition *dia* (διὰ) means "through the personal intermediate agency of" since the word functions as a marker of personal intermediate agency. This indicates that the Holy Spirit is the personal intermediate agency whom the Father will employ to strengthen the recipients of this letter with power for the benefit of their new Christ nature.

The accusative masculine singular form of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) means "human being" and in context speaks of the unique person of history, Jesus

Christ, who is the head of the new creation in contrast to the head of the old humanity whose head is the first human being, Adam.

The articular construction of this noun functions as a possessive personal pronoun referring to the recipients of this letter who Paul identifies in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile church age believers in the Roman province of Asia. This expresses the idea that this inner human being is “the possession of” these Gentile church age believers. Therefore, it should be translated “your.”

The adverb of location *esō* (ἐσω) means “inner” and pertains a position defined as being within certain limits.⁴ Therefore, this word identifies the location of this new humanity or the new head of the human race is located, namely, within the human body and soul of the church age believer.

The noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of benefaction, which indicates that it is “for the benefit of” the inner new humanity of these church age believers that they are strengthened by means of power through the post-justification work of the Holy Spirit.

Translation of Ephesians 3:14-16

Ephesians 3:14 For this reason, I make it my habit of bending my knees in the presence of the Father 15 from whom each and every family located in the heavens as well as located upon the earth is designated a name. 16 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that according to the wealth produced by His glory He would cause each and every one of you as a corporate unit to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of your inner being. (Author’s translation)

Expanded translation of Ephesians 3:14-16

Ephesians 3:14 For this reason, I make it my habit of bending my knees in the presence of the Father 15 from whom each and every family located in the heavens as well as located upon the earth exists in the state of being designated a name. 16 I make it a habit of occupying myself with praying that according to the wealth produced by His glory He would cause each and every one of you as a corporate unit to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of your inner being. (Author’s translation)

⁴ 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. 713). United Bible Societies.

Exposition of Ephesians 3:16

By way of review, we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:14 that this verse resumes Paul's thought from Ephesians 3:1, which is indicated by the fact that the expression *Toutou charin* (Τούτου χάριν), "**for this reason**," which begins the former also begins the latter. As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:1, he interrupts his thought in order to present an autobiographical digression in Ephesians 3:2-13. Thus, Paul as we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:1 is using the figure of anacoluthon in Ephesians 3:2-13. As we also noted in our study of Ephesians 3:1, the referent of the genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" is the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22. This is indicated by the fact that this word is put in the neuter gender indicating the writer is not referring to a particular word or words in Ephesians 2:11-22 but rather the entire contents of this pericope. Furthermore, we also noted in our study of Ephesians 3:1 that 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.

Therefore, as was the case in Ephesians 3:1, the referent of the genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" here in Ephesians 3:14 is the contents of the Ephesians 2:11-22. Also, as was the case in Ephesians 3:1, the genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" here in Ephesians 3:14 is the object of the improper preposition *charin* (χάριν) and functions as a marker of reason. Thus, this would indicate that the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 are the basis or the reason for Paul's intercessory prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21.

As we noted in our exegesis of Ephesians 3:14, as was the case in Ephesians 3:1, the genitive neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**" is the object of the improper preposition *charin* (χάριν), which is a marker of reason rather than purpose 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. They will rule the earth along with Jesus Christ during the latter's millennial reign.

So therefore, as we have noted, the contents of Ephesians 2:11-22 serve as the basis of Paul's second intercessory prayer here in Ephesians 3:14-21 on behalf of the recipients of this letter who we noted are Gentile Christians living in the Roman province of Asia. This indicates that this second intercessory is based upon the Father's eternal purpose of creating a new humanity, which is composed of both regenerate Jews and Gentiles, who are under the headship of His Son, Jesus Christ.

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 and 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 and what He is going to do for them in the future during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

Now, as we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:1, Paul emphasizes with the recipients of this epistle that he was a 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 them as a corporate unit, who are Gentiles. On the other hand, here in Ephesians 3:14, he resumes this thought by asserting that he made it his habit of bending his knees in the presence of the Father.

As we noted in our exegesis of Ephesians 3:14, the referent of the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *patēr* (πατήρ) is of course the first member of the Trinity. We also noted that the articular construction of this word indicates that the Father is “in a class by himself” indicating the extreme of a particular class. Thus, it indicates the extreme of those who are fathers. Thus, this construction indicates that there is only one Father worth mentioning as far as Jewish and Gentile Christians are concerned.

Also, this word is the object of the preposition *pros* (πρός), which 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 the apostle Paul was in “the personal presence of the Father” when he made this intercessory prayer for the recipients of this epistle, who we noted were Gentile Christians living throughout the Roman province of Asia.

As we also noted in our exegesis, this word *patēr* (πατήρ) forms a word play with the noun *patria* (πατριά), “family,” which appears in Ephesians 3:15.

Paul’s assertion here in Ephesians 3:14 that he bent his knees in the presence of the Father reveals that he was appropriating by faith his union and identification with Jesus Christ and specifically, his identification with Him in His present session at the right hand of the Father. He did this by considering himself as seated at the right hand of the Father (cf. Rom. 6:1-12; Col. 3:1-5; Eph. 2:6). In other words, he adopted the Father’s view of himself.

Interestingly, we also noted in our exegesis, the present tense of the verb *kamptō* (κάμπτω) is a customary present, which would indicate that Paul “made it his habit” or “regularly” bent his knees in the presence of the Father in order to intercede in prayer for these Gentile Christians who lived throughout the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia in the first century A.D. Therefore, the present tense of this verb brings out one of the characteristics of an effective and productive prayer life, namely, perseverance (Matt. 26:39-44; Luke 11:9-10; 18:1-8; 21:36; Rom. 12:12; 15:30; Acts 1:14; 6:4; 12:5; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 5:5; 2 Tim. 1:3; Col. 1:9; 4:2, 12; Heb. 10:22).

The apostle Paul’s assertion here in Ephesians 3:14 that he bowed his knees to worship the Father in prayer and to intercede on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle expresses the solemn nature of the introduction to this prayer.

So therefore, in Ephesians 3:14-21, the apostle Paul prays a second time for the recipients of this epistle who we noted were Gentile Christians living throughout the various cities and towns in the Roman province of Asia in the first century A.D. His first intercessory prayer for them is contained in Ephesians 1:15-22.

As we noted, Ephesians 3:14 also reveals the “posture” of Paul’s prayer meaning he states that he bends his knees to the Father. The Scriptures do not command a particular posture in prayer (position of the physical body as a whole) since it is the posture or attitude of the heart, which is important to God, thus it can be accomplished sitting, standing, kneeling down or on one’s face. Although bodily posture is secondary to the attitude of the soul, it is instructive to note that at times the Lord Jesus Christ prayed while standing, wherever He happened to be at the moment (Mt. 14:19).

The reference to Paul’s kneeling in the presence of the Father is not only speaking of his posture in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle, but also is alluding to worshipping the Father in that prayer.

Ephesians 3:15 is composed of the declarative statement *ex hou pasa patria en ouranois kai epi ges onomazetai* (ἐξ οὗ πᾶσα πατριά ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς ὀνομάζεται), “**from whom each and every family located in the heavens as well as located upon the earth is designated a name.**” It is composed of the third person singular present passive indicative conjugation of the verb *onomazō* (ὀνομάζω), “**is designated a name,**” which is modified by three prepositional phrases. The first of these is *ex hou pasa patria* (ἐξ οὗ πᾶσα πατριά), “**from whom each and every family,**” the second is *en ouranois* (ἐν οὐρανοῖς), “**located in the heavens**” and the third is *epi ges* (ἐπὶ γῆς), “**located upon the earth.**” This declarative statement is modifying the articular accusative masculine singular form of the noun *patēr* (πατήρ), “**Father,**” which appears at the end of Ephesians 3:14.

So therefore, the contents of Ephesians 3:15 and the syntax of this verse make clear that it is a description of God the Father asserting that each and every family located in the heavens as well as those located upon the earth is designated a name, which originates from Him.

As we noted, the verb *onomazō* (ὀνομάζω) means “to designate a name to someone” since the word pertains to identifying someone by name. We also noted that the referent of the third person singular form of this verb is nominative feminine singular form of the noun *patria* (πατριά), which functions as the nominative subject of this verb, which means that it receives the action of this verb. The noun *patria* (πατριά) pertains to the descendants of one individual or persons of successive generations who are related by birth.⁵ In a unique sense, this word pertains to the

⁵ 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. 114). United Bible Societies.

idea of a group of people forming a family, patterned after God’s fatherhood.⁶ This word we also noted is modified by the adjective *pas* (πᾶς), which since pertains in context to not only the totality of God’s moral rational creatures (human beings and angels) but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions. This word is in the first attributive position (adjective-noun), which indicates that this adjective expresses an attributive relation to the noun *patria* (πατριά).

As we also noted in our study of Ephesians 3:14, the noun *patēr* (πατήρ), “Father” in Ephesians 3:14 forms a word play with the noun *patria* (πατριά), “family,” which appears here in Ephesians 3:15.

Now, in Ephesians 3:15, the apostle Paul is not teaching that God is the father of unregenerate human beings and non-elect angels but rather that He is the prototype of all fatherhood. In fact, God is the father to everyone of His moral rational creatures in relation to creation. In other words, He is their creator and thus in this sense He is their father but not in a relationship and fellowship sense which requires one to be declared justified faith through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

In relation to creation, God is the father of every regenerate and unregenerate human being as well as every elect and non-elect angel whether they are living on the earth, under the earth or throughout the three levels of heaven. Therefore, Paul’s assertion here in Ephesians 3:15 simply asserts and affirms that God the Father is the creator of every one of His moral rational creatures, i.e., regenerate and unregenerate human beings and elect and non-elect angels.

So therefore, in relation to relationship and fellowship, God the Father is the Father of all believers and is not the Father of unbelievers. God is the Father of all believers who are sons of God through regeneration (Jn. 1:12-13; Rm. 8:15; Gal. 3:26-28; 4:6; Eph. 2:18). Regeneration takes place at the moment of justification when a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone (Jn. 3:16-17, 36; Acts 16:31; Gal. 3:26-28). Those who are sons of God through regeneration are considered by God to be His children as a result of honoring His Son by accepting the Son as Savior. The Father deals with believers as a father in the natural realm would deal with his children (1 Th. 2:11; Heb. 12:4-13).

Unlike the Greek philosophers of the ancient world and of modern 21st century society, the New Testament considers only those who have accepted Christ as Savior as children of God. Unbelievers are considered children of the devil and are designated “**sons of disobedience**” (Eph. 2:2; 5:6; Col. 3:6; cf. Jn. 8:44). It is true that as Creator, God is Father of all but in terms of relationship and fellowship, He is the Father of only believers who have been born into the royal family of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:7, 9). One cannot claim to have or know experientially the Father without the Son (1 Jn. 2:22-23; 2 Jn. 9; cf. Jn. 8).

⁶ Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. (2000). In [Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#) (Vol. 4, p. 303). Baker Books.

Now, in Ephesians 3:15, the first prepositional phrase *ex hou pasa patria* (ἐξ ὅ̃ πα̃σα πατριὰ), “**from whom each and every family**” contains the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), “**whom**,” whose referent is the noun *patēr* (πατήρ), “**Father**,” which as we noted appears at the end of Ephesians 3:14, which is indicated by the fact that they agree in gender (masculine) and number (singular). This immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), “**whom**” is the object of the preposition *ek* (ἐκ), “**from**,” which functions as a marker of source denoting origin. Thus, in context, this would indicate that the name of every family in heaven and on the earth “originates with” God the Father.

The second prepositional phrase *en ouranois* (ἐν οὐρανοῖς), “**located in the heavens**” contains the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός), which refers to all three levels of heaven, which is the earth’s atmosphere, the stellar universe and the throne room of God. This word is object of the preposition *en* (ἐν) which functions as a marker of location indicating that the name of each and every family “located in” the first, second and third heavens originates from God the Father.

Now, the noun *ouranos* (οὐρανός), “**the heavens**” is 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 third and final prepositional phrase, which is found in Ephesians 3:15, which is *epi gēs* (ἐπὶ γῆς), “**located upon the earth**” contains the noun *gē* (γῆ), which is used in a cosmological sense. The articular construction of this word *ge* is generic

meaning it is distinguishing planet earth from these three levels of heaven. Specifically, it is distinguishing all God's moral rational creatures living on the earth with those living in all three levels of heaven. This noun is the object of the preposition *epi* (ἐπί) which is a marker of the location indicating that the name of each and every family located "upon" the earth originates with God the Father. These families as we noted would include both human and angelic beings and specifically both unregenerate and regenerate human beings and elect and non-elect angels.

These families would include both human and angelic beings and specifically unregenerate and regenerate human beings as well as elect and non-elect angels. Regenerate human beings who have died are located with Jesus Christ at the throne room of God (cf. 2 Cor. 5:1-10; John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 19:1-10). Angels including Satan and his angels currently have access to all three levels of heaven. They have access to the throne room of God (Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1-10; Rev. 12:1-10) as well as the stellar universe and the earth's atmosphere (Dan. 10; Eph. 2:1-2; 6:10-12). Both elect and non-elect angels have access to all three levels of heaven. Also, the angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who possessed the bodies of unregenerate men during the antediluvian period are presently imprisoned in Tartarus, which is underneath the earth (cf. Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4-5). Lastly, there is another group of evil spirits who are currently imprisoned in the Abyss, which is the place of imprisonment for those evil spirits who follow Satan and who violated certain rules for angelic creation. They are scheduled for release during the tribulation period but will eventually experience eternal condemnation in the lake of fire (Lk. 8:30-31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 20:1-3).

In Scripture, when God named the first human being Adam, it signified His authority and rulership over him. Also, when Adam named the first woman Eve, it too signified his authority and rulership over the woman. Throughout Scripture, when a parent names a child it signifies their authority and rulership over that child. The only exception is Jesus Christ because Joseph and Mary did not name their firstborn son, but rather they received this name from the elect angel Gabriel, who was sent by the Father to name their firstborn son, Jesus (Matt. 1:21; Lk. 1:31). Therefore, when Paul asserts in Ephesians 3:15 that every family among the angels and human beings who are located in the first, second and third heavens as well as those located upon the earth received their name from God the Father, he means that the Father is the ruler over each of each member of the human and angelic races. This assertion also means that each and every angelic and human being owes their existence to the Father.

Ephesians 3:16 is composed of the following: (1) direct object clause *hina dō hymin...dynamēi krataiōthēnai* (ἵνα δῶ ὑμῖν...δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι), "**that...He would cause each and every one of you as a corporate unit to be given strength by means of power.**" (2) prepositional phrase: *kata to ploutos tēs doxēs autou* (κατὰ

τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), “**according to the wealth produced by His glory.**” (3) prepositional phrase: *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), “**through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit.**” (4) prepositional phrase: *eis ton esō anthrōpon* (εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον), “**for the benefit of your inner being.**”

As we noted in our exegesis of this verse, Paul is using the figuring of ellipsis because he is deliberately omitting the first person singular present middle indicative conjugation of the verb *proseuchomai* (προσεύχομαι), though it is implied from the context. Here the verb refers to the intercessory prayer of the apostle Paul offered up to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle but without reference to the fact that it is intercessory. Thus it simply refers to prayer in its general sense or the simple act of making a prayer to the Father without reference to its content. The context indicates it refers to Paul’s intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this letter because the contents of Ephesians 3:16-21 make this clear.

The present tense of the verb *proseuchomai* is a customary present used to signal an action that is to regularly occur indicating that Paul “made it his habit of” or “regularly” interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle. The middle voice of the verb is an intensive middle, which would indicate that Paul made it his habit of “occupying himself” with interceding in prayer to the Father on behalf of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle.

Therefore, we can see that the clause *hina* (ἵνα) direct object clause is modified by these three prepositional phrases, which together present the content of Paul’s second intercessory in this epistle. They assert that Paul made it his habit of occupying himself with praying to the Father that according to the wealth produced by His glory He would cause each and every one of the recipients of this epistle to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of their inner being.

The dative 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 epistle as a corporate unit but is also used in a distributive sense emphasizing no exceptions expressing Paul’s concern for each and every one of them. This word functions as a dative of interest or advantage or benefaction, which indicates that Paul’s intercessory prayer to the Father here in Ephesians 3:16-21 is “for the benefit of” of “on behalf of” each and every one of the recipients of the epistle as individuals and as a corporate unit.

We also noted that the verb *didōmi* (δίδωμι) pertains to causing someone to have something in an abstract or physical sense. Here the former is in view since it speaks of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner being according to the wealth of His glory.

The referent of the first person singular form of this verb is of course the Father. The active voice of this verb is a causative active which would indicate that the Father is not the direct cause of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle being strengthened with power according to the wealth of His glory. Rather, the Holy Spirit is directly involved in this action of strengthening the recipients of this epistle with power as indicated by the prepositional phrase *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), “**through the personal intermediate agency of the Spirit.**” The latter expresses the fact that the Holy Spirit is the Father’s personal intermediate agency who will strengthen the recipients of this epistle with power. Therefore, the causative active voice is expressing the idea of the Father causing each and every one of the recipients of the epistle to be strengthened with power “through the personal intermediate agency of” the Holy Spirit in the inner being according to the wealth of His glory.

We noted that the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος), “**wealth**” is 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 wealth or prosperity of the Father. The articular construction of this word is monadic which expresses the idea that this wealth is unique to the Father’s glory.

The noun *doxa* (δόξα) refers to the honor, which is accorded to that which characterizes the Father and the splendor which characterizes Him. It speaks of the fact that the Father is a transcendent being in that He exceeds the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience. Specifically, it is related to the manifestation of the Father’s transcendent character and nature, which exceeds the limits of human and angelic understanding and experience. This word is modified by the genitive masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), “**His**” which refers of course to God the Father. It functions as a genitive of possession indicating that this glory “belongs to” the Father in that it manifests His holy character and nature. We also noted that this noun *doxa* (δόξα) functions as a genitive of production, which expresses the idea that the Father’s glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature, “produces” His wealth, i.e., the abundance of His spiritual and temporal resources.

A comparison of Scripture with Scripture indicates that the Father’s transcendent character and nature was manifested through the person and work of His Son during His First Advent and through the work of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the recipients of this letter and all Christians who benefit from the Father’s wealth through faith in Jesus Christ and the baptism of the Spirit. The church age believer possesses every spiritual and temporal blessing in the heavens because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3-14).

The Son's perfect life of obedience to the Father's will and His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father manifested the Father's transcendent character and nature and delivered the church age believer from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins, spiritual and physical death. At the moment of justification, the Holy Spirit manifested the Father's transcendent character and nature by identifying the church age believer with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

The church age believer's faith, which resulted in the Father declaring them justified, appropriated the omnipotence of God, which delivered the church age believer from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, personal sins, spiritual and physical death. This union and identification with Jesus Christ results in the Father's spiritual and temporal wealth or prosperity to flow to the church age believer.

Therefore, the Father's glory "produces" His wealth in the sense that His wealth flows to the church age believer through the person and work of His Son and the person and work of the Holy Spirit whose work manifests the Father's transcendent character and nature. In other words, the work of the Son and the Spirit glorifies the Father because it manifests His transcendent character and nature.

In our exegesis, we noted that the noun *ploutos* (πλοῦτος) is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), which is functioning as a marker of correspondence which indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through the person and work of both the Son and the Spirit is "in agreement with" the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, this preposition indicates that the Father's wealth, which is produced by His glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature as manifested by the work of the Son and the Spirit is "the equivalent of" or "identical to" the Holy Spirit who is able to strengthen the church age believer by means of power in their inner being or new nature.

The reason why the Father's wealth, which is produced by the manifestation of the Father's glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature corresponds to or is equivalent to the Holy Spirit strengthening the church age believer by means of power for the benefit of the new indwelling Christ nature is that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit manifest the Father's transcendent character and nature.

We also noted that the verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω) means "to become strengthened, to become powerful or strong" in a spiritual sense. The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), "**by means of power**" refers to the exercise of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, which is indicated by the *dia tou pneumatos autou* (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ), "**through his Spirit,**" (NET), which modifies it. This word functions as a marker of means,

which indicates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is “the means by which” the recipients of this letter will be strengthened for the benefit of their inner being or new Christ nature according to the wealth produced by the Father’s glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature through both the work of the Son and the Spirit.

Therefore, this expresses the idea that Paul is praying that the recipients of this letter will be strengthened in their inner being or new nature according to the wealth produced by the Father’s glory, i.e., the manifestation of His transcendent character and nature which was accomplished through the work of the Son and the Spirit, “by means of” power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit.

Now, in Ephesians 3:16, the noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), “**Spirit**” refers of course to the Holy Spirit. The articular construction of this word is employed with genitive third person masculine singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός), which refers to the Father, to denote possession. The latter is expressing the relationship between the Father and the Spirit. This construction emphasizes the Spirit is in a relationship with the Father and is also distinguishing the Spirit from the Father. The noun *pneuma* (πνεῦμα), “**Spirit**” is the object of the preposition *dia* (διὰ), which functions as a marker of personal intermediate agency, which indicates that the Father will strengthen the recipients of this letter with power for the benefit of their new Christ nature “through the personal intermediate agency of the Spirit.

The passive voice of the verb *krataioō* (κραταιόω) indicates that these Gentile church age believers living in the Roman province of Asia would receive the action of being strengthened with power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of their new indwelling Christ nature, which is according to the wealth produced by the Father’s glory. Therefore, this is another “divine-passive,” which Paul employs in the Ephesian epistle.

Warren Wiersbe writes “The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life is evidence of salvation (Rom. 8:9); but the power of the Spirit is enablement for Christian living, and it is this power that Paul desires for his readers. ‘Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you’ (Acts 1:8, literal translation). Jesus performed His ministry on earth in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:1, 14; Acts 10:38), and this is the only resource we have for Christian living today. As you read the Book of Acts, you see the importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church, for there are some fifty-nine references to the Spirit in the book, or one fourth of the total references found in the New Testament. Someone has said, ‘If God took the Holy Spirit out of this world, most of what we Christians are doing would go right on—and nobody would know the difference!’ Sad, but true.”⁷

⁷ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 31–32). Victor Books.

Commenting on Ephesians 3:16, Peter O'Brien writes "This prayer, like the counterpart of 1:15–23, is loaded with terms for power (vv. 16, 18). God's mighty activity is stressed, first, by means of the relatively rare Greek word rendered 'strengthen,'⁸ and then by the addition of the words 'with power' (a Semitic manner of expression; cf. 2 Kings 22:3),⁹ as Paul petitions God for their inner strengthening. This divine empowering will be affected through God's Spirit,¹⁰ the same Spirit who, according to Paul's prayer of 1:17, imparts wisdom and revelation so that the readers may know God better. The agency of the Spirit in dispensing divine power is in line with other New Testament teaching where the Spirit and power are intimately linked (Acts 1:8; Rom. 1:4; 15:19; 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5)."¹¹

Divine omnipotence is one of the characteristics of the divine essence (Father: Mark 14:36 and Luke 1:37; Son: Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3; Spirit: Rom. 15:13). God has limitless and infinite ability to do something (Gen. 18:14a; Ps. 147:5a; Isa. 40:26; Lk. 1:37). There is power in the Word of God (Ps. 33:6a; Heb. 1:3a; 4:12a; 11:3a; 2 Co. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:5).

The cross of Christ is the power of God, which delivers the believer from the sin nature, the cosmic system of Satan and Satan himself (1 Corinthians 1:18). The Gospel is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16).

All three members of the Trinity are omnipotent since they are co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal: (1) God the Father is omnipotent (Eph. 1:17; 2 Pet. 1:2-3). (2) Holy Spirit is omnipotent (Acts 1:8; Rm. 15:13, 19; Eph. 3:16; 1 Th. 1:5). (3) God the Son is omnipotent (John 1:3, 10; 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:23-24; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:8).

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). The impeccable body of the humanity of Christ was conceived by the power of God the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20).

The Lord was brought back from the dead by three categories of divine omnipotence: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father sent back our Lord'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 our Lord's 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).

The Lord Jesus Christ has the power to raise the dead (John 5:21; 6:40; 11:25). The same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead will raise the believer from

⁸ κραταιόω means 'to become strong, to become powerful' (Louw and Nida §76.10). The passive voice here draws attention to God's activity (as it does at 1 Cor. 16:13; cf. Luke 1:80; 2:40). The verb occurs only on these four occasions in the New Testament. Note Arnold, 87–88.

⁹ Note the similar expressions in the Qumran writings: 1QH 7:17, 19; 12:35; 1QM 10:5. See Lincoln, 205, who follows K. G. Kuhn.

¹⁰ This is rather different from the interpretation of G. D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 695, who speaks of the Spirit as the 'source' of that empowering.

¹¹ O'Brien, P. T. (1999). *The letter to the Ephesians* (p. 257). W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

the dead (1 Corinthians 6:14). The same power that raised the humanity of Christ from the dead has been made available to every church age believer because of their union and identification with the Lord through the Baptism of the Spirit (1 Co. 6:14; Eph. 1:18-20). Thus because of the church age believer's union with Christ, he can have a lifestyle of power and wisdom (2 Ti. 1:7).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in positional sanctification: (1) The omnipotence of God the Father in eternity past as related to the divine decree, eternal inheritance, election and predestination (Rom. 9:22; Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Pet. 1:3). (2) The omnipotence of God the Son created the cosmos through His Word in order that the Father's eternal purpose through the divine decree, the eternal inheritance, election and predestination might be carried out in time (Heb. 1:3; 4:12) and also the omnipotence of God the Son in the form of the Word of God, i.e., the Gospel provided the means of salvation (Rm. 1:16). (3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ at the moment of salvation, thus providing in time the principle of achieving that which the Father had purposed in eternity past (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-28).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in experiential sanctification: (1) The omnipotence of God the Father as related to the principles of election and predestination (Eph. 1:3-14). (2) The omnipotence of God the Son as related to the perpetuation and preservation of human history (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3) and the Word of God for the execution of the plan of God for the church age (1 Co. 1:18; 2 Co. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:5). (3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit as related to the filling of the Spirit for the execution of the plan of God for the church age (Rm. 6:4-11; 15:13; 2 Co. 6:7; 12:9; Eph. 1:19; 3:20; Col. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:3).

The church age believer is the beneficiary of three categories of divine omnipotence in the perfective aspect of their sanctification: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father in relation to the believer's human spirit being placed back in the resurrection body (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 in relation to the believer's soul being placed back in the resurrection body (Rom. 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son in relation to the believer's resurrection body being created (John 5:21; 6:39-40, 54; 10:17-18; 11:25).

Church age believers have been given divine power and made partakers in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4). It is the power of God that works within believers who apply the Word of God (Eph. 3:20). Church age believers have been given divine omnipotence to execute the plan of God (Col. 1:11). They have been created a new spiritual species, i.e., Christ-nature at the moment of salvation so that you can use God's divine omnipotence (2 Cor. 5:17). The Christ-nature enables the believer to have a lifestyle of power which is patterned after that which the humanity of Christ

demonstrated during His First Advent (2 Ti. 1:7). The same power that enabled the humanity of Christ to execute the Father's plan for the incarnation and that raised Him from the dead is available to every church age believer as a result of the Baptism of the Spirit.

The believer's sole ambition in life must be to become like Christ in His death in order to grow to spiritual maturity. In Philippians 3:10-11, Paul informs the Philippian church that his sole ambition in life was to become like Christ by experiencing identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.

Philippians 3:10 that I come to know Him experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death. (Author's translation)

The order of thought in Philippians 3:10: (1) The believer must come to know Christ experientially in order to attain Christ-like character and as a result to be identified with Christ as expressed by *tou gnonai auton*, "**that I come to know Christ experientially.**" (2) To come to know Christ experientially, the believer must come to know experientially the power made available to him from Christ's resurrection and session as expressed by the phrase *ten dunamin tes anastaseos autou*, "**the power from His resurrection.**" (3) Then the believer must experience underserved suffering in order to experience the power made available to him from Christ's resurrection, as expressed by the phrase *koinonian pathematon autou*, "**the participation in His sufferings.**" (4) The manner that must be adopted by the believer in order for him to know Christ experientially and the power from His resurrection and the participation in His sufferings is by becoming like Christ with reference to His unique voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths and appropriating what Christ accomplished on the cross as expressed by the phrase *summorphizomenos to thanato autou*, "**by my becoming like Him with respect to His death.**"

Philippians 3:11 If somehow (by becoming like Him with respect to His death), I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones. (Author's translation)

"**That I come to know Him experientially**" refers to experiencing fellowship with Christ after conversion by being obedient to the Lord's command to self-sacrificially love his fellow believer as Christ self-sacrificially loved the believer. The believer who experiences fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is enabling God the Holy Spirit to reproduce in him the life and character of Christ (Galatians. 5:22-23).

"**The power from His resurrection**" refers to experiencing divine omnipotence by appropriating by faith the Spirit's revelation in the Word of God of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, which results in experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection.

“The participation in His sufferings by my becoming like Him with respect to His death” refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His death by means of underserved suffering.

The enclitic particle of indefinite manner *pos*, **“somehow”** indicates Paul’s uncertainty of what manner of undeserved suffering that the Lord will employ in his life to identify him with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may be identified with Christ experientially in His resurrection. It indicates an unspecified form of undeserved suffering that will identify Paul with Christ experientially in His death in order that he may attain the exit-resurrection life of Christ, or in other words, experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection.

Underserved suffering is the means that the Lord employs in the believer’s life in order to identify the believer with Christ experientially in His death.

“I may attain to the exit-resurrection, namely, the one out from the (spiritually) dead ones” refers to experiencing identification with Christ in His resurrection, which is accomplished by applying the Word of life, which enables the Spirit of life to reproduce the character and life of Christ in the believer.

Identification with Christ in His resurrection experientially is accomplished by appropriating and experiencing the eternal life that was imputed to the believer at the moment of salvation through regeneration. Resurrection life is eternal life or the life of God.

The phrase **“namely, the one out from the dead ones”** refers to two categories of spiritual death: (1) Real spiritual death: unregenerate people (2) Temporal spiritual death: regenerate people who our consistently out of fellowship with God.

The contents of Paul’s first intercessory prayer on behalf of the recipients of this epistle, which appears in Ephesians 1:15-23 also mentions that the omnipotence of God. Paul teaches that the same omnipotence that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is available to each and every church age believer who is in union with Him and identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

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 1:19 continues Paul’s thought from Ephesians 1:15-18. First of all, this is indicated by the fact that it contains a categorical or qualitative question which is in addition to the previous two recorded in Ephesians 1:18. Secondly, it presents the third intercessory prayer request, which Paul presented to the Father on behalf of the recipients of this epistle. Specifically, it presents the third purpose of Paul wanting the Father to cause them to receive divine revelatory wisdom provided by the Holy Spirit, which he describes as having the eyes of their heart enlightened by the Spirit.

As was the case when the word appeared twice in Ephesians 1:18, the nominative feminine singular form of the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις), “**what constitutes**” here in Ephesians 1:19 introduces a categorical or qualitative question. Here it is expressing the idea of the recipients of the Ephesian epistle possessing the conviction regarding “what constitutes” the Father’s incomparable, great power which He exercised on behalf of the church age believer, which is equivalent to the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome.

The referent of this interrogative pronoun is the exercise of the omnipotence of the Father through both the work of His Son and the Spirit. It was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son Jesus Christ. These events delivered all of sinful humanity from eternal condemnation, condemnation from the Law, enslavement to the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and personal sins. This deliverance is appropriated by the sinner when they exercise faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, which results in the Father declaring them justified. Simultaneously, at the moment of justification, the omnipotence of the Father was manifested at the church age believer’s justification through the baptism when the Holy Spirit identified them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father’s right hand. This identification provides the church age believer the necessary omnipotence to experience deliverance from the power of the sin nature as well as the power of Satan and his cosmic system. The omnipotence of the Father is manifested in the life of the church age believer who appropriates by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the referent of the interrogative pronoun *tis* (τις), “**what constitutes**” here in Ephesians 1:19 is the Father’s incomparable, great power, which was

manifested on behalf of the church age believer through His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. As we noted, Paul also describes this power as the Father's sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. This omnipotence we also noted was also manifested at the moment of the church age believer's justification through the baptism of the Spirit, which identified them with the Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

Again, as we noted, this identification with Jesus Christ in these events in His life provides the church age believer the necessary omnipotence to experience deliverance from the power of the sin nature as well as the power of Satan and his cosmic system. In other words, these events in the Lord's life provide the church age believer the necessary power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. We also noted that the omnipotence of the Father is manifested in the life of the church age believer who appropriates by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This post-justification enables the church age believer to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

We noted in our exegesis that the nominative neuter singular form of the noun *megethos* (μέγεθος), "**great**" describes the Father's omnipotence as preeminent and superior in relation to the power of His moral rational creatures, namely angels and human beings. Also, we noted that the articular nominative neuter singular present active participle conjugation of the verb *hyperballō* (ὑπερβάλλω), "**incomparable**" describes the Father's omnipotence as eminent and beyond comparison.

The noun *dunamis* (δύναμις), "**power**" refers to the exercise of the Father's omnipotence. Specifically, it first refers to the omnipotence of God the Father which He exercised on behalf of the church age believer through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son Jesus Christ. Secondly, it refers to the Father's omnipotence, which He manifested through the work of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the church age believer at their justification when the Spirit identified the church age believer with Jesus Christ in these events in His life.

We also noted in our exegesis that the accusative first person plural form of the personal pronoun *ego* (ἐγώ). "**each and every one of us as a corporate unit**" since the word 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. This would indicate that the Father's omnipotence was manifested through both the work of His Son and His Spirit on behalf of "Paul" and "each and every one of" the recipients of this epistle. In other words, the Father's power was manifested on behalf of "each and every" church age believer without exception.

This word is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), "**on behalf of**" since the word is functioning here as a marker of benefaction or marker of advantage. Therefore, this prepositional phrase is expressing the idea that the Father's incomparable, great

power was manifested through both the work of His Son and His Spirit “on behalf of” each and every church age believer without exception. In other words, it was “for their benefit.”

The articular accusative masculine plural present active participle conjugation of the verb *pisteuō* (πιστεύω), “**who believe**” refers to the church age believer as having been declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. This verb is expressing the idea of each and every church age believer believing in the content of the gospel at justification. Namely, they believe that Jesus Christ is both God and man and that He died and rosed from the dead on behalf of them in order to deliver them from eternal condemnation, person sin, enslavement to the sin, Satan and his cosmic system, spiritual and physical death and condemnation from the Law in the sense that they consider this as fact or true. Consequently, this word speaks of the Father’s declaring the church age believer justified or other words, it speaks of their faith at their justification.

There is an interpretative problem which is related to the present tense of this verb *pisteuō*, which is translated the modern translations as “who believe” (NET, TNIV, ESV, LEB, NRSV).

First of all, the present tense can be interpreted as a customary present tense or stative present which indicates that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb. Therefore, this would express the idea of the church age believer “existing in the state of” believing.

Secondly, the present tense can also be translated as customary present which is used to signal a habitual action or regularly occurring action. Therefore, this would express the idea of the church age believer “making it their habit of” believing.

Thirdly, the present tense of this verb could also be interpreted as a gnomic present, which describes something as true any time and usually takes a generic subject. Therefore, this would express the idea of the church age believer being “characterized” as someone who believes.

The present tense of the verb *pisteuō* could be interpreted as a perfective present, which is used to emphasize that the results of a past action are still continuing. Therefore, this would indicate that the results of Paul and the recipients of this epistle being declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ are still continuing. The force of this type of present is that although this decision took place in the past, it is still binding and will be forever. The implication is that they have eternal security because this act of the Father on behalf of them is a judicial decision whose results are eternal in that this decision can never be rescinded because the Father is a perfect judge.

Lastly, the present participle can be diminished if the particular context requires it. Therefore, this would not express the idea of those who “make it habit of” believing or “exist in the state of” believing or are “characterized” as believing but

rather simply expressing the idea of those “who believe,” which the modern translations adopted.

Now, in order to determine the best interpretation, we must of course take into consideration the context. First of all, Paul is informing the recipients of this epistle that he regularly asks the Father to cause the recipients of this letter to receive a divine revelatory wisdom provided by the Holy Spirit, in other words, that they would have the eyes of their heart enlightened. He then presents the three-fold purpose of this request. First, that they would possess the conviction of what constitutes their confident expectation of blessing, which is the reception of a resurrection body and rewards for faithful service. Secondly, he wanted them to possess the conviction of what constitutes the Father’s glorious, rich inheritance residing in the person of the saints. The Father’s inheritance is the same as the church age believer’s confident expectation of blessing. Thirdly, he wants them to possess the conviction of what constitutes being the Father’s incomparable, great power on behalf of the church age believer which is equivalent to the Father’s sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

The Father’s omnipotence was manifested through crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father which delivered the church age believer 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 was also manifested through the work of the Spirit in baptism which appropriated this deliverance for the church age believer because it identified the church age believer with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This identification is not only what the Father did for them through both the work of His Son and the Spirit but is also how the Father views them. It also set up the guarantee of being perfected in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church. Lastly, it also set up the potential to experience this deliverance and power of Christ’s crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father in time by appropriating by faith this identification.

So therefore, we can see that the three-fold purpose of Paul’s prayer request can be summarized as the apostle wanting the recipients of this letter to possess the conviction of what is already their possession as a result of being declared justified by the Father through faith in His one and only Son, Jesus Christ. In other words, they were placed in union with Christ and identified with Him at the moment of justification. Simultaneously, they received the guarantee of being in the presence of the Lord at physical death as well as receiving a resurrection body at the rapture of the church and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat. Thus, the three-fold purpose of Paul’s prayer request is that the recipients of this epistle, i.e., the Christian community in the Roman province of Asia, would possess the conviction that they

already possess these blessings, which would enable them to experience the power of God. Specifically, these blessings provide them the necessary omnipotence, which will enable to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. These blessings are the direct result of the Father declaring them justified through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Therefore, this author believes that based upon this context, it is best to interpret the present tense of the verb *pisteuō* as a perfective present, which as we noted is used to emphasize that the results of a past action are still continuing. Therefore, this would emphasize that the results of Paul and the recipients of this epistle being declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son at their conversion are still continuing and are still binding. It is emphasizing that the results of being justified through faith in Jesus Christ are still continuing in the sense that they can experience the omnipotence of God by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ in order to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. This would be the direct result of possessing the conviction that they will receive a resurrection body at the rapture and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat, which we noted constitutes their confident expectation of blessing.

All of these results would be the direct result of the recipients of this letter possessing the conviction that they possess the power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ. It would also be the direct result of possessing the conviction that the Father's power resides in this union and identification with His Son.

Now, in Ephesians 1:19, the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια), “**the exertion of**” refers to the Father's activity on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of His Son and His Spirit. Therefore, this word speaks of the “exertion of the Father's power” since it pertains to the exertion of the Father's omnipotence.

This word we noted is the object of the preposition *kata* (κατά), “**equivalent to**” which is functioning as a marker of correspondence indicating being in conformity or agreement with something. In other words, it is marking the agreement of two things. Therefore, this prepositional phrase indicates that the Father's incomparable, great power, which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit is “in agreement with” the exertion of His immense strength. Thus, this preposition indicates that the Father's incomparable, great power which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit is “the equivalent of” or “identical to” the exertion of His immense strength.

They are one in the same. In other words, he is describing the Father's incomparable, great power as exerting His sovereign omnipotent power to overcome any enemy, with the implication from the contents of this epistle, that these enemies are the indwelling Adamic sin nature as well as Satan and his cosmic system.

The noun *kratos* (κράτος), “**sovereign power**” pertains to absolute, sovereign divine power that is exercised without any necessary conditioning by a finite will or wills or anyone or anything outside the exercise of this power. In other words, the Father’s omnipotence is sovereign over the power of both human beings and angels.

The noun *ischys* (ἰσχύς), “**power to overcome**” refers to the attribute of divine omnipotence which belongs to the divine nature of the Father, which has overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. As we noted the Father’s omnipotence was manifested through the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session of His Son, Jesus Christ. It was also manifested through the work of the Spirit in identifying the church age believer with Jesus Christ in these events in His life, which provide the church age believer victory over sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

So therefore, Ephesians 1:19 is of course speaking about the Father’s divine omnipotence which was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of the Son and the Spirit. This omnipotence is now available to the church age when they appropriate their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This verse describes the Father’s omnipotence as being incomparable, great, absolute or sovereign, and able to overcome any enemy.

In Colossians 1:9-11, Paul uses much of the same language when interceding on behalf of the Colossian Christian community as he does for the recipients of the Ephesian epistle in Ephesians 1:15-19. In fact, both prayers reference the Father’s omnipotence.

Colossians 1:9 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. (Author’s translation)

Paul’s statement in verse 11 is directly related to his statement in verse 10 regarding the Colossians living their lives in a manner worthy of the Lord. It expresses the cause or the reason why these faithful believers in Colossae would be able to live their lives in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be pleasing to Him. The result of fulfilling this purpose was that they would bear fruit by means of

actions which are divine in quality and character and in addition would increase in knowing the Father experientially. Therefore, all of this indicates that these faithful believers in Colossae would live their lives in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be fully pleasing to Him because they were empowered by means of a power which is absolute. It also indicates that they would bear fruit by means of actions which are divine in quality and character and in addition would increase in knowing the Father experientially because they were empowered by means of a power which is absolute. So here in verse 11, Paul is making the assertion that the Colossians would live in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be pleasing to Him because of being empowered by means of a power which is absolute.

The apostle Paul teaches the Colossians that when they live in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be fully pleasing to Him it is because they are empowered by means of a power which is absolute. This power refers to the divine omnipotence of the Son which indwells the Colossians and which omnipotence empowers them to live in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be pleasing to Him. Paul asserts that this power is “absolute” which indicates that God exercises His power freely without any restraint from His creatures. In other words, the omnipotence of God is absolute in the sense that He exercises it sovereignly. So he is teaching the Colossians that this absolute power of God is the means by which these faithful believers in Colossae will be empowered to live their lives in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be pleasing to Him.

In Colossians 1:11, the apostle specifically defines this absolute power. It is a power which is sovereign and in fact it is the Father’s glory Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus Paul is teaching the Colossians that living in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be fully pleasing to Him is based upon a power which is sovereign and specifically it is based upon the Father’s glory who is His Son Jesus Christ. So the apostle Paul is teaching the Colossians that they will be able to live in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be pleasing to Him because of being empowered by means of a power which is absolute. He is also teaching that they are empowered by means of a power which is absolute because of a power which is sovereign, namely the Father’s glory who is Jesus Christ. Thus, he is informing his readers that when they live in a manner which is pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ it is because of His power. In other words, the omnipotence of Jesus Christ, who is the glory of the Father because He manifests perfectly the Father’s character and nature, is the basis for living the Christian way of life. He manifests through His words and actions the absolute perfection of God’s character, and thus God’s omnipotence (cf. John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 1:1-13). The Lord Jesus as the incarnate Son of God is the glory of God since He manifested through His words and actions the absolute perfection of God’s character, which is His holiness.

Then in Colossians 1:11, Paul teaches the Colossians the purpose for which they are empowered to live in a manner worthy of the Lord so as to be fully pleasing to Him by means of a power which is absolute. He teaches them the purpose for which they are empowered because of a power which is sovereign, which is the Father's glory, His Son Jesus Christ. The purpose of the Lord empowering them by means of His omnipotence is so that they will perfectly embody godly perseverance as well as godly patience with joy.

Now, here in Ephesians 1:19, Paul presents the third purpose for which he wanted the Father to cause them to receive a divine revelatory wisdom produced by the Holy Spirit or in other words, the purpose for which he wanted the eyes of their heart to be enlightened. Namely, he wanted them to possess the conviction of what constitutes being the Father's incomparable, great power on their behalf which is equivalent to the Father's absolute, omnipotent, sovereign power to overcome. This power resides the church age believer's union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This omnipotence is appropriated by the church age believer who appropriates by faith this union and identification with Jesus Christ, which in turn enables them to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

This power was first appropriated by the church age believer at their justification, which Paul refers to here in Ephesians 1:19 when he describes them as those "**who believe.**" This faith at justification results in the Father viewing them as He does His Son, namely crucified, died, buried, raised and seated at His right hand. It results in the church age believer receiving the guarantee of being perfected in a resurrection body at the rapture of the church and rewards for faithful service at the Bema Seat. This justifying faith also sets up the potential for the church age believer to experience this power after their justification. This is accomplished when they appropriate by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. This post-justification faith involves the church age believer considering themselves as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Jesus Christ at the Father's right hand (cf. Rom. 6:1-14; Col. 3:1-7). Again, the appropriation of the Father's omnipotence will enable them to experience victory over the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system.

Ephesians 1:20 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 1:20 continues Paul's thought from Ephesians 1:15-19 since it continues to discuss the exertion of the Father's sovereign, omnipotent power, which is mentioned in Ephesians 1:19. Specifically, the contents of Ephesians 1:20 describe the means by which the exertion of the Father's sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system manifested itself. This verse is composed of a relative pronoun clause, which is then followed by two participial clauses.

The relative pronoun clause makes an assertion about the exertion of the Father's omnipotent power to overcome the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system. It asserts that the exertion of the Father's omnipotent power to overcome the sin nature, Satan and his cosmic system was caused by the Father to enter into the state of being exerted on behalf of the one and only or incomparable Christ. The first participial describes the means by which the Father caused the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome was manifested in time. It describes it as taking place by means of the Father causing Jesus Christ to enter into the state of having been raised physically alive out from those who are physically dead. The second participial clause describes the second means by which the Father caused the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome was manifested in time. It describes it as taking place by means of the Father causing Jesus Christ to enter into the state of being seated at His right hand in the third heaven.

As we noted in our exegesis of Ephesians 1:20, in the relative pronoun clause, the referent of the accusative feminine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos* (ὃς) is the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια), which appears in Ephesians 1:19, since they agree in gender (feminine) and number (singular) and case (accusative). Here it refers to the Father's activity on behalf of the church age believer through both the work of His Son and His Spirit. Therefore, this word speaks of the "exertion of the Father's power" since it pertains to the exertion of the Father's omnipotence.

We also noted in our exegesis that the verb *energeō* (ἐνεργέω) in this relative pronoun clause is the verbal cognate of the noun *energeia* (ἐνέργεια) and pertains to the act of bringing into play or causing something to be. Therefore, this verb speaks of the act of the Father working. In other words, it speaks of the exertion of the Father's His omnipotence or divine power being exerted by Himself. Therefore, this verb *energeō* expresses the idea of the Father causing the exertion of His power to

be exerted by causing His Son, Jesus Christ to be raised physically alive out from those who are physically dead.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 12, and 17 the proper name *Christos* (Χριστός), “**Christ**” here in Ephesians 1:20 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. We also noted that 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 speaks of the incomparability of Christ. Also, we noted that this word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions as a marker of benefaction, which indicates that the Father exerted His omnipotence “for the benefit of” or “on behalf of” the person of the one and only Christ.

Now, as we noted, the first participle clause describes for the reader the first means by which the exertion of the Father’s sovereign, divine omnipotent power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system was caused by the Father to be exerted on behalf of His incomparable Son, Jesus Christ. We noted that it was by means of the Father causing His Son to enter into the state of being raised physically alive out from those members of the human race who were physically dead.

In this first participial clause, we noted in our exegesis that the nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *egeirō* (ἐγείρω) refers to the Father causing His Son Jesus Christ to live again after having died physically. It speaks of the Father causing Jesus Christ to be raised out from those who are physically dead.

We also noted that the genitive masculine plural form of the adjective *nekros* (νεκρός) functions as a substantive and means “the dead ones” referring to members of the human race who have died physically. The word is the object of the preposition *ek* (ἐκ), which is a marker of separation indicating that the human nature of Jesus Christ was raised “out from” those who are physically dead by the Father exerting His divine omnipotence. The aorist tense of this verb *egeirō* is an ingressive aorist which refers to the Father causing Jesus Christ to enter into the state of being physically alive again after having been dead physically for three days.

The participle conjugation of this verb can be interpreted as a temporal participle, which in relation to its controlling verb, answers the question, “when?” Here in Ephesians 1:20, the controlling verb is *energeō* (ἐνεργέω). Therefore, this would express the idea that the Father exerted His divine power “when” He caused His one and only Son, Jesus Christ to enter into the state of being raised physically alive out from those members of the human race who are physically dead.

The participle conjugation of this verb *egeirō* can also be interpreted as a participle of means, 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, which we noted is *energeō*. Here the verb *egeirō* is following the verb *energeō*. Therefore, this would indicate that the former is defining or explaining what Paul means when he asserts that the Father exerted His omnipotence, and which assertion, begs to be defined. Therefore, the participle conjugation of this verb *egeirō* expresses the idea that the Father exerted His divine omnipotence “namely, by” causing His one and only Son, Jesus Christ, to enter into the state of having been raised physically alive from those who were physically dead.

The temporal participle of this verb interpretation can be rejected because it can have a more specific semantic value, namely, by interpreting it as a participle of means.

Lastly, as we noted, the second participial clause in Ephesians 1:20 further describes the relative pronoun clause. Specifically, it further describes the means by which the exertion of the Father’s sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system was exerted by Himself on behalf of His incomparable Son, Jesus Christ. It describes this as taking place by means of the Father causing His Son to enter into the state of being seated at His right hand. This second participial clause marks the Father seating His Son at His Son, Jesus Christ at His right hand in the third heaven as taking place after the Father raising Him from the dead.

The nominative masculine singular aorist active participle conjugation of the verb *kathizō* (καθίζω) means “to cause someone to sit” and is employed with the prepositional phrase *en dexia autou* (ἐν δεξιᾷ αὐτοῦ), “at the right hand” in order to form an idiom, which means “to cause someone to sit at one’s right hand.” Here it is used of the Father causing His Son, Jesus Christ to sit at His right hand, which was a place not only the highest position in the divine government but also the place of the highest authority in the divine government. The participle conjugation of this verb is also as a participle of means, which would indicate that the former is defining or explaining what Paul means when he asserts that the exertion of the Father’s power was exerted by the Father, and which assertion, begs to be defined.

As was the case in Ephesians 1:3, the articular dative neuter plural form of the adjective *epouranios* (ἐπουράνιος) here in Ephesians 1:20 means “the heavenlies” and refers to the first, second and third heavens. We noted that this word is the object of the preposition *en* (ἐν), which functions here as a marker of location. Therefore, this prepositional phrase is marking the first, second and third heavens as the location in which the Father caused His Son, Jesus Christ to sit at His right hand. The Lord Jesus Christ present session at the right hand of the Father is the direct consequence

of not only His resurrection but also, His ascension to the third heaven. The ascension of Jesus Christ refers to the vertical transfer of the glorified, resurrected human nature of Jesus Christ in hypostatic union to the third heaven, which contains the throne room of God where He now sits at the right hand of the Father.

So therefore, in Ephesians 1:20, the apostle Paul describes for the recipients of the Ephesian epistle two means by which the Father caused the exertion of His sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system in time, namely, the resurrection and session of Jesus Christ. The church age believer has been identified with Jesus Christ in both of these events in His life (Eph. 2:6). Thus, this same divine omnipotence that raised and seated Jesus Christ at His Father's right hand is also available to each and every church age believer because of their union and identification with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 1:19, the Father's incomparable, great power was manifested on behalf of the church age believer through His Son's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand. As we noted, Paul also describes this power in this verse as the Father's sovereign, omnipotent power to overcome. This omnipotence we also noted was also manifested at the moment of the church age believer's justification through the baptism of the Spirit, which identified them with the Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the Father's right hand.

Again, as we noted, this identification with Jesus Christ in these events in His life provides the church age believer the necessary omnipotence to experience deliverance from the power of the sin nature as well as the power of Satan and his cosmic system. In other words, these events in the Lord's life provide the church age believer the necessary power to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system. We also noted that the omnipotence of the Father is manifested in the life of the church age believer who appropriates by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ. This post-justification enables the church age believer to overcome sin, Satan and his cosmic system.

The resurrection and session of Jesus Christ is also related to the believer's position in Christ and union and identification with Him. In Colossians 3:1-5, Paul discusses the implications of this identification with Christ in His resurrection and session in relation to the spiritual life of the church age believer.

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. (Author’s translation)

The church age believer’s union and identification with Jesus Christ enables the Father to restore mankind as sovereign ruler over the earth, which was His original plan with Adam and Eve (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). However, they lost the rulership of the earth to Satan and his angels (cf. Luke 4:6; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19) and which rulership is only temporary because at His Second Advent, Jesus Christ and His bride the church will be installed as permanent rulers over the earth.

We complete our study of Ephesians 3:16 by noting Paul’s use of the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος), which we noted speaks of the unique person of history, Jesus Christ, who is the head of the new creation in contrast to the head of the old humanity whose head is the first human being, Adam. The articular construction of this noun functions as a possessive personal pronoun referring to the recipients of this letter who Paul identifies in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile church age believers in the Roman province of Asia. This expresses the idea that this inner human being is “the possession of” these Gentile church age believers.

This word we noted in our exegesis is modified by the adverb of location *esō* (ἔσω) which identifies the location of this new humanity or the new head of the human race is located, namely, within the human body and soul of the church age believer. The noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) is the object of the preposition *eis* (εἰς), which functions as a marker of benefaction, which indicates that it is “for the benefit of” the inner new humanity of these church age believers that they are strengthened by means of power through the post-justification work of the Holy Spirit.

This expression *ton esō anthrōpon* (τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον), which appears in Ephesians 3:16 also appears in Roman 7:22 with the same referent.

Romans 7:22 For you see, I habitually and joyfully agree with God’s Law with respect to my inner man. (Author’s translation)

In 2 Corinthians 4:16, Paul employs a similar expression *ho exō hēmōn anthrōpos* (ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος), “**our inner person**” to refer to the new indwelling nature of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not despair, but even if our physical body is wearing away, our inner person is being renewed day by day. (NET)

Therefore, these expressions in these three verses all refer to the new Christ nature that the church age believer received through regeneration the moment they were declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. At the moment

a sinner is declared justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit for the imputation of eternal life by God the Father, which makes the believer a new spiritual species meaning they now possess the divine nature. This is called in theology “regeneration.”

Some expositors argue that this “inner human being” or “man” or “inner person” is not the nature of Jesus Christ, which every church age believer receives at the moment of justification through regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Many of these expositors believe the inner man or person is speaking of the heart, mind or soul of a person, which are in fact are affected by the temptations of the sin nature.

However, Romans 7:22 makes clear that it is in fact this indwelling nature of Jesus Christ because if you notice, Paul asserts in this verse that he delights in the law of God in this inner man or inner person. An unregenerate person cannot delight in God’s law but only a regenerate person can delight in it because they are a new creation or new spiritual species because they received the nature of Jesus Christ at justification through regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

Also, notice in Romans 7:23, Paul asserts that the members of his physical body which contain the old Adamic sin nature are waging war against his mind and making him captive to this sin nature, which resides in the genetic structure of the physical body according to Romans 6:6.

Lastly, in 2 Corinthians 4:16 Paul contrasts the physical body, which is corrupted by the sin nature and decaying, with the new nature, which is being renewed day by day. Therefore, it is better to view this inner person or inner man or inner being as the indwelling nature of Jesus Christ, which gives the church age believer the capacity to love and obey God and His law.

Paul’s Spirit inspired desire that the Father would cause each one of the recipients of this epistle, who were Gentile church age believers, to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit, would result in this new nature of Christ gaining more and more control over the hearts of these Christians. Consequently, the indwelling old Adamic sin nature would have less control over their hearts. Therefore, this is why Paul asserts in Ephesians 3:17 that as a result of the Father answering this prayer request he makes in Ephesians 3:16, Christ will dwell in their hearts through faith.

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 1:18, the noun *kardia* (καρδία), “**heart**” is that aspect of the soul, which circulates thought or mental activity and is where one’s frame of reference and memory center resides. It is also the place where one’s vocabulary and the classification of thoughts reside as well as the conscience where the norms and standards reside. A person’s entire mental attitude circulates in the *kardia* as well as the subconscious where various categories of things that shock or impress from adversity, sin, failure or disappointment are located. Also, it contains

volition, which enables a person to make decisions. Therefore, this word refers to a person's mentality, volition, conscience, sub-conscience and emotions.

Thus, we can understand why Paul prayed that the Father would cause each one of these Gentile church age believers to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of the Holy Spirit because it would affect their decisions and the way that they thought and their norms and standards. The only way this could take place is if the Holy Spirit strengthened the new indwelling nature of Jesus Christ within these Christians.

F. F. Bruce writes "The 'inner being'¹² is the new creation inwardly begotten by the Spirit in those who are united by faith to Christ. It is in tune with the mind of God and delights in his law (Rom. 7:22); it is renewed from day to day even when the 'outer,' mortal nature wastes away (2 Cor. 4:16).¹³ It is the immortal personality which constitutes here and now the seed of that fuller immortality to be manifested in the resurrection age. Gnostic speculation about the 'inner man' does not help us to understand Paul's use of the phrase;¹⁴ Paul is his own best interpreter."¹⁵

Warren Wiersbe writes "This power is available for 'the inner man.' This means the spiritual part of man where God dwells and works. The inner man of the lost sinner is dead (Eph. 2:1), but it becomes alive when Christ is invited in. The inner man can see (Ps. 119:18), hear (Matt. 13:9), taste (Ps. 34:8), and feel (Acts 17:27); and he must be "exercised" (1 Tim. 4:7–8). He also must be cleansed (Ps. 51:7) and fed (Matt. 4:4). The outer man is perishing, but the inner man can be renewed spiritually in spite of outward physical decay (2 Cor. 4:16–18). It is this inner power that makes him succeed.

What does it mean to have the Holy Spirit empower the inner man? It means that our spiritual faculties are controlled by God, and we are exercising them and growing in the Word (Heb. 5:12–14). It is only when we yield to the Spirit and let Him control the inner man that we succeed in living to the glory of God. This means feeding the inner man the Word of God, praying and worshiping, keeping clean, and exercising the senses by loving obedience."¹⁶

Now, Paul's intercessory prayer here in Ephesians 3:16 to the Father on behalf of these Gentile church age believers would be accomplished by these Christians responding in faith to the Spirit inspired contents of the Ephesian epistle. This post-justification faith in the contents of this Spirit inspired epistle would result in these

¹² Gk. εἰς τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, taking εἰς in the sense of ἐν. M. Barth renders " 'to grow' toward the Inner Man," the "Inner Man" being the ἄνθρωπος τέλειος of Eph. 4:13. But the other Pauline occurrences of ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος are against this interpretation (Rom. 7:22; 2 Cor. 4:16).

¹³ Cf. 1 Pet. 3:4, "the hidden man of the heart" (ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος).

¹⁴ H. Schlier (*Christus und die Kirche im Epheserbrief*, p. 32) compares the Naassene teaching quoted by Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.35–36, where the "stone" of Isa. 28:16 and Dan. 2:45 (cf. p. 306, n. 153 above) is said to be the "inner man" who has fallen from Adamas, the archetypal man above, to be imprisoned in the human body, within the ἔρκος ὀδόντων ("enclosure of the teeth") of which Homer speaks. When R. Reitzenstein remarks that the "inner man," like the "new man," is mentioned repeatedly in the Manichaean fragments from Turfan (*Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium*, p. 153, n. 2), he throws no light on the origin of the Pauline phrases.

¹⁵ Bruce, F. F. (1984). *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (p. 326). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

¹⁶ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 32). Victor Books.

Gentile church age believers obeying the various prohibitions and commands and requests, which appear Ephesians chapters 4-6. Therefore, this is why Paul asserts in Ephesians 3:17 that as a result of the Father answering this prayer request, Christ will dwell in the hearts of these Gentile church age believers through their post-justification faith in the Spirit inspired contents of this epistle.

Holy Spirit

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:16, the apostle Paul asserts that he made it a habit of occupying himself with praying that according to the wealth produced by His glory the Father would cause each and every one of the recipients of this epistle to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of their inner being or new Christ nature. This is the sixth reference to the work of the Holy Spirit up to this point in our study of Ephesians.

The first reference to the Holy Spirit was in Ephesians 1:13, which asserts that the church age believer was sealed by means of the omnipotence of the promised Spirit, who is holy. The Holy Spirit is mentioned again in Ephesians 1:17, in which, Paul asserts that that he interceded in prayer to the Father for the recipients of this epistle that the Father would cause each one of them to receive divine wisdom, specifically, divine revelatory wisdom provided by the Holy Spirit with respect to an experiential knowledge of Himself.

The Spirit appears again in Ephesians 2:18, which asserts that through the personal intermediate agency of Jesus Christ both Jewish and Gentile church age believers are experiencing access to the presence of the Father by means of the omnipotence of the one Spirit.

Spirit appears again in Ephesians 2:22, which asserts that by appropriating by faith their union and identification with Jesus Christ, the Gentile church age believer is being built together with Jewish church age believers into God's dwelling place by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit.

Lastly, the Spirit is mentioned in Ephesians 3:5, which asserts that the mystery was by no means made known to members of the human race in previous generations as it has now been revealed during the church age through the personal agency of His holy apostles as well as prophets by means of the omnipotence of the Spirit. The content of this mystery is that the Gentile church age believers are 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 justification by faith in and union and identification with Christ Jesus by means of the proclamation of the gospel.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

In theology, God the Holy Spirit is identified as the third person of the Trinity. 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**” (Isa. 11:2) (4) “**Spirit of truth**” (John 14:17). Titles related to God the Father: (1) “**Spirit of God**” (2) “**Spirit of our God**” (Gen. 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; Phil. 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.**”

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 (Gen. 6:3; 2 Th. 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 (He. 10:29).

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 32 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).

The Work of the Holy Spirit

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 of god the Holy Spirit: (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).

Sins 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 Thess. 5:19).

Fourteen Affirmations About the Holy Spirit

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’s. (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’s.

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.

Filling of the Spirit Verses 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 "indwelling" of the Spirit occurs at the moment of justification and is *permanent* meaning it can 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 undeserved 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.

The Holy Spirit in First John 2:20 and 27

The Holy Spirit is mentioned many times in First John. The first of these is 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)

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)

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.

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).

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 16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. (ESV)

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 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.

When John tells the recipients of First John 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.

“**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.

The Holy Spirit in First John 4:1-6

The Holy Spirit also appears in 1 John 4:1-6 in relation to false teachers.

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 described by him as false prophets here in 1 John 4:1. This word pertains to the doctrine which these 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.

The language of this prohibition in 1 John 4:1 expresses the fact that it applies to each one of the recipients of First John without exception. In 1 John 2:12-14, John affirms that the recipients of this epistle were remaining faithful to his apostolic teaching and thus were already obeying this prohibition which he more than likely had taught them many times in the past.

By identifying these unregenerate antichrists who taught an incipient form of Gnosticism and docetic Gnosticism as “**false prophets**,” John is describing these individuals as people who were deliberately attempting to deceive others. They were not only deceiving the non-believer but also attempting to deceive even those in the

Christian community by claiming to be sent by God and communicating His full council to them.

Again, these individuals were the proto-Gnostic teachers who rejected the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 1:1-3). As we noted, John mentions these individuals in 1 John 2:18-19 and describes them as “antichrists” in verse 18. He also asserts that they never belonged to the Christian community in verse 19 indicating that they were never declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ.

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 and every one of them are by no means a part of our fellowship. (Author’s translation)

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 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 Zoroastrian 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.

Therefore, in 1 John 4:1, the recipients of First John must obey the command to continue making it their habit of thoroughly and critically examining the various spirits in the world or in other words, various teachings, by means adhering to John's apostolic teaching which is inspired by the Holy Spirit. In other words, if a teaching contradicts John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching, then it is from the devil and is emphatically not from God. It is not truth but rather a lie from Satan and his cosmic system. The Spirit will confirm John's apostolic teaching is truth from God and will confirm this teaching as truth from God when it is communicated by someone else such as a pastor or an evangelist.

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)

As we noted, “**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.

This interpretation of 1 John 4:2 is based upon the kataphoric use of the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (ἐν τούτῳ), “**by means of this.**” It can be interpreted as either “kataphoric” or “anaphoric.” The former would indicate that this prepositional phrase is referring to the assertion in 1 John 4:2 *pan pneuma ho homologei Iēsoun Christon en sarki elēlythota ek tou theou estin* (πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν), “**Any spirit which does acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, appearing in a human body does possess the characteristic which originates from this God who is the Spirit.**” Therefore, it would express the means by which the believer can confirm that any teacher’s doctrine originates from God the Holy Spirit. Consequently, this prepositional phrase indicates that the doctrine of the hypostatic union is the means by which the believer can confirm if any teacher’s doctrine originates with God the Holy Spirit or not. In other words, the means by which the child of God can confirm that any teacher’s doctrine is inspired by God the Holy Spirit is that their teaching acknowledges that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, the God-man. If they adhere to John’s Spirit inspired apostolic teaching that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, then their doctrine originates with God the Holy Spirit.

If this prepositional phrase *en toutō* (ἐν τούτῳ), “**by means of this**” in 1 John 4:2 is “anaphoric,” then this would mean that this prepositional phrase is pointing back to 1 John 4:1, which is composed of a prohibition followed by a command and a *hoti* causal clause. The first class condition presents the assumption of truth for the sake of argument. The prohibition required that each of the recipients of First John continue making it their habit of not trusting in every spirit which refers to a particular viewpoint communicated by a teacher through instruction. Then, John issues a command which is found in the apodosis of this first class condition and stands in contrast to this prohibition. The protasis asserts for the sake of argument the recipients of First John confirming these spirits or teachings possess the characteristic originating from the one and only God (the Father) and which characteristic is truth. This is a responsive first class condition which would indicate that they must confirm this teaching is from God in order to ensure that they continue to experience fellowship with God. If they don’t, they will not experience this fellowship. The command requires that each one of them continue to make it their

habit of thoroughly and critically examining these spirits or teachings. Then, John presents the reason why they must obey this command by asserting that many false prophets are traveling about in the world. Therefore, the anaphoric use of the prepositional phrase *en toutō* (ἐν τούτῳ), “**by means of this**” would then indicate that by thoroughly and critically examining the spirits the recipients of First John could confirm if any teacher’s doctrine originates from God the Holy Spirit.

However, it is better to interpret this prepositional phrase as kataphoric, which is indicated by several factors. First, the preceding command in 1 John 4:1 to test or thoroughly and critically examine the spirits is functioning as we noted as the apodosis of a first class condition. Thus, it is connected to the protasis which speaks of how the believer can confirm that any teacher’s doctrine possesses the characteristic of truth which originates from the Father. Therefore, this command answers the protasis. In other words, this command answers for the recipients of First John how they can confirm that any spirit or teaching is truth from God. This would indicate that John has already identified for them how they can confirm any teacher’s doctrine is truth from God. Correspondingly, this would also identify for them how they can confirm any teacher’s doctrine originates from God the Holy Spirit.

However, if we interpret the prepositional phrase *en toutō*, “by means of this” as anaphoric, then John would not be able to identify the specific means by which the recipients of First John can test the spirits or various types of teaching to determine if they are from the Spirit who is God. If you recall, in verse 1, as we noted, he only told them that they must test the spirits and did not identify the specific doctrine which would enable them to do so. However, if this prepositional phrase is kataphoric he has done so since this would mean that he is identifying the doctrine of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ as the specific means by which they can determine if any teacher’s doctrine originates with God the Holy Spirit or with the devil. Correspondingly, he would also be identifying this doctrine as the means by which they are to test the spirits or in other words, critically examine any type of teacher’s doctrine to determine if it is truth from God or a lie from the devil.

Thus, we can see that verse 2 is exegetical in that verse 1 is ambiguous and verse 2 defines specifically how the recipients of First John can confirm if any teacher’s doctrine originates with God the Holy Spirit or with the devil. Verse 1 is ambiguous only in the sense that John commanded them to test or critically examine any type of teaching in order to determine if it is truth from God or not. As we noted, he did not identify the specific doctrine which would enable them to do so. However, verse 2 does this since he asserts that adherence to the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ is the specific means by which they can use to confirm if any teacher’s doctrine originates with God the Holy Spirit or with the devil.

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 teaching 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.

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 exegetical 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.

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.

John is not only encouraging the recipients of First John that they were victorious over these false prophets but also more importantly they were victorious over Satan in spiritual combat because their false doctrine originated with the devil. They were victorious over these false prophets and Satan who sent them because they accepted by faith the apostle John's Spirit inspired apostolic teaching that Jesus of Nazareth is the God-man Savior. In fact, in 1 John 5:4, John asserts that the believer's faith in the Spirit's teaching gives them the victory over Satan's world system and organization. Faith in the Word of God which is inspired by the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21) appropriates the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Matt. 17:20).

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 teaching 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 they 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.

This structure apes God's system and organization. The Trinity of course is at the top. The Father sends His Son into the world to become a human being in order to suffer a substitutionary spiritual and physical death on the cross in order to redeem and reconcile sinful humanity to Himself. The Son chose the apostles to proclaim to

the human race God's message of peace to them which is the gospel. The Holy Spirit makes the gospel understandable so that a member of the human race can make the non-meritorious decision to trust in Jesus Christ so as to be declared justified by the Father. Thus, the Trinity employs the apostles to communicate the gospel to unregenerate humanity in order that they can become members of God's kingdom. Therefore, God is the source of the message of the apostles while on other hand, Satan is the source of the message of the false prophets.

Therefore, these two kingdoms are at war. The Trinity is opposed by Satan and his angels. The apostles are opposed by these false prophets. The message of the apostles is truth. The message of the false prophets from Satan's kingdom is deceit, deception and lies. Obedience to the apostles' message results in entering into an eternal relationship with the Trinity as well as experiencing eternal life and fellowship with the Trinity. Obedience to the false prophets' message results in spiritual death or separation from the Trinity and eventually eternal condemnation in the lake of fire.

Both kingdoms are warring over the souls of members of the human race. The Trinity has the best interests of each member of the human race, which is manifested through God's one and only Son becoming a human being in order to suffer God's wrath on the cross as a substitute for each member of the human race. Satan and his angels do not have the best interests of each member of the human race which is manifested by the fact that they are deceiving the human race so that eventually they will experience God's wrath in the lake of fire along with them.

The vehicle or the means by which the Trinity seeks to save people from their wrath is the gospel or in other words, the teaching of the apostles. The vehicle or means used by Satan is lies about the person of Jesus Christ and the other members of the Trinity.

Thus, 1 John 4:5 emphasizes the importance of the believer rejecting false doctrine communicated by these false prophets and instead adhering to the sound doctrine taught by John and the other apostles.

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 his 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, as we noted earlier, 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 affirms 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. As we noted 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* is the Holy Spirit 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 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, as we noted, 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.

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.

The Inner Being

As we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:16, Paul asserts that he made it his habit of occupying himself with praying that according to the wealth produced by His glory God the Father would cause each and every one of the recipients of this letter to be given strength by means of power through the personal intermediate agency of His Spirit for the benefit of their inner being or new Christ nature.

We noted in our study of this verse that the expression *ton esō anthrōpon* (τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον) also appears in Roman 7:22 with the same referent.

Romans 7:22 For you see, I habitually and joyfully agree with God's Law with respect to my inner man. (Author's translation)

In 2 Corinthians 4:16, Paul employs a similar expression *ho exō hēmōn anthrōpos* (ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος), "**our inner person**" to refer to the new indwelling nature of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not despair, but even if our physical body is wearing away, our inner person is being renewed day by day. (NET)

Therefore, these expressions in these three verses all refer to the new Christ nature that the church age believer received through regeneration the moment they were declared justified through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior. At the moment a sinner is declared justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, the Holy Spirit creates a human spirit for the imputation of eternal life by God the Father, which makes the believer a new spiritual species meaning they now possess the divine nature. This is called in theology "regeneration."

Now, as we noted in our study of Ephesians 3:16, the noun *anthrōpos* (ἄνθρωπος) means "human being" and in context speaks of the unique person of history, Jesus Christ, who is the head of the new creation in contrast to the head of the old humanity

whose head is the first human being, Adam. The articular construction of this noun functions as a possessive personal pronoun referring to the recipients of this letter who Paul identifies in Ephesians 2:11 as Gentile church age believers in the Roman province of Asia. This expresses the idea that this inner human being is “the possession of” these Gentile church age believers. This noun is modified by the adverb of location *esō* (ἐσῶ), which identifies the location of this new humanity or the new head of the human race is located, namely, within the human body and soul of the church age believer.

Paul teaches in Colossians 3:10 that this new Christ nature located in the church age believer desires to be replenished for the purpose of an experiential knowledge in conformity with the image produced by the One who created him. In this passage, he describes the new indwelling nature of Jesus Christ as the “new man” or “new self” or “new humanity” in Colossians 3:10.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if, and let us assume that it is true for the sake of argument that each and every 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, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in a state of being seated at God’s right hand. 2 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of concentrating on the things above, not on the things on earth 3 because each and every one of you has died. Consequently, the life of each and every one of you is concealed with Christ by means of the power of God the Father. 4 When Christ, the life of each and every one of you, enters into the state of being revealed, then, at that time, each and every one of you will, as a certainty be revealed with Him in a state of glory. 5 Therefore, I solemnly charge each and every 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, as an eternal spiritual truth characterized as idolatry. 6 These things are the reason why the wrath exercised by God the Father, as an eternal spiritual truth is and will be directed against the people characterized by disobedience. 7 Each and every one of you also lived your lives among them at one time when each and every one of you were continually living among them. 8 But now, I also solemnly charge each and every one of you, for your own benefit to lay aside each and every one of the following: destructive, uncontrolled anger, malice, slander, filthy language from the mouth of each and every one of you. 9 Each and every one of you continue making it your habit of not lying to one another because each and every one of you for your own benefit have stripped off the old man with its practices. 10 Likewise, each and every one of you have clothed yourselves with the new man which is, as an eternal spiritual truth existing in the state of 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, as an eternal spiritual truth existing between Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free person. But rather, Christ as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of being everything as well as in each and every person. (Author's translation)

In Colossians 3:9, the apostle Paul commanded the faithful believers in Colossae to continue making it their habit of not lying to one another. Then, he gives the first of two reasons why they should do this. The first reason is found attached to this command in Colossians 3:9 and asserts that the Colossians have stripped off the old man with its practices. This causal clause is figurative language for the Colossian believers taking off or stripping their old Adamic indwelling sin nature at the moment of justification. It speaks of the Colossians leaving the state or condition of being enslaved to the old indwelling Adamic sin nature at the moment they were declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. Simultaneously, they were identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, and burial through the baptism of the Spirit. Consequently, this identification freed them from the power of the sin nature. So, this removal of the sin nature took place at their conversion experience. Therefore, Paul is telling the Colossians with this causal clause that they must not lie to one another because to do so would be inconsistent with the fact that they have been freed from the sin nature since lying is one of the manifestations of the sin nature.

Now, here in Colossians 3:10, Paul presents the second reason why the Colossians must obey the command in verse 9 by asserting that each and every one of them have clothed themselves with the new man. This new man belongs to the new creation and is the nature of Jesus Christ who reflects the Father's nature. The new man speaks of the sinner who has been declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son and has consequently been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This justified sinner was not only regenerated at the moment of their justification but they were also identified with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were also simultaneously indwelt permanently by all three members of the Trinity. Therefore, the new man belongs to the new creation under the headship of Jesus Christ.

This clothing of themselves with the new man also took place at the moment of the Colossians were declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. So, like the stripping off of the old man, it took place at justification through the baptism of the Spirit. However, stripping off of the old man took place when the Spirit identified the Colossians with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial whereas the clothing of themselves with the new man took place when the Spirit

identified them with Christ in His resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father.

Then, Paul asserts that this new man, as an eternal spiritual truth exists in the state of desiring to be replenished for the purpose of an experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ. This experiential knowledge involves personally encountering Jesus Christ through the process of experiential sanctification or fellowship as He is revealed by the Holy Spirit in a prayerful study of the gospel. It also refers to being affected by this encounter with Jesus Christ which in turn will result in the gaining of practical spiritual wisdom and more of the character of Christ.

This replenishing of the new man speaks of filling the new man with power so that the new man gains greater dominance over the believer. This empowerment of the new man involves the intake of God's Word. Specifically, it involves the Colossians learning God's Word, then exercising faith in God's Word and which faith results in obedience to God's Word.

This replenishing of the new man by the Word of God is related to the command in Ephesians 5:18 to be filled with the Spirit and the command in Colossians 3:16 to let the Word of Christ richly dwell in you. When the Christian exercises faith resulting in obedience to the Holy Spirit's teaching in the Word of God, the new man is replenished in the sense that it is filled with power for the purpose of enabling the Colossians to have an experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The action of being replenished for an experiential knowledge is accomplished by the Holy Spirit who replenishes the new man when the Colossians exercise faith in His teaching in the Word of God which He has inspired. This faith replenishes the new man in the sense that it empowers the new man since this faith appropriates the power of the Spirit. This replenishing of the new man is for the purpose of enabling the Colossians to have an experiential knowledge of Jesus Christ. This experiential knowledge enables the Christian to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ who created the Christian a new man or a part of the new creation.

Then, the apostle Paul teaches that this replenishing of the new man for the purpose of an experiential knowledge is in conformity with the image produced by the One who created this new man. The obvious question regarding this assertion, is whose image is being referred to? Paul says it is the image of the Creator. However, is speaking of Jesus Christ as the Creator or the Father? The former was the instrument in which the Father created mankind and all of creation. It would appear that this "image" is of Jesus Christ for several reasons. The first is that as we noted, He is the Creator asserted by Paul in Colossians 1:15-20. Secondly, Paul teaches in Romans 8:29 that the Father predestined the church age believer to be conformed to the image of His Son. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit's job after conversion is the shape the believer into the image of Christ in an experiential sense. By reflecting character of Christ, the Christian simultaneously reflects the character of the Father since the

Father and Son have the same character and nature. Lastly, the purpose of the Holy Spirit identifying the Christian with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father positionally is to that the Christian might gain the potential to become like Christ experientially. The purpose of this identification is also to give them the guarantee of a resurrection body which will perfect them in the sense that it will complete work of the Holy Spirit reproducing the image of Christ in them. Consequently, the Christian in a resurrection body will not only perfectly reflect the character of the Son but also the Father since the former reflects the image and character of the latter.

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). However, that image was marred due to their sin in the Garden of Eden. This marring of the divine image was passed down to their posterity, i.e., the human race. The Son of God became a human being to restore the image of God in fallen humanity. The incarnate Son of God's crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father enabled this image of God to be restored in fallen humanity. When the sinner trusts in Jesus Christ, the Father declares them justified. Simultaneously, the Holy Spirit identifies them with Jesus Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. This identification conforms them into the image of Jesus Christ and simultaneously it restores the image of God in the justified sinner since Christ perfectly reflects the image of the Father. This identification conforms them into the image of Christ and restores the image of the Father in a positional sense in that God now views them as crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ because this is what He has done for them through the baptism of the Spirit. It thus sets up the potential for the justified sinner identified with Christ to reflect the image of Christ and thus the image of the Father in an experiential sense which is accomplished when they appropriate by faith their identification with Christ. Lastly, it provides them the guarantee of their being perfectly conformed to the image of Christ and thus having the image of God perfectly restored in them when they receive a resurrection body at the rapture or resurrection of the church.

Therefore, a comparison of Colossians 3:9-10 indicates that the stripping off the old man and clothing oneself with the new man are speaking of two events that took place through the baptism of the Spirit at the moment of justification. They are both related to their identification with Christ. The former is related to their identification with Christ in His crucifixion, death and burial whereas the latter is related to their identification with Christ in His resurrection and session at the right hand of the Father. Furthermore, both are speaking of the positional aspect of their sanctification which sets up the potential to experience their sanctification in time and provides the believer the guarantee of being perfected in the image of Jesus Christ in a resurrection body.

1 John 3:9 Every person who has been fathered by God never practices sin because His nature lives in him. In other words, he has received the capacity to never sin because he has been fathered by God. (Author's translation)

The apostle John is solemnly presenting to the recipients of First John another eternal spiritual truth or spiritual axiom which is related to their being children of God through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. He asserts that every person who has been fathered by God never practices sin because the Father's nature lives in them. This person fathered by God are those sinners who have been declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ and as a result of have been regenerated by the Spirit. John then explains what he means by this first assertion by teaching that the believer has received the capacity to never sin because they have been fathered by God.

The concept of being fathered by God is first mentioned by John in this epistle in 1 John 2:29.

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)

When John mentions the believer being “fathered by” God in 1 John 2:29 and 3:9, 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).

“Regeneration” refers to the spiritual birth of the sinner who is declared justified by the Father through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Regeneration takes place at the moment of conversion when the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit appropriates for the sinner justified by faith in Jesus Christ, the benefits of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

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 born again, 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)

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 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 3:5 He (God the Holy Spirit) saved us, not on the basis of deeds (human works) which we have done in (human power) righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. (NASB95)

“**Renovation**” 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.

In 1 John 3:9, when John refers to the Father's nature indwelling the believer, he is referring to the believer's new nature, which Paul mentions in his writings. This new nature is the human spirit which contains eternal life. In other words, this human spirit with eternal life imputed to it composes the believer's new nature, i.e., the new self and this new nature is the nature of Christ. This act of regeneration makes the believer a new spiritual species, which is the nature of Christ that can never sin and that is described in Scripture by many phrases such as the “**new self, new man, newness of life, new creation.**”

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)

The fact that the Trinity permanently indwells every church age believer is another reason why they possess the divine nature. The Father indwells the believer permanently (cf. Eph. 4:6). The Son does as well (cf. Col. 1:27) and the Spirit (cf. John 14:17; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).

The new nature gives the believer the capacity to execute the command to be holy as God is holy (cf. 1 Pet. 1:14-16).

1 Peter 1:14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, 15 but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.” (NASB95)

God the Holy Spirit would not issue this command to the believer to be as holy as He is unless the believer had the power or capacity to be holy as Him and this capacity God has given to the believer when He gave the believer a new nature at the moment of justification through regeneration.

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. After justification, the believer can experience the holiness of God and fellowship with God by obeying the Lord Jesus Christ’s command to love one’s fellow believer in the same manner as He loved.

Therefore, in 1 John 3:9, we have two assertions. The first asserts that every person who has been fathered by God never practices sin. The second explains the first and teaches that this person has received the capacity to never sin because they have been fathered by God.

Now, both of these assertions would seem to indicate that a “true” believer can never sin. This of course is false. The believer can and does sin since they still retain an old indwelling Adamic sin nature after being declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ. This old Adamic sin nature will be permanently eradicated from the life of the believer the moment they die or the moment of the rapture of the church when they receive a resurrection body which will be minus the old sin nature.

That the believer can and does sin is indicated by John’s statements in 1 John 1:5-2:2. He teaches in 1 John 1:9 that if the believer confesses their sins to the Father, the Father is faithful and just to forgive them these sins which of course implies that they can and will sin. He teaches that in 1 John 1:10 that if the believer enters into the claim that they have never sinned, then they are making God out to be a liar. This clearly implies that the believer can and will sin. Furthermore, in 1 John 2:1, John teaches that he wrote 1 John 1:5-10 so that the recipients of First John would not

enter into committing sin. However, he says that if they do sin, they possess an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous one. This again implies that the believer can and will sin.

So, what does John mean by these two assertions in 1 John 3:9? The answer is found in the causal clause which follows the first assertion, which identifies the Father's nature living in the believer as the reason why every person fathered by God never practices sin. Since the Father can never sin, His nature living in the believer can never sin. Therefore, when John speaks of never practicing sin or never committing sin, he is referring to the Father's nature living in the believer as never being able to sin or never committing sin. The believer has received from God at the moment of justification the capacity to never sin when they were regenerated by the Spirit because they received at that moment the new divine nature which can never sin.

Therefore, the believer has two natures living in them, namely the old Adamic sin nature and the divine nature. Every person in the human race received the former at the moment of physical birth. Only those sinners who are declared justified by the Father through faith in His Son Jesus Christ receive the new divine nature.

In his writings, the apostle Paul identifies the old Adamic sin nature as the "old man" or "old self" (cf. Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9) and he calls the divine nature the "new self" (cf. Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).

Now, the old Adamic nature is the reason why the believer sins. In fact, they are sinners by nature and practice. This does not mean that they are not responsible or culpable. They are. It simply that the believer sins because they give into the desires of the sin nature. On the flip side, when the believer does not sin, it is because they are living in their new nature by obeying the Father's will which is communicated by the Spirit to the believer through the communication of the Word of God. Therefore, the old Adamic nature sins and the new divine nature can never sin. The believer must choose which nature they will live in. If they are living in fellowship with God, they are living in the new divine nature. However, if they are out of fellowship, then they are living according to the desires of the old Adamic nature.

John's first assertion in 1 John 3:6 helps us to understand in 1 John 3:9 that the latter advances upon the former.

1 John 3:6 Anyone who does at any time live in fellowship with Him is never sinning. Anyone who does at any time sin, never sees Him, nor knows Him experientially. (Author's translation)

The first statement in this verse asserts that anyone or any believer who does at any time exist in the state of living in fellowship with Him is as an eternal spiritual truth never existing in the state of sinning. The implication is that if a believer does at any time exist in the state of sinning, then they are absolutely never living in fellowship with Him. The solution to the problem is to confess one's sins to the

Father as John taught in 1 John 1:9. This restores them to fellowship with the Trinity and which fellowship is maintained by obedience to the Word of God.

Therefore, if we compare 1 John 3:6 with 1 John 3:9, John is teaching the believer experiencing fellowship with God is living according to the desires of the Father's nature while on the other hand, if they are sinning and thus out of fellowship, they are living according to the desires of the old Adamic nature.