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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom on earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."* [Romans 10:9,10](#) *"For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* [Romans 10:13](#) *"Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* [Romans 5:1](#)

Romans 8:18-39

R. Present sufferings compared to future glory. v.18

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” - λογίζομαι γαρ οτι ουκ αξια τα παθηματα του νυν καιρου προς την μελλουσαν δοξαν αποκαλυφθηναι εις ημας.

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time”, *logizomai gar hoti ouk axia ta pathemata tou nun kairou*, uses the present middle indicative of logizomai, which meant to reckon, to conclude, to deduct, to consider. It was the sound analytical thinking of an accountant, or mathematician based on facts where one arrived at a logical conclusion based upon the facts of a matter. One's emotions, or feelings, never enter into the picture.

Paul has taken the facts he knows to be true: the original purpose for Adam, sin, the curse upon the earth, the suffering of Jesus Christ, our salvation, the sufferings we go through, God's consummate purpose, the return of Jesus Christ to the earth to establish God's kingdom, the resurrection, the new earth and much more. And from these facts Paul has concluded that the sufferings we go through in this life are not worthy to be compared to what lies ahead for us in our new bodies, the new heavens and the new earth.

Christians can get so caught up in their own problems, the state of the world or nation, their own wants, desires and plans, that they spend little time reflecting on their own eternal and eventual destiny. God has prepared a wonderful inheritance for us: new bodies, a new earth, everlasting joy, production, fulfillment, peace, beauty, harmony, glory, etc.. These are the things that should fill our minds; things that we should be looking forward to with eager anticipation.

“Are not worthy” - *ouk axia*. I consider that the sufferings of the present time, (or season), are not equal to, worthy, or comparable, to the coming glory to be revealed to us. Paul recognizes that we suffer in this life, whether it is mental, emotional, or physical, we all suffer! But what he's saying is that the sufferings that we are experiencing are not worthy to be compared to what we will have in eternity.

The word **worthy**, *axios*, from which we get the English word axle, referred to the bringing up the beam of scales into equilibrium, where both sides of the scales are equal to each other. It had the idea of putting two things on the scales to see if they balance each other out. For example. One pound of carrots on one side of the scales should be equal to one pound of peas.

On the one side of the scales Paul is placing all the suffering we will go through in this life on earth in these flesh bodies, and on the other side of the scale he is placing our future glory in the eternal state. The result is that our future glory in the eternal state with our resurrected bodies on a new earth in the presence of God and his Son, Jesus Christ, will so tip the scales that there will be no comparison at all!

Suffering comes with this present life, *nun kairou*. It comes from being a human being having fallen, corrupted natures we inherited from Adam and Eve, living on an earth cursed by sin, and ruled over by the devil and his angels. But there is no comparison between it and our future glory. *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”* Revelation 21:4

“*With the glory which shall be revealed in us.*” - *pros ten mellousan doxan apokaluphthenai eis hemas.* We have here the present active participle of *mello* and the aorist passive infinitive of *apokalupto*. *Mello* spoke of something that was near and about to occur. And *apokalupto* meant to uncover, to reveal, or unveil. It had the idea of something that had been hidden, but now is fully revealed.

Apokalupto was used in the **mystery religions** of something secret that was only revealed to certain individuals who had gone through the steps of initiation. It was used of **God**, who is hidden from men, revealing himself only to those he has chosen. And of **Jesus Christ** in the book of the Apocalypse, where he is revealed as deity. ***Apokalupto* was a technical word for the revealing of deity!** And here the word is used with the sons of God.

Paul is talking about the coming glory that will be revealed to us when Christ returns to earth to raise the dead and establish his Father's kingdom here on earth. We have two words, two clauses and two different ideas used in the passage. ***Pros*** is used with the sufferings of this present time, while ***eis*** is used with the glory that is to be revealed in us.

Both *pros* and *eis* are translated as **to** in the English, *pros* would denote approach up to the object, while *eis* would denote entry into the object. The two key words that stand out in the two clauses are **sufferings** and **glory**, with *pros* being used with **sufferings** and *eis* used with **glory**. So what this is saying is that the sufferings of this life approach up to the event of glory, (actually end at our physical death), but do not penetrate it. While the coming glory penetrates into our very being!

But what does this reference to glory being revealed to us mean? Some say Christ returning, others to different things. But in the next verse it states what it is with the words the revealing of the sons of God! So it's talking about us. But then, how can we explain the use of *apokalupto* concerning us in both verses 18 and 19? Does this mean we will be divine beings?

We are the sons of God, this is born out by many passages. “*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the **sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name:*” John 1:12 “*And because ye are **sons**, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*” Galatians 4:6 “*That ye may be blameless and harmless, the **sons of God**, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*” Philippians 2:15 “*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the **sons of God**: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*” 1 John 3:1,2

But what does that mean, or imply? Christ told the Jews that God was his Father, thus making him the son of God, and that he and the Father are one. The Jews stated that this was blasphemy because he was making himself God! “*I and my Father are one.*” John 10:30 “*Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.*” John 10:31 “*The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*” John 10:33

Perhaps we need to look at the differences between deity and divinity, a divine being and God, to better understand what is going on in this matter of being divine beings. We will not utilize the term angels for it is nothing more than a transliteration of the Greek and can be somewhat misleading in trying to understand what is involved, choosing rather to use the term celestial beings. To begin we will look at the names of God found in the OT.

The word *Yahweh* is the personal name of God, while the word *God*, (our word for deity), is the word we use to translate the Hebrew words *El*, *Eloah*, *Elohim*, *El-Elyon*, etc.. The meaning behind the word *Yahweh* is the idea of self-existence, and can be translated as “*The Eternal One*”. While the meaning behind the *El* word group is **power!** *El* and *Eloah* for the singular, *Elohim* for the idea of plurality denoting the plurality of God in the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *El-Elyon* is *El*, the Powerful One; the Highest Powerful One, or *El* the Highest *El*. The “angels” are called *elohim* and *elim* in the OT, and in the English that would be called *Els* or powerful beings. All the “angels” are *Els* and beyond that each one has their own personal name given to them by the One who created them.

We need to see that the universe on into the third heaven is filled with celestial beings and from the highest to the lowest all are powerful. But there is one who is infinitely higher and more powerful than the others and that is the one who we call God. His personal name is *Yahweh* and he is the highest and the most powerful; he is deity, while all the others are only divinity.

The key to understanding this is **understanding the differences between the two words deity and divinity**. **Deity** is the term that we give only to the being who is independent, intrinsically eternal or self-existent, all powerful, omniscient, omnipresent and the source of everything that exists, including the other *elohim*. He is the one who created the *elohim*!

While **divinity** is the term that we give to the *elohim*, “*gods*”, beings of power, who are not infinite and intrinsically eternal, and whose existence is derived from the deity and dependent upon the deity. This is why Biblical theologians reject the term divinity for Jesus Christ, for it takes away from his deity. While the false teachers and doctrines of heresy, as brought forth in the Witness group, Modernism, Mormonism and others, teach that Jesus was a divine being, one of these “*gods*”.

These divine beings, (“angels”), have tremendous powers and abilities, maybe even the power to create in some sense; power defines their existence, for that's the root idea behind the word *elohim*. So when we're talking about heavenly beings, we're talking about beings who possess tremendous power! But, as powerful as they are individually and collectively, the one true deity, *Yahweh*, the God of heaven, has ultimate power, infinite power; **he possesses all power!**

So when defining the differences between **deity** and **divinity** in the idea of **power**, all the celestial beings, divine beings, are powerful, thus making them **divinities**, but there is only one being in heaven who is **all-powerful** and that is *Yahweh*, and his all-powerfulness is one of his attributes as **deity**.

When considering the idea of **height** or **position**, in the celestial hierarchy, all the celestial beings in the heavens hold differing positions in this celestial hierarchy, some higher than others. But there is only one being who has the very highest position of all and that is *Yahweh*! There are many, many *Els* in heaven and the universe, many powerful beings, but there is only one *El* who is higher than all the others and that is *Yahweh*. All the others are *Els*, but he is the highest *El*. He is *El-Elyon*. He is ***El*, the highest *El*!**

When we consider the idea of **knowledge** or **wisdom** in defining the differences between deity and divinity, between the one called God and divine beings, we see that all the *Els* in heaven, all these celestial beings are beings of tremendous intellect, knowledge and wisdom, and again, some more than others. But there is **only one being who possesses all knowledge and wisdom!** He already knew all the knowable before anyone or anything was created! And that is the *El* (powerful one) named *Yahweh*, the only true God of heaven and earth.

When we consider the differences between deity and divinity from the standpoint of **length of days, or age**, we need to see that all the celestial beings (angels) have existed for eons, perhaps millions of years or more, and even in that there are those who have been in existence longer than others. And if we took the oldest group of celestial beings, there was one who was in existence before them. They could say that he, *Yahweh*, was in existence before all them. They could say to the other angels that they were there long before them, but **there is one who was there before us!**

They were not in existence at some point in time, then they existed, (and that by the hand of *Yahweh*). But in that we have a comparison of age, which, although is true, is not the standard of measurement to be used in defining the difference between deity and divinity. The standard to be applied is that, while divinity can have existed from a long distant point in time, and even though it can go on for all eternity, it lacks what deity has. And that is deity never had a beginning! ***Yahweh* always existed and always will!** *“I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.” Daniel 7:9*

In the matter of **judgment** concerning the differences between deity and divinity, even though divinities may have certain tasks assigned to them around the matter of judging, **there is only one celestial being who actually does the judging!** And that is *Yahweh*! He is the only one who judges men and angels. *“A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated. And the books were opened.” Daniel 7:10*

In the matter of **governing** the universe in defining the differences between deity and divinity, even though many divinities,/celestial beings/angels, hold various positions of authority and power in God's celestial government, there is **only one being who is at the top governing it all!** And that being is the one we call *Yahweh*, the God of the universe!

So concerning divine beings they have **tremendous power**, but they are **not all-powerful** as God is! And even though they possess **vast amounts of knowledge** and are still acquiring more knowledge over time, they are **not omniscient** as God is! And even though these divine beings have **existed for such a long period of time** that no one can calculate, there is only one being who has **existed forever!** Only God is eternal! And even though they exist and function at differing levels of **height** in heaven, there is only one who exists **at the top** of all things! *Yahweh* the only true God. And even though divine beings hold positions of authority and power in God's **government, they are not the ones who govern!** And even though the divine beings play certain roles in the matter of **judgment**, there is **only one who judges the universe and is judged of no one**, and that is God! And finally, even though divine beings are extremely powerful, and not one of us can deprive them of life, **they are totally dependent upon *Yahweh* for life, while he is dependent on no one for his existence!**

So a divine being can have tremendous power, vast amounts of knowledge, live on for all eternity, be at a certain height and function in the celestial hierarchy of God, be involved in matters of government and judgment, have a certain level of glory, never lose their life force, etc., and still be not deity. And when we look at Jesus Christ, we see that he was elevated far above all the divine beings in the cosmos. *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:” Philippians 2:9* And if the Church is in union with Christ, we being the body and he the head, then where does that put us in comparison to these divine beings? As the writer of Hebrews said concerning us, *“Who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age.” Hebrews 6:5*

S. The creation waits for our revealing. v.19

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Romans 8:19 - η γαρ αποκαραδοκια της κτισεως την αποκαλυψιν των υιων του θεου απεκδεχεται.

*“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth”. - he gar apokaradokia tes ktiseos...apedechetai. **Apokaradokia** meant to stretch out the head, then watching for something with an out-stretched head. It's like when you really love someone, and miss them in their absence, and hear they are coming home. When they're coming home you don't know, so you strain a look out the window everyday watching for them to come down the street.*

***Apekdechomai** has the idea of expecting something to occur and then patiently waiting for it. It also has the idea of the expectation of the end of something. The end of school; the end of a military hitch; the end of a prison term; the end of Satan's rule over the world; the end of the earth's bondage to sin; the end of the curses, etc.. The present middle indicative of *apekdechomai* came to signify eager waiting with the idea of strained expectancy. Something like the mental attitude of a pregnant woman waiting for her child to be born.*

The creation is eagerly and patiently waiting for the end of the curse that was placed on it because of the fall of man; it is waiting for the day when it can go back to doing what it was designed to do, to go back to unhampered productivity and beauty; and it is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God! But when we speak of the creation, perhaps we should not limit it to just the earth, although the earth is the central object in view here, but the entire cosmos as well! *“For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.” NIV*

*“For the sons of God to be revealed” - ten apokalupsin ton huion tou theou. Apokalupsis, **revealed**, is the same word found in the preceding verse, only it is in the noun form instead of the verb. It meant to unveil, or reveal, something that had been previously hidden. **It was a technical term used for the revealing of deity.** It was used of God whenever he revealed himself to men. It was used of Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation where he is revealed as to his true nature. And here it is used of the Church, the royal family of God.*

The earth is eagerly waiting for the revealing of the sons of God, for when that happens, they, operating under Jesus Christ, will restore the earth to its former glory and production. Thorns, thistles, weeds, decay, death, drought, famine, floods, plagues, fires, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms, destruction, pestilence, erosion, and the destructive hand of a sinful race of men cutting down its forests, poisoning its waters, poisoning its land and air, depleting the soil of its nutrients, paving the countryside, building cities, and a general destruction of everything on the earth, often just for the sake of destruction, not to mention for the love of money, is all the earth has ever known.

The earth has been savagely ravaged by man because of his apathy, ignorance, his outright greed and general destructiveness. Man is quick to destroy things, but not to build things. But the time is coming when the earth will be changed under Jesus Christ, when he returns to establish his kingdom here on earth and put into effect the will of God, his Father. The earth had been cursed by God for a purpose. Thorns, thistles, death, decay is all the world has ever known since the fall of Adam. But one day, under the rule of Jesus Christ, the curses will be removed, the sons of God revealed, and Christ and the royal family of God will restore the earth to its pristine glory that it had before the fall. It is that day that the creation is eagerly awaiting!

T. God's curse on the earth. v.20

“For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,” - τη γαρ ματαιοτητι η κτισις υπεταγη ουχ εκουσα αλλα δια τον υποταξαντα επ ελπιδι.

“For the creature (creation) was made subject to vanity,” - *te gar mataioteti he ktisis hupetage.* *Hupotasso* was a military term denoting that one was under the authority of someone else, that he had been placed, or subjected to them, thus surrendering all rights and their will. Here it's telling us that the earth was subjected to the concept of vanity, or *mataiotes*.

The word **subjected** is the orist passive indicative *hupotasso*. We notice that in the orist tense this tells us that this action happened at a point in time in the past, which took place at the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden, when God placed a curse on the serpent, the man, the woman, but also the earth. The passive voice shows that the subject, the earth that God created, received the action, that is, it was made subject to vanity or futility. It did not bring it about; it did not ask for it, nor did it warrant it. It simply received the action as the result of God's curse on it due to Adam and Eve's sin. And the indicative mood emphasizes the reality of all this, that it really happened!

The earth was subjected to **vanity**, futility, *mataiotes*. *Mataiotes* speaks of emptiness as to results. One of the ideas it encompassed is a man wandering around in the desert looking for water to drink. But his dehydration has so affected his mind that he thinks he sees water off in the distance. So he heads for the water, only to find nothing there. He has been following a mirage. But he looks up and sees another mirage of water and heads off for it, only to once again find that it too has nothing to it. So his life now is an aimless wandering after something that is not there. So it denotes **a pointless, fruitless action that has no real results at all.**

Mataiotes is a condition of the soul that all unsaved people have, and that many Christians have due to their rejection of Bible doctrine. *“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the **vanity** of their mind,”* Ephesians 4:17 *Mataiotes* comes about when believers in Christ reject the spiritual life dynamic of the filling of the Holy Spirit and the metabolizing of Bible doctrine by faith. This creates *porosis* on the soul, very similar to plaque on the teeth, or barnacles on the hull of a ship. **This porosis on the soul now creates the mental conditions of illusion and delusion, which so affects them in such a way that they are convinced that the things they see in life will be what they need for their soul.** Things that will satisfy the emptiness in their souls. So they set off in pursuit for them, only to find that when they do get them there is nothing to them but only dry sand. So they look up and see something else on the horizon and they set off in pursuit of it, only to find that when they get it there is nothing to it also! And so they keep repeating this over and over, following after one illusion after another, following after one pointless, fruitless pursuit after another and their life is now summarized as a fruitless, no results, wasted life!

Spring, summer, fall, winter, spring, summer, fall, winter. Plants spring up, grow, produce and die, then they do it all over again. We're born, grow up, live and die. Our children are born, grow up, live and die. What's the point we ask?? Like wandering around in the desert in an endless, pointless, fruitless, resultless endeavor. It's all vanity; it's all meaningless. You put all your energy into marriage and it ends in divorce. You put all your life into your job attaining success and making money, and you get both, you retire and now what. You had kids, raised them, and now they're gone. What was the point?? It was all pointless as to results for death awaits all at the end of the life.

*“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is **vanity**. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.” Ecclesiastes 1:2-7 (See chapters one and two).*

Countless generations of people have been born, lived and died. So what was that all about? Countless numbers of animals have been born, they live and die, other animals eat their flesh and bones, bugs devour what's left and they go back to the soil and everything looks the same as it did before. What's the point of it all? That's why Solomon said it was all vanity, that it was all meaningless.

But there is a meaning for people, if they will respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ, get under the teaching of God's Word and grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. If they do, then their lives will have meaning. If they do the will of God in their lives, then their lives will have purpose. But if they don't, then their lives will be pointless, fruitless and meaningless.

*“Not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,” - ouk hekousa alla dia ton hupotaxanta ep'elpidi. The word **willingly**, hekousa, denoted the opposite of free will; something one has to do, but doesn't want to do. It was subjected to a never ending cycle of birth, life, death and nonproductivity by the will of the one who subjected it. But he did so because he had another purpose in mind concerning fallen man.*

This reveals the prerogative of God's sovereignty over his creation. God runs his creation as he sees fit in accordance to his divine essence and his eternal purpose and that includes us. Many are the plans of man. We have the ability to choose, to decide and to plan things for our lives – but so does God! *“My days are past, my **plans** are torn apart, Even the wishes of my heart.” Job 17:11 And when God decides to do something, it is his purpose that prevails. *“I know that You can do all things, And that no **purpose** of Yours can be thwarted.” Job 42:2**

It was to man's benefit, after the fall, that the earth was cursed! Now we have thorns, thistles; the earth does not easily give up its bounty. Whatever it is that we need to sustain ourselves, we have to work hard to get it. If the earth was as productive as it was back in the garden, then man would have so much free time on his hands that he would get into more evil than he already does.

*In **hope**, is elpis. Hope is the confident expectation that good awaits us in the future. But it is based upon the fact that something good **does** await us in the future! And the reason why something good is awaiting us in the future is **because God will cause all things to work together for our good!** *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28**

Because of God's curse on the earth it was not allowed from having its normal and natural function of bountifully producing. The reason why is because during the interim of the curse God was going to work with Adam's fallen race to bring about reconciliation with him. After that is accomplished, then the curse will be lifted and the earth will have its bountiful production once again. This is the hope mentioned in the passage. *“Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;” Genesis 3:17b “And there shall be no more curse:” Revelation 22:3a*

U. Nature is set free. v.21

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Revelation 8:21 - οτι και αυτη η κτισις ελευθερωθησεται απο της δουλειας της φθορας εις την ελευθεριαν της δοξης των τεκνων του θεου.

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered” - *hoti kai he ktisis eleutherothesetai apo*. Delivered is the future passive indicative of *eleutheroo*. *Eleutheroo* looked at freedom versus being a slave, of being set free versus being in bondage, of having restrictions made on your words, actions, thoughts versus being free of a bond which prevented that, all in the context of just laws which prevented wrongful actions against others.

In this matter of being set free there are **two concepts involved**: the **legal** and the **practical**. The **legal** aspect of bondage goes back to the curse that God put on the earth, which will be removed in the future. The **practical** refers to the actual dynamic of frustrated production, thorns, thistles, etc., which will be gone when the curse is removed.

So to be **delivered** here, *eleutheroo*, meant to be set free from a concept of bondage, which had been imposed on it by God. The future indicative of this denotes the future certainty when the earth will be allowed, once again, to have the glorious production that it originally had in the beginning when God created it, and the passive voice shows that it will be God who sets the earth free – not man!

“From the bondage of corruption” - *apo tes douleias tes phthoras*. The word for **bondage** is *douleias*, from which we get the word for servant or slave. There is no choice, no freedom, no personal goals in the life of a slave, for they have to do the bidding of their master. Here the master is corruption and all the creation is the slave.

The word for **corruption** in the passage is *phthoras*. The main idea of *phthoras* is not destruction, although it is in it, but the idea of bringing something into a worsened condition until it is destroyed. For example: wood rots, metal rusts, teeth decay, the body ages, food spoils, things decompose, even morals, or doctrinal integrity can deteriorate. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” KJV “Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” 1 Corinthians 15:33 NIV

The process of corruption is built into every fabric of life, whether it be plant, animal and even people. Every living thing is gradually decomposing, rotting, decaying, or corrupting little by little, day after day. It goes into a state worse than it previously was. From a little seed a towering giant of a redwood tree will grow up to three or four hundred feet tall then it starts to decay. It may last for a thousand years, but one day it falls to the ground and in time it goes back to the soil. People start out as a little seed, are born, grow up into strong and handsome men, or beautiful women, but then the muscles start to go, the hair falls out, eyesight weakens, teeth decay and fall out and one day they die and go back to the soil. What happened? The corruption of every living thing. And then it starts all over again.

“Into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” - eis ten eleutherian tes doxes ton teknon tou theou. The reason why there is **hope** for the creation in v.20 is that one day it will be set free into the glorious liberty that will come at the revealing of the sons of God. No more will there be birth, life, non-attainment of the creation's full potential, death, doomed to repeat the cycle all over again. When the sons of God are revealed, then the entire creation will experience in fullness all that God had originally planned for it and more!

V. The creation's pains. v.22

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” Romans 8:22 - “We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” NIV - οιδαμεν γαρ οτι πασα η κτισις συστεναζει και συνωδινει αχρι του νυν.

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth” - *oidamen gar hoti pasa he ktisis sustenazei*. The word for **know** is the perfect active indicative of *oida* and it meant to have a full understanding on the subject. Paul and the others were well familiar with the doctrine of a cursed earth, the results of all that and the coming day when all of that would change through Jesus Christ when he returns to earth.

It says that the whole creation groans together, *sustenazo*, which includes everything on the earth along with the people of God. The word for **groans** is the present active indicative of *sustenazo*, which had the idea of an inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow. And can be translated as groaning, or sighing. A sigh expresses a deep distress of the spirit. One can sigh, or groan, over going through suffering, when one does not get the desires of their heart, and over losing someone you love.

There is also the deep groaning of a woman in childbirth, as she is ready to deliver her baby. And there also can be that deep distress of the spirit, sighing, he feels as he is trapped in this body awaiting the day of his redemption. Even Adam and Eve's second child, *Abel*, was an onomatopoeic word named after a sigh of futility. The reality of life outside the garden, now with fallen natures and after having a child, which wasn't all that they thought it would be, brought Adam and Eve to the place of sighing, *Avel*, or, “Oh well”, as we would say in English, when they named the second boy *Abel*.

“And travaileth in pain together until now.” - *kai sunodinei achri tou nun*. Or, “as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time”. The word for **travail**, is the present active indicative of *sunodino*. *Sunodino* is a composite of two words: sun – together, and odino – to travail, or suffer birth pains. Although it used of sudden and violent wounds, as sustained in battle, it usually referred to the pains that a woman experiences in giving birth to a child.

Sunodino refers to the actual pains that the woman giving birth feels increasing in frequency and intensity as the time of birth draws closer. One needs to keep that idea in the background as the Lord talks about the increase in earthquakes, and other natural phenomena, all over the planet as the time of his return draws near. “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the **beginning of sorrows**.” Matthew 24:7,8 We also want to note that the word for **sorrows** here is the word *odin*, the word used for the pain of childbirth. Or, the beginning of labor.

This idea of a seed, development in the womb, pains of childbirth and delivery is used to teach a spiritual truth. “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains (*odin*) of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden, (*krateo* – not subject to death's dominion), of it.” Acts 2:24

In a sense the earth is put in the feminine gender to represent a woman and Hades has been put as the womb of the earth. “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Matthew 12:40 So when the Lord was raised up from Hades, it was like he, the first one of this new species of human beings, was being delivered from the earth's womb as the Firstfruit from the dead. “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” 1 Corinthians 15:20

In Acts 2:24 it says, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains (odin) of death: because it was not possible that he should be **holden**, (**krateo** – not subject to death's dominion), of it.” And in Hebrews 2:14 it says, “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the **power** (**kratos** – refers to the power one exerts over a dominion or kingdom) of death, that is, the devil;”

Death also spoke of the abode of the dead and it was regarded as a dominion, where absolute rule is exercised over those who exist in this place, and the one who rules over this dominion is the devil. This place is also referred to as Hades, Sheol, or Hell. Death could not hold Jesus Christ in its powerful grip because he did not belong there. He was sinless, righteous, and he had been unjustly accused and murdered. It could not hold him in its grip because there was no legal right for it to do so. Just the same as if an innocent man had been sent to prison.

Another thing about Hades, Hell, Sheol was that it was regarded by many writers as a womb! It is an enormous, multi-layered cavern in the bowels of the earth divided by two different compartments, Paradise and Torments, separated by a large chasm, with a third area down at the bottom of this chasm called Tartarus, where all the angels who rebelled against God in the pre-flood era were sent confined and chained in caves of absolute darkness.

Now we have the resurrection of Christ from the dead, that is, the raising up of Christ's soul from the land of the dead ones, or those who had died physically, is put in allegorical fashion to show Christ coming forth from Hades with the context of a woman giving birth. As a new child comes forth from its mother's womb, so did Christ come forth, not from his mother's womb this time, but from the bowels (womb) of the earth.

Christ's soul was released from the prison of Hades and came up from the bowels of the earth to a new “birth”. That is, his soul came up from Hades to receive a resurrection body making him the first one to be raised from the dead, (the Firstfruit), but also the first one born of these sons of God! The first soul to be raised from the dead, and the first one to receive an eternal body, makes him the first of the sons of God, who are his brothers. “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the **firstborn among many brethren**.” Romans 8:29

We have all of creation groaning and in birth pains together right up to this present time waiting in eager anticipation for the sons of God to be revealed. Which places all of creation in the position of an expectant mother waiting for her child to be born. Creation waits for the sons of God to be revealed (“born?”), so that it will be set free from its bondage to death and decay into the glorious freedom God designed for it under the sons of God.

Was this not the picture of ancient Israel waiting expectantly as a mother for her son, the Messiah Jesus, to be born, so she could be set free by his glorious reign? “And she being with child cried, *travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*” Revelation 12:2 “And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” Revelation 12:4

In the end times the earth will be experiencing earthquakes and many other related concepts in both frequency and intensity paralleling the labor pains of a woman right up to the time of the resurrection. “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” Matthew 24:7

Romans 8

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” [Romans 8:22](#)

Christian growth really entails the development of the new man that was created in us at the moment of our faith in Jesus Christ. And it all began with the **holy seed** that was implanted in us. *“Now the parable is this: The **seed** is the word of God.” [Luke 8:11](#) “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every **seed** his own body.” [1 Corinthians 15:38](#) “Being born again, not of corruptible **seed**, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” [1 Peter 1:23](#)*

It is the seed that contains the life of whatever the species is that we are talking about. In the plant world the seed is planted in the ground, whereupon receiving the nourishment of sunlight, soil and water, it will be able to grow up into a mature, healthy plant giving its production as it is supposed to.

In the world of people it is the seed of the man that contains the life of a new human being, and once it is implanted in a mother's womb, where it can receive the nourishment that it needs, it grows and develops to the place of being a full term baby now ready to be delivered. And Paul uses this example to refer to Christ being formed in us. *“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” [Galatians 4:19](#)*

Even though the growth that it is a spiritual concept that is taking place inside of us, Paul said that he was experiencing the pains similar to human childbirth while waiting for Christ to be formed in them. It is after the baby is fully developed in its mother's womb, and then delivered, when we have a new human being in this life. And so he uses this embryonic concept to refer to the forming of Christ in us.

The word for **formed** is the orist passive subjunctive of *morphoo*, which deals with the changing of the inner essence of someone. Christ has his *morphe* and so do we! Christ's *morphe* existed in his human body, while he was physically alive and walking on the earth. And when he died, and his body lie in the tomb, his *morphe* was now in Hades. And when Christ was raised from the dead, so did his *morphe*. And when he received his resurrection body his *morphe* was now present in it. And now that he has ascended into heaven and was glorified his inner *morphe* is there.

So the believer's inner *morphe* is being changed, but into what? Whenever there is a change of something, there is always a goal toward which it is going. Such as tender shoots that springs forth from the ground. They may all look the same, especially from a distance, but each one is going toward its completion/maturity of what it's supposed to be, whether a tomato plant or a redwood tree!

And so it is with believer's in Christ. We have a *morphe*, and it is being changed. But unto what? Unto the *morphe* of Jesus Christ! He is the prototype after which we are all modeled. And this is what spiritual growth is all about. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” [Romans 8:29](#)* Our inner essence is being changed into conformity to the inner essence of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, for which we have been predestined by God!

And how it is being changed is by means of the dynamics of faith, the Word of God, and the filling of the Holy Spirit. These three concepts, coupled with going through various trials in life create a spiritual phenomena inside of us which transforms us in the inner man bringing us into conformity to Christ.

W. The Christian's pains. v.23

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:23 - ου μονον δε αλλα και αυτοι την απαρχην του πνευματος εχοντες και ημεις αυτοι εν εαυτοις στεναζομεν υιοθεσιαν απεκδεχομενοι την απολυτρωσιν του σωματος ημων.

“And not only they, but ourselves also,” - *ou monon de alla kai autoi*. The word **only** is *monos* and refers to something that is by itself, or stands alone. Paul is saying that it is not the creation by itself that is groaning, as it awaits the revealing of the sons of God, but us believers in Christ as well.

Most unbelievers really don't have much of an idea of what awaits them in the future. Some think they will be reincarnated, others think that they will float away somewhere into the universe, while others think that when you're dead that's the end if it all. Only those who have believed on Christ as their Savior experience this inward groaning in this life for the day when they will be set free from this body and receive an eternal, resurrection body.

“Which have the firstfruits of the Spirit,” - *ten aparchen tou pneumatos echontes*. The word for **have** is the present active participle of *echo*, which means to have and to hold as one's own possession, and as a continuing abiding principle of life. The Holy spirit was given to us at the moment of our salvation, he is with us now, he will never leave us – never, and he will be with us and in us for all eternity!

Firstfruits is the accusative singular of *aparchen* and should be rendered the firstfruit. The original idea was one of a proportionate gift of one's natural products, such as, livestock, crops, etc., or one's possessions, as an offering to God, or to a deity in one's culture. If one wanted to give an offering of something to God, then he would take the very first of the crop, or the very first animal that was born, and give it to the Lord. That was the firstfruit.

For example; Christ was the **firstfruit** from the dead, that is, Christ was the very first human being to be raised from the dead with an eternal, resurrection body. Which means that he was the the very first of this “crop”, if you will, of resurrected people. *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”* 1 Corinthians 15:20 *“But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.”* 1 Corinthians 15:23 And, as in the matter of crops, etc., it means that the rest of the harvest, of the same kind, will be following.

But instead of man making a gift to God of the firstfruit of his harvest, God is giving to man, that is, to those who believe on his Son as their Savior, the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is the first of all the wonderful things he has in store for us in eternity, with the resurrection body as the first of them.

The Holy Spirit is also referred to as the earnest, or the deposit, of what is to come. *“Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”* Ephesians 1:14 When a person purchased something from a shop owner, and he was going to go some place else and return later on to pick it up, he would purchase the item, place it in a clay jar, seal it with wax, then the purchaser would place his signet ring on it signifying who owned it. The sealing prevented the contents from going out and pollutants from coming in. This is our sealing and redemption for the day when Christ returns to pick up what he purchased with his blood. *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,”* Ephesians 1:13

“*Even we ourselves groan within ourselves,*” - *kai hemeis autoi en heautois stenaxomen*. As we have seen, *stenazo* meant to groan, to sigh, that is was an inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow and weariness, a deep distress of the spirit. It isn't something that can easily be expressed in words, but more of a feeling, or sense, that one experiences deep down inside.

It could be said that it is a sense of restlessness, an inner sighing or longing, a feeling of sorrow in this life, a sense of being incomplete, of being out of place, that you don't belong here, a dissatisfaction because you're here in one place when you know deep down inside that you belong some place else, a lack of fulfillment, like something isn't right, that it's incomplete and you're waiting for your fulfillment and completion, which hasn't happened yet. It's a sense that regardless of how good it is here, it's not what you want, nor is it where you belong. It's not having a sense of belonging, because you have been given a glimpse, a foretaste, of what's to come and you know that's where you belong. And the groaning comes in because you're not there, nor are you what you were designed to be... yet.

“*Waiting for the adoption,*” - *huiiothesian apekdechomenoi*. The present middle participle of *apekdechomai* meant to await, or eagerly, expect the end of something. It expresses the attitude of someone who believes in and eagerly awaits for something. In the case of the Christian, it refers to the second advent of Christ, when he returns to earth, raises the dead, and gives to his people an eternal, resurrection body. The present active participle denotes that Paul, et al, were looking forward to this event each day of their lives – and so should we!

Adoption, *huiiothesian*, is literally the placing of a son. The word is not found in the Septuagint, but was found in Greek culture from around the second century BC and onward. Adoption was used by Greek families, when there was no heir to hand down the family name and line, business, or tradition, so that the family tradition, name and business could continue on.

When a son was adopted, he was formally presented to the family, and/or clan, his name was written down in their book, and he immediately entered into all rights, privileges and benefits that came with being a son. In his adoption, his placing into the family as a son, there was a formal ceremony, the legal aspect involved and being placed into his new position of responsibility, rights and benefits.

This is the word that is used when describing our adoption into God's family. And we need to look at our adoption from this perspective, and what it meant, rather than the present idea in today's society. With us there is the legal aspect of our adoption, there will be the formal ceremony when all this is finalized, there will be the all the rights, privileges and benefits that come with being God's sons, and there will be our being placed into our future roles and responsibilities in God's kingdom.

And this is where we get into a new body. If we are going to live forever with an eternal being and an eternal family, then we will have to have bodies that will live forever! And we will also have to have an eternal earth and heaven as well, which God will create when he creates a new heaven and new earth. And our future roles and responsibilities for us in God's celestial hierarchy have already been decided and we will be placed into our new positions as kings and priests.

And, as in the case of Greek families, when there was the day of their formal presentation and ceremony that came with being placed as a son into the family, so will be the day of our formal presentation to the Father and that will be when we have received our resurrection bodies! On that day, which we can refer to as the Day of Presentation, we will be presented before God the Father with all the glory he has given us in our new, eternal bodies.

“*The redemption of our body.*” - *ten apolutrosin tou somatos hemon*. We already have the redemption of our souls, which took place at the very moment of our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, and something that we will never lose. **Once saved – always saved!**

So our souls are now ready to face an eternity with God, **but these present bodies aren't!** They still are cursed by sin, they still have an indwelling sin nature, they still have the problem of corruption and death, upon which they go back to the basic elements of the soil. So we are going to need an eternal body, with which are souls can dwell in eternally.

Apolutrosis is the intensified form of *lutrosis* and it meant to release someone on the receipt of ransom. It was used of slaves, prisoners of war and criminals condemned to death. There are three main ideas found in it: **one**, that a person is in bondage, **two**, that a ransom had to be paid, and **three**, that the person was set free.

The doctrine of the believer's redemption is very interesting and needs to be understood as to: how we're in bondage? What is our bondage? Who paid the ransom? How much was it? What will be set free? And when will it happen? Our bodies are in bondage, this was due to Adam's sin, Christ paid the ransom, the price was his life, our full redemption will be our bodies, and it will occur at the return of Christ to earth.

How we came to be in bondage, which is the state of all humanity, goes back to when Adam sinned against God and received a curse on, not only him, but all of Adam's progeny as well. When Adam sinned against God he acquired at that time a body subject to death and decay, which we all still possess today.

As to what is in bondage is our bodies. Even though born again Christians have new natures inside, their bodies are still subject to death and decay. As Paul said, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from [ek – out of] the body of this death?*” Romans 7:24

As to what is to be set free from this bandage to death and decay is our bodies, as Paul writes here, “*the redemption of our body.*” Romans 8:23b There is an intermediate state for all believers between physical death and the resurrection in which the believer will not have a body, but be a disembodied spirit awaiting a body. Some Christians believe that their souls be be living in the Paradise of Sheol awaiting the resurrection of the dead, while others believe that they will be living in the Paradise section of the **third heaven**. Paul said that he was caught up to the third heaven. “*I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the **third heaven.***” 2 Corinthians 12:2 By the way, the word caught up here is *harpazo*, which so many have incorrectly applied the word rapture, which comes from the Latin word rapio. It means to be caught up. If we begin with God's abode as the first heaven, and the angel's abode as the second heaven, then the third heaven would be under them.

Paul was not looking forward to this intermediate state, for it was a period in which he would be without a body. Humans do not have fulfillment as disembodied spirits, because they were created by God to be spirit, soul and body. “*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*” 2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Who is our **Redeemer**? Jesus Christ! *“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,”* Luke 1:68 *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”* Romans 3:23,24 *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:”* Colossians 1:14

How much was the ransom that he had to pay? His life! *“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* Matthew 20:28 *“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* Mark 10:45 *“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”* Titus 2:14 *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”* 1 Peter 1:18,19 *“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”* Hebrews 9:12

Awaiting our redemption. Paul stated in Romans 8:23, *“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”*

God could have given us new bodies at salvation just as easily as he created a new man inside of us. But he chose not to for several reasons. One is our **spiritual growth** consisting of growing in faith, in the Word, in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Another reason is, because of the **angelic conflict**, to see **what we will choose**. We have been given free will, and in life we will be confronted with many choices, so we will be tested to see what we will choose. Will we choose our will over God's will? Will we choose to do our thing, but not the Father's plan? Will we choose for Bible doctrine and the spiritual life, or will we choose for the world and the flesh?

Another reason is so that we can be conformed to the image of Christ. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”* Romans 8:29 It takes the renewing of the mind, which comes under the operation of the spiritual life dynamic, consisting of the teaching of Bible doctrine, operating in the filling of the Holy Spirit, the exercise of faith in the Word and faith in the Father, and trials whereby our faith is tested, that we can become conformed to the image of Christ. *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* Romans 12:2

Another reason is so we will have the opportunity **to glorify the Father**, as the son glorified the Father here on earth. *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”* Matthew 5:16 *“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 15:6

Another reason is so that we may have the time and opportunity to **accumulate rewards** for ourselves that will endure throughout eternity! *“And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”* Matthew 10:42 *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”* Matthew 16:27 *“If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.”* 1 Corinthians 3:14

X. Our redemption is our hope. v.24

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” Romans 8:24 τη γαρ ελπιδι εσωθημεν ελπις δε βλεπομενη ουκ εστιν ελπις ο γαρ βλεπει τις τι και ελπίζει.

“For we are saved by hope:” - *te gar elpidi esothemen*. Now when we get into this matter of **hope**, we will see that the hope that the entire OT and NT were talking about was not some disembodied state, but the resurrection of the dead and the new bodies that God has promised us all. The word **hope**, *elpis*, speaks of having the confident expectation that something good awaits us in the future.

Actually, there are two kinds of hope. **Subjective hope** is having the inner confidence of good things awaiting us in the future, not because we are optimistic in our outlook, but based entirely upon what God has promised he would do. And then there is **objective hope**, where, based upon what God is going to do, good things will be awaiting us in the future, regardless of what we may think, or feel, at any given moment.

Now Paul tells us what our **hope** is. It is the resurrection and our receiving eternal bodies! We see such things as: the glory that is to be revealed in us, waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our body, the revealing of the sons of God, all creation waiting for this event. This is our hope. Not that we will live forever in these bodies, nor that we will live in some disembodied state, but that we will have an eternal, glorified body like Christ's!

“But hope that is seen is not hope:” - *elpis de blepomene ouk estin elpis*. By understanding what hope is all about, we will be more secure in what is presently unseeable and untouchable and be able to strengthen our faith. A common expression, which is totally inaccurate is, “I'll believe it, when I see it”! Or, “seeing is believing.”. Yet seeing is not believing and believing is not seeing.

There are three modes of perceiving reality. **Rationalism** – where we reason things out with our minds. **Empiricism** – where we perceive reality by one or more of the five sense, of which is seeing with the eyes. And **pisticism** – where we perceive reality by faith alone. The concept of **hope belongs to the world of faith**.

Hope is something you have, but not in your possession! It is something you're going to get, but do not have it yet! Hope **always** deals with the **future**, never the **present!** Hope **always** deals with the **unseen**, never the **seen!** Hope speaks of something that is **real**, but not **realized!** Hope refers to the **unrealized**, but not the **unreal!** And hope **always** deals with that which is **good**, never that which is **bad**. Despair deals with that which is bad happening to you in the future.

Subjective hope is where believers experience an inner positive mental attitude that something good is going to happen to them in the future. But it is based upon the knowledge that God is going to do something for them in the future! Which is **objective hope**. Now we are able to have this inner confidence of good awaiting us in the future, subjective hope, only by the exercise of faith in what God has promised to do for us! And the receiving of the new body is just but one of his promises to us.

Now God is the source of **hope**, and this hope comes to us through the filling of the Holy Spirit, as we exercise faith in his Word! “*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*” Romans 15:13 NIV

Y. Waiting for our redemption. v.25

“But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Romans 8:25 - ει δε ο ου βλεπομεν ελπίζομεν δι υπομονης απεκδεχομεθα. “But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.” NIV

*“But if we hope for that we see not,” - ei de ho ou blepomen elpizomen. Both verbs **hoping** and **not seeing** are in the present active indicative, which denote actions that are currently going on in the believer's soul. Combined with the first class condition of *if, if it's true and it is*, we then have, “But if we are hoping, and it's true we are, for what we are not seeing”.*

So many believers today are hoping for the wrong things: to get married, or to have children, to make money, get rich, buy things, go places, have fun, acquire toys, gratify their lusts, etc., etc.. All things they see around them in life, or on TV. When they should be hoping for the things they cannot see! Things such as: the return of Christ, the resurrection from the dead, their new bodies, etc..

As Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1,2, *“If ye then be risen with Christ, **seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**”* Or as I put it in an expanded translation, *“Therefore, since you have been raised from the dead in union with the Messiah, **keep on seeking the things above, where the Messiah presently exists at the right hand of God. Keep on directing the entire intellectual activity of your soul, (bound to the human body), toward the things above, not toward the things upon the earth.**”* Colossians 3:1,2

*“Then do we with patience wait for it.” - di'hupomones apekdechometha. The present middle indicative of *apekdechomai* meant to expectantly wait for the end of something, to be waiting for something to be over, or fulfilled, or completed. But combined with *hupomones*, which meant to be enduring a bad situation at the same time, it meant to be enduring a bad situation while we are waiting the end of something, which is going to be replaced by something better.*

Hupomones did mean that one was in a bad situation and there was no other recourse than to just endure it. It won't go away, you can't avoid it, so all you can do is endure it. But it also had the idea that the way that God wants us to endure it, (and them), is not by “gritting our teeth”, but by utilizing the spiritual grace provision he has provided for us, which consists of: being filled with the Holy Spirit, exercising our faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word, prayer, etc..

We tend to forget that this world is not our home. We live in a world controlled by the devil, filled with demons, people with old sin natures, having bodies of corruption, as well as old sin natures ourselves also, and living in a world where sin death and corruption rules! This obviously creates all sorts of problems for us resulting in our souls being under constant pressure. Which is why the concept of endurance is what we will need to be living by during our walk as pilgrims in this world.

The Christian's attitude is to be one of expectation of the end or consummation of God's plan. Where at Christ's return and the resurrection we will receive our public sonship and enter into immortality with our new bodies. *Apekdechomai* didn't look forward to the completion of just one aspect of God's plan, such as, second advent, the rapture, or Armageddon, etc., but to **the end of it all!** All that plus the new heavens, new earth, the new Jerusalem. **Our attitude of expectation is to be looking forward to the eternal state!** *“But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.”* 2 Peter 3:13

Z. The ministry of the Holy Spirit on our behalf. v.26

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26 - *ωσαυτως δε και το πνευμα συναντιλαμβανεται ταις ασθενειαις ημων το γαρ τι προσευξομεθα καθο δει ουκ οιδαμεν αλλ αυτο το πνευμα υπερεντυγχανει υπερ ημων στεναγμοις αλαλητοις.*

“Likewise” - *hosautos de kai*. *Hosautos* is translated as: in the same way, likewise, similarly and also. It tells us that Paul is going to add to what he has been saying about our trials and tribulations that we go through in this life, as we await the Lord's return to earth.

He's been saying that we are to face our trials and tribulations with hope, the hope of our future glory with Christ, which comforts, strengthens and enables us to endure what we're we're going through. But now he's bringing in the idea that we are not just left with hope and faith to face our trials, but also the Holy Spirit, who has been given us to comfort and strengthen us, helps us and assists us in our prayers.

Likewise connects this verse back to verse 16 where Paul is talking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit to us. *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”* Romans 8:16 He then digresses away from the subject in verses 18-25, where he goes into the area of talking about the sufferings we and the creation go through in this life and how important hope is in this.

Now in v.26 he goes back to the role of the Holy Spirit. He shows that we are not left with just our faith, which gives us hope and assurance, but we have the help of the Holy Spirit, who helps us in our weaknesses and prays for us, as well as, giving us the assurance of our salvation, leading us in our daily lives, helping us in our decisions, motivating us, enlightening our minds, giving us the desire to do the Father's will, as well as actually doing it, and so many other things.

“The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:” - *to pneuma sunantilambanetai tais astheneiais hemon*. *To pneuma, the Spirit* with the definite article, of course, refers to **the Holy Spirit**. The word *astheneia* meant to be without strength, and can be rendered: infirmity, feebleness, weakness, etc.. Basically it meant the inability to produce in any given area.

Infirmities, as the KJV has it, primarily means weaknesses. But they are not necessarily sinful in and of themselves. There is a difference between personal weaknesses and sins. Our weaknesses may lead us to sin, but they are not necessarily sinful themselves. There are many things that contribute to us being weak in various areas of our lives, but all of them are due to the original sin of Adam and Eve. The genetics of our parents, the environment we were raised in, the OSN nature trait of our father, personal experiences in life – all of these contribute to our many weaknesses. These affect us in our relationship to God, to others, and to our living our own unique spiritual life God has given us.

Antilambanomai meant to help, to take up a matter, to enter into an alliance with someone, to come to the aid of someone. But our word here has another preposition, sum, prefixed to it making it *sunantilambanomai* showing that a person is not doing something **for** someone, but **with** someone! **This tells us that the Holy Spirit not only comes to the aid of believers, but with the believer, as he or she goes through whatever it is they are going through, because he is in union with them!** This tells us that the Holy Spirit comes to our aid in the midst of our weaknesses, and especially in the midst of our weaknesses, to help us be able to go on and perform God's will for our lives, even in our prayer life before the Father!

Romans 8

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26 - ωσαυτως δε και το πνευμα συναντιλαμβανεται ταις ασθενειαις ημων το γαρ τι προσευξομεθα καθο δει ουκ οιδαμεν αλλ αυτο το πνευμα υπερεντυγχανει υπερ ημων στεναγμοις αλαλητοις.

“For we know not what we should pray for as we ought:” - *to gar ti proseucometha katho dei ouk oidamen.* *“We do not know what we ought to pray for;”* NIV How this sums us up so accurately. We pray, or we know we should be praying, but as so often the case is, we don't know **what** to pray for! The word **know** here is *oida* and it meant to have a complete and full understanding on something and the idea can be translated as, **to know for sure**.

This is one of our many areas of weaknesses, that is, to know **what** to pray for, or to be able to form the specific thought into words in our prayer request to God. Even though we have been forgiven, saved, redeemed, regenerated and have the Holy Spirit indwelling us, and even though we may think we know everything, we still don't know, for sure, what to pray for.

This passage isn't teaching us that we don't know **how** to pray, we know how to pray, at least those who are under sound teaching do, but **what** we're to be praying for! The how to pray is summed up in our prayers are to be directed solely to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ and in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Confession of known sins may be necessary accompanied with thanksgivings to God.

The word **ought** is *dei* and it referred to compulsion of any kind, one's duty, something one had to do. There is prayer in general and then there is prayer that is specific. When we get into the areas of praying a specific prayer, which we need to do in certain things, then we run into the problem of coming up with the right words. Oftentimes, we don't even have the general idea in our mind, let alone know how to put it into words. And this is where the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit comes in on our behalf. There is a prayer that we need to be praying, something we ought to be praying for, but we don't know what words to use.

“But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us” - *all'auto to pneuma huperentuchanei huper hemon.* The conjunction, *alla*, introduces a contrast between this thought and the last one. In the last one it says that **we** don't know **what** to pray for, but here it says that **the Spirit** of God **knows!** Intercession and intercede are from a Latin background and meant to act or interpose in behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble.

Entunchano meant to meet with a person for the purpose of petitioning them and was a technical term for approaching a king with one's petition. But with the preposition *huper* prefixed to the word, it meant to approach the king with a petition on behalf of someone else!

Now it says that the Spirit **intercedes for us**, or on our behalf and the word used for **for** is *huper*. And there are four ideas found in *huper*: protection, causal, representation and substitution, with the three proceeding from the original idea of protection. First came the idea of protecting of someone, then causal, representation and substitution. All four of these ideas, although separate in activity, are connected together, but there is another idea found in *huper* and that is there is a close relationship that exists between the two parties, or that there is **love on the part of the one toward the other**.

There is another idea involved in *huper* and that is there is always a **purpose** involved for the person to be protected, therefore **the protection of that person is paramount**. That is, the one who is doing the protecting has a purpose for the one he is protecting. Therefore, because the Holy Spirit is interceding **for us**, it's because he loves us and is protecting us!

Another idea found in *huper* is that there is always a **person** involved. It never is used for inanimate objects, business matters, or principles. It always has a very personal dynamic going on between two people. Which, in our case, is the relationship that exists between us and God.

So what we have so far is that when *huper* is brought into the equation we have an entirely different world opened up before us. *Huper* **always has an activity in view, substitution, representation, protection, etc.**, but it goes way beyond that! It tells us that **two people are involved**, that what is being done is a **very personal matter between these two people**, that **one is doing an action for the other person; the decision to perform the act could be spontaneous, or it could have been planned out in advance**, that **love and/or a close relationship exists between the two people**, that because of that love or close relationship, **the one party is caused to perform an action for the other party**; it also tells us that the party performing the action also has a **purpose for the person** he is doing the action for, that the action he is performing is **to protect the other person**, and that the action being performed **can be to protect the other person, represent the other person, or substitute himself for the other person. And in our case, because we do not know what we are to be praying for, and the Holy Spirit does, he petitions God on our behalf!**

Huper also has the idea of **causal** in it, where one person's actions are being caused for another person's sake. Where an individual is caused to do something on behalf of someone else, and we end up saying that he did something **because** of so and so. You could ask the individual why he was doing an action and he would say, "I'm doing it **because** of: my wife, my family, my country, etc.."

Huper always has a personal object in view, that is, a real live person; and it also has the idea of a **love** for that person, a **purpose** for that person, or a **relationship** with that person. Having said that, now the other person embarks on a certain course of action that will benefit that person, or persons. He is caused to do something that will benefit that person.

When the **causal** side of *huper* is being looked at, we would say a certain action is being done because of another person, and sometimes we would translate the idea as, "*for the sake of*". Under the **causal** idea we have these things in view: for another person's **benefit**, for his **sake**, for his **advantage**, for his **well being**, for his **safety**, for his **protection**, for his **future**, that there is a **purpose** for the person. The act always denotes that there is an underlying purpose for that person for whom an action is being done.

In this there is always an act that is being performed, a specific individual or individuals in mind, a love and/or relationship with the individual and a purpose for the individual. The causal sense of *huper* is not centered around a principle, but around a person.

Another aspect of *huper* is **substitution** where one person is substituted for another. This is where **one does not merely act in another's place, but takes his place!** An attorney will *act in your place* as your representative, but he will *not take your place*, that is, he will not do your punishment. When the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, he is actually taking our place petitioning the Father with the prayer requests that we should be praying, but are not praying because we don't know what we should be praying for.

“With groanings which cannot be uttered.” - stenagmois alaletois. “With groanings that words cannot express” NIV. “With unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for words.” Amplified. “With unutterable groanings” Wuest. Stenagmois in believers is the inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow, or deep distress of spirit.

Deep at work in the souls of each one of us are thoughts, feelings, desires, impulses, scars on the soul that trouble and perplex us. We don't understand what they are, where they have come from, or what to do about them, but they trouble us nevertheless. And when we go to pray we don't know **what** to pray about them. All we know is that we're bothered by them.

That's why we're told in James 5:13 that when we are suffering, for whatever the reason, then God wants us to, in fact we're commanded to, keep on praying. *“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”* But even then, we still don't know **what** to pray for! That's where the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf before the Father. And when he does it is with groanings or sighings that words cannot express.

The Holy Spirit is very sensitive and gentle, which would explain the groanings or sighings in his intercession for us to the Father. We see this in this passage and in others, such as, in Ephesians 4:30-32 where we are told to **stop grieving** the Spirit due to our insistence on hanging on to our bitterness and anger and not letting go of them, and our refusal to not be kind to one another, forgiving and tenderhearted. *“And **grieve not** the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”* And in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we're told to stop **quenching** the Spirit. *“**Quench not** the Spirit.”*

We pray for things we think we want, but the Spirit knows that they are nothing but lusts. So he prays for us concerning the deepest desires of our hearts. Sometimes we don't know what we want at all, but he does and intercedes along those lines. We pray for things because we saw them on TV, but he knows that and knows that they are not good for us, so his petitions to the Father are for those things that are really good for us.

Having this knowledge should certainly help us in our attitudes, if we are humble about the whole matter, in that we will not get all worked up and angry when we don't get what we want, or if something we really wanted is taken away from us! We have to defer to the Father and the Spirit in these matters because they have our best interests at heart.

There are some things we are instructed from the Word to be praying for and we should be praying for them. There are some things that we know what to pray for and we should be praying for them. But most of the time we don't know **what** to pray for and it is these things that the Spirit prays for. The Holy Spirit not only prays for those things, but he also helps us form our prayers to God.

But we need to go back to priorities. **The number one priority for all believers in Christ is his mandate that he made back in eternity past that we will be conformed to the image of Christ!** This takes precedence over all other things and it is around this concept that the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit takes place! The Holy Spirit has not been given to us for us to use to get what we want out of life, but to take the all things of life, and the things that we go through, our personal hurts, etc., and intercede on our behalf so that we will be conformed to the image of Christ!

AA. Searching our hearts. v.27

“And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:27 - ο δε ερευνων τας καρδιας οιδεν τι το φρονημα του πνευματος οτι κατα θεον εντυγχανει υπερ αγιων.

*“And he that searcheth the hearts” - ho de ereunon tas kardias. “But the who searches the hearts.” The word for **search** is the present active participle of *ereunao*, which was used in the following applications: animals – to sniff out with the nose; men – to search as for possessions; to investigate a matter, such as robbery; to find out by questioning; religious – the revealing of God or a spiritual matter by searching his Word; to search out by testing, “*And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*” Deuteronomy 8:2*

The Scriptures indicate that God searches the hearts of men by **testing**, where he puts the individual through a trial to find out what is really in their hearts; and through the **indwelling Holy spirit**, who resides in Christians, thereby giving him access to our hearts and motives. “*But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*” 1 Corinthians 2:10,11

But there are other ways he does this in addition to his omniscience, such as, “*And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which **searcheth the reins and hearts**: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*” Revelation 2:23 “*The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, **searching all the inward parts of the belly.***” Proverbs 20:27 “*And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD **searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts**: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*” 1 Chronicles 28:9 “*To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. O LORD, thou hast **searched me, and known me**. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou **understandest my thought afar off.***” Psalms 139:1,2

“Knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,” - oiden ti to phronema tou pneumatos. The word for **know** is the perfect active indicative of *oida*, which shows that the Father knows full well what the mind or thinking of the Holy Spirit is. The word for **mind** is *phronema* it tells us that the entire concept of the Spirit's insight and ability is completely in tune with our souls and he knows full well what's in us. This is why the Spirit does not need to even speak the words because the Spirit knows everything in us and about us and the Father knows the same things as well.

“Because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” - hoti kata theon entunchanei huper hagion. The *will of God* is not in the original, but is properly added because of *kata theon*, according to God, according to the standard of God's nature and his will.

As mentioned before, the number one priority for all believers in Christ, the one thing that he has mandated for all believers in Christ, is for us not to get money, possessions, success, glory and all the other stuff we want, but to be **conformed to the image of Christ!** “*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*” Romans 8:29

BB. To our good. v.28

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Romans 8:28 - οίδαμεν δε οτι τοις αγαπωσιν τον θεον παντα συνεργει εις αγαθον τοις κατα προθεσιν κλητοις ουσιν.

*“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,” - oidamen de hoti tois agaposin to theon panta sunergei eis agathon. We **know** is the perfect active indicative of *oida*, which was to have a complete understanding on the subject. In the perfect tense it looks at the development of this knowledge over a period of time unto the place where one absolutely knew it for sure and was a settled state that lived with them from that time on. They **knew** that God caused all things to work together in their lives unto good.*

*“To them that love God,” - tois agaposin to theon, to the ones loving the God. **Loving** is the present active participle of *agapao*, which obviously looks at a way of life for these people. Now we know that this applies only to believers in Jesus Christ, due to the reference to the ones being chosen by God, but there is also a qualifier of the ones loving God!*

The word for **love** in the NT has no reference to an emotional love, or any other human love for that matter. Christian love cannot be produced by the flesh, whether the flesh of unsaved people, or the flesh of born again people! It is a spiritual love, a non-emotional love, a volitional love, (hence why it is commanded so often), and is produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

It is a spiritual mental attitude toward all people and is not dependent upon human reciprocation. And when it is there toward God, it will be manifested in obedience to the Father and the Son. In fact, **obedience is the manifestation of love** according to the Lord. *“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:10*

If we love God, then we will see this brought out in a love for the Word of God. We will not only love it, but be seeking to apply it to our lives! How can we say we love **God**, who is the God of truth, and not love his Word? How can we say we love the **Son**, who is incarnate truth, and not love his Word? And if we say we love the **Holy Spirit**, who is the Spirit of truth, and not love his Word? So the ones loving God are those believers in Christ who love his Word. *“But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.” 1 John 2:5*

The question is, do all believers in Christ love God? We know that God loves all these believers, but do they love him? When some people look at this verse they think that it applies to all believers, that is, God works out all things for the good for all believers. If that was the case, then why didn't God leave the passage with just the elect? And we know that all things work together for good to them ... who are the called according to his purpose? Why did he modify it with another qualifier of *“To them that love God,”*? **Because God works things out for good for those who are positive to Bible Doctrine!**

How can one say he loves God and is rebelling against his Word? Or, has made himself an enemy of God by his continual involvement in the world system? Or treats his fellow Christian with contempt and hostility? Or, closes up the bowels of his heart to the suffering of other believers? *“But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” 1 John 3:17,18*

“All things work together for good” - *panta sunergei eis agathon*. The word for **work together** is the present active indicative, third person singular of *sunergeo*. The third person singular is he, she, or it. **Things** is *panta*, the plural of *pas*, which tells us that **things** cannot be the subject controlling the idea of working together. So what we have is a singular subject, which is not **things**, that is making or causing the all things to work together for good. And that subject is God the Father.

So what we have is **not all things are working together for good**, which is impossible for things are inanimate objects which have no consciousness or volition, but that **it is God who is causing or making all things to work together for good**. And that activity is directed at those who love God, those who have been called according to his purpose!

Things in the plural refers to anything and everything in life; the good, the bad, the pleasant, the unpleasant, blessing or discipline, good times and bad, testing or not, even the garbage we got into if went into reversionism, God will take that and all the other all things in life and make them work out for our good! But once again, this applies to those who love God, those who have been called according to his purpose!

For good is *eis agathon*. Literally, *unto good*. The preposition *eis* gives us action, direction, motion, going from one thing unto another, a goal and actual penetration into the goal. The goal here is good. No matter what we have gotten ourselves into, whether good or bad, God will take it and make work together for our good!

The word *agathos* referred to that which is not only intrinsically good, for God can no other than that which is good, but also beneficial in its effect! That is, whatever God does will benefit us! Or as we would say, it will be good for us!

“To them who are the called according to his purpose.” - *tois kata prothesin kletois*. To those who have been called according to his purpose, or, to the called out ones. The **called** is *kletois*, which comes from *kaleo* – to call or summon someone. *Kaleo* is to call someone; *klesis* is the calling; *kletois* are the ones called by God; and *ekklesia*, or the Church, is the assembling together of those who are called.

God called us unto fellowship with his Son. “*God is faithful, by whom ye were **called** unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*” 1 Corinthians 1:9 God called us unto a state of grace with his Son. “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that **called** you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.*” Galatians 1:6 We are called unto grace by God, who, in his grace, set Paul apart from birth unto this grace. “*But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and **called** me by his grace,*” Galatians 1:15

Paul said that God had set him apart and called him, even from his mother's womb, to be saved and preach the Gospel showing that God was working in his life before he could act, choose, or even think! “*To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.*” 1 Corinthians 1:16

God told Jeremiah that he had chosen and ordained him as a prophet before he was even born! “*Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*” Jeremiah 1:4,5 **God causes all things, whether good or bad, to work together for the good to those whom God has called according to his purpose.**

The word for **separated** in Galatians 1:16, “*who separated me from my mother's womb*”, is *aphorizo*. It meant to determine a limit, mark off by bounds, or to set apart from the rest. It was used of **separating the sheep from the goats**, “*And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*” Matthew 25:32 Of separating **Barnabas and Paul from the rest of the men**, “*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*” Acts 13:2 And us **separating from the unsaved**, “*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*” 2 Corinthians 6:17

Galatians 1:16 shows that God separated Paul from the rest of the others at birth; from the rest of his friends, from the rest of his countrymen, from the rest of those who dwell upon the earth. At birth Paul was marked out and set apart from the others as one whom God had chosen prior to the earth's creation. He was one of the elect; one of those that God had predestined to be conformed to Christ's image.

His election had taken place prior to his birth, while his calling took place when he was born. His, and ours, being set apart was the first phase and guarantee that the Holy Spirit was working with him bringing him out of the world system unto the place of faith in Christ and his justification.

And we will note again that Paul was called according to the purpose of God, not according to his own will, not according to his faith, not according to his good works, not according to his own righteousness, or because he chose Christ. He was called according to **God's purpose!** The preposition kata is used to denote that the action that took place was based upon the decision or purpose of God.

Our election is according to God's purpose, as shown with Jacob and Esau. “*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that **the purpose of God** according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*” Romans 9:11 We were saved according to God's purpose. “*In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestinated according to the purpose of him** who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*” Ephesians 1:11 We were elected to be in Christ. “*Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but **according to his own purpose and grace**, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*” 2 Timothy 1:9

“*According to his purpose*” - *tois kata prothesin*. *Kata prothesin* tells us that we were **called** according to his **purpose**. *Prothesin* was a function of the will; one plans, one has a purpose, one is resolved, one is determined to do something. It looked at a **desire**, then the action of the **will** where one makes a **decision**, then there is a **commitment** towards that end, that is, where one is **resolved** to bring about what he has **decided** to do. **So we see that we were called according to his purpose!**

God has given man free will, that is, man has the freedom, apart from any coercion on his part, to do what they choose to do. They can make a decision, then be committed toward that goal of having come to pass what they have decided to do. Now just because they have chosen to do something doesn't necessarily mean that they will be able to see it come to pass! The reason why is because they lack the wherewithall to bring it to pass.

But we tend to ignore the fact that God has the right to choose as well! God has a will and he has the right to choose. But he also has the power to make come to pass what he has chosen to do. Man has free will, the angels have been given free will and God has free will. But there is one will that is above all others and that is God's! This is what sovereign will is all about. But God doesn't exercise his will capriciously. He exercises it according to the perfection of his righteous nature.

Election is based upon God's decision, God's determination, God's purpose, not on man's decisions. Arminiasts might concede to some form of election, (although many of them don't), saying in effect that God elected someone because they chose to believe on Christ. What this does is make his election based upon what someone else has done, rather on his own sovereign choice. This makes election dependent on the decision of the individual.

But it is very clear that we have been called according to his purpose. *“To them who are the called according to his purpose.”* Romans 8:28b And our calling is but one aspect of the entire process that was set in motion when he elected us according to his purpose. *“Knowing, brethren beloved, your **election of God**.”* 1 Thessalonians 1:4 *“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because **God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation** through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”* 2 Thessalonians 2:13 Purpose > Election > Foreknowledge > Predestination > Setting Apart > Calling > Justifying > Glorifying.

Paul is very clear in this matter, when he wrote that our election is not based upon our **desire** or will, or on our **effort** or trying, but solely upon God's grace and mercy. *“So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”* Romans 9:16 *“It does not, therefore, depend on human **desire or effort**, but on God's mercy.”* NIV

T. Total Depravity

Total depravity doesn't mean that every person is a raging homicidal maniac, but that fallen man in his natural state is totally unable and unwilling to do anything about his spiritual condition before God. It means that every aspect of our humanity has been infected, corrupted and affected by sin: the body, the intellect, the emotions and the will.

U. Unconditional Election

The unconditional election of people by God is found all throughout the Bible, but it is so hard for us to accept it for it would mean not the end of our faith, **but the end of our works, our efforts and our pride**. God elects, he chooses people to be saved freely and sovereignly according to his own purpose and grace apart from any works, activity or merits of the ones he has chosen.

L. Limited Atonement

When we look at the doctrine of limited atonement some misconstrue it to say that what is meant by it is that a non-elect person couldn't get saved even if he wanted to! But that is not what it means at all.

Others will misconstrue it to mean that Christ died only for the sins of the elect, that is, his atoning death on the cross paid the penalty only for the elect's sins, but not the sins of the world! And that is not what it means either.

It means that the redeeming work of Christ on the cross had as its end and goal the saving of those whom God had chosen, that Christ died specifically for those whom the Father had chosen and given to him. And in so doing he paid the penalty for the sins of everyone else.

I. Irresistible Grace

Says that **the work of the Holy Spirit never fails in bringing the elect to saving faith in Jesus Christ; it never fails to reach its object of saving those whom God has chosen!** It says that one can resist the grace of God, and most if not all do to some degree or other, but they will not be successful. **In the end God's grace will override our resistance and he will prevail.**

Irresistible Grace means that **the work of the Holy Spirit never fails in bringing the elect to saving faith in Jesus Christ;** it never fails to reach its object, just as the resurrecting act of Jesus Christ on the last day will not fail to raise from the dead every single person given to him by the Father. *“And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”* John 6:39 It means that **the wooing work of the Holy Spirit in reference to the elect destroys all the opposition they may have to believing in Christ resulting in them fully trusting Christ as their Savior.**

A look at the dynamic behind this is the drawing of men to Christ. *“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all men unto me.”* John 12:32 *καγω εαν υψωθω εκ της γης παντας **ελκυσω** προς εμαυτον* The **all, pas**, refers back to the group Christ was talking about in John 6:37, *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* **It is this group of people that are being drawn to Christ!**

Now the word for **draw** is *helkuo* and it referred to two things back in those days; the drawing of fish in a net to the fisherman, or the drawing power of a magnet. Even though **all the fish want to get away**, and even though **some of them do get away** from the net, **there will always be those who do not escape** and are taken by the fisherman.

When we look at the drawing power of a **magnet** we think what a mystery! How does it do that? Yet it does! Here is this magnet having some inexplicable power that draws the iron filings to it. Yet it does not draw wood to it, or water, or fire and so many other things on earth. It draws only certain things to it. Is this not a picture of the elect? **Why is it that only the elect are drawn to Christ and the others aren't?** Some even go in the opposite direction. Can we not see that Christ is like a magnet, the Holy Spirit is the drawing power drawing the elect to Christ like iron filings inexplicably being drawn to Him?

Can we not see this? Or are we too proud to see it? The iron filings did not choose to come to the magnet any more than the fish choose to come to the fisherman. In both cases **they were drawn to the source**. Yes, the elect may resist the grace of God in coming to Christ, but the power and love of the Holy Spirit overcomes all resistance they may have and they continue to be drawn to the Son where he saves them. For some, it's no, no, no all their lives, then one day it's a wonderful yes.

P. Preservation of the Saints

The preservation of the saints means that the believer in Christ will be kept in faith, in the grace of God, in the standing of righteousness, that is, they will be kept saved by the unconquerable power of God till they stand before in him in glory in their resurrection bodies. **It means that Christ will not lose one of them!** The preservation of the saints means that **God** is the one who is able to keep us from falling and present us without fault and with great joy before him. *“Now unto **him** that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,”* Jude

Romans 8

CCC. Predestined to be like Christ. v.29

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” - Romans 8:29 - οτι ους προεγνω και προωρισεν συμμορφους της εικονος του υιου αυτου εις το ειναι αυτον πρωτοτοκον εν πολλοις αδελφοις.

*“For whom he did foreknow,” - hoti hous proegno. To **foreknow** is the aorist active indicative of *proginosko*, which meant to know something beforehand, to foreknow, to have an advance knowledge of something that is going to occur in the future. Now the question is, does someone, in this case God, know what is going to happen in the future because one can see the future? Or does one know what is going to happen in the future **because of what he has determined by his will to occur in the future?***

Peter wrote that Christ was known before the creation of the world. *“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,” 1 Peter 1:20* The word **foreordained** is *proginosko* and meant to be foreknown. This does not mean that the Father knew beforehand that a man named Jesus was going to be born, but that everything about the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ was foreknown because the Father had chosen him.

Again, with God, God's knowledge of future people and events centering around his will is not because of his ability to look into the future and **see** what is going to happen, but because of his predetermined will and plan where he has determined in the past that certain things are going to occur in the future!

2 Peter 3:17, *“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.”*, tells us that believers have the foreknowledge of what is going to occur in the future, because we have learned it beforehand! And we knew it beforehand because the Apostles told us about it and the Apostles knew about it because God revealed it to them! And God's knowledge concerning certain events in the future he knew about because he had determined for them to happen.

Just like the prophets of old who told Israel what was going to occur in the future. The foreknowledge of future events for the Israelites did not come about because they were able to look into the future, but was because the prophets told them what was going to happen in the future! And the foreknowledge the prophet's had concerning the future was not because they were able to look into the future and see what was going to happen, but was because **God** told them what he was going to do in the future!

God's **foreknowledge** is directly linked to the determination of his will. *“Him, being delivered by the **determinate counsel and foreknowledge** of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” Acts 2:23 “This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” NIV*

God's **foreknowledge** of Christ, and what was going to happen to him on the cross, was due directly to the predetermined plan and will of God. *“For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel **determined before to be done.**” Acts 4:28* God's foreknowledge of the crucifixion of Christ was not because he was able to see into the future and see that a man named Jesus Christ was going to be crucified, but because **he had predetermined that in eternity past!**

Now when we come down to believers in Christ, whom God calls the elect, those chosen by God, and we see the word **foreknowledge** being used, is his foreknowledge of them due to him being able to see into the future and choosing them? Or is it due to him determining that beforehand? *“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”* 1 Peter 1:2

Concerning understanding the foreknowledge of God there are two concepts that need to be considered. Does God's foreknowledge mean that he knew what was going to happen beforehand? Or does foreknowledge mean that God **knew** what he was going to do beforehand? Acts 2:23 and Acts 4:28 help us in our understanding of what God's foreknowledge is about.

We see in Romans 8:29, *“For whom he did **foreknow**, he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*, that God's **predetermination** is linked to God's **foreknowledge**. And in Acts 2:23, *“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”*, we see that his **foreknowledge** is linked to his determinate counsel or eternal **purpose**. As it is again in Acts 4:28, *“For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy **counsel determined before** to be done.”*

From God's eternal purpose we have the formation of his plan determined by his will and purpose. God's foreknowledge is based upon his plan and will. From that we have God determining certain things beforehand, or predestination. And then we have election, calling, justification and glorification.

The man, Christ Jesus, was **elected** by God. *“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, **elect**, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.”* 1 Peter 2:6 *“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine **elect**, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”* Isaiah 42:1 *“And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the **chosen** of God.”* Luke 23:35

Christ was **foreknown** before the earth – before the universe was created. *“And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the **chosen** of God.”* 1 Peter 1:20

His **destiny** on earth was predestined, **determined beforehand**, by the Father. *“For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together; For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy **counsel determined before** to be done.”* Acts 4:27,28

The election, foreknowledge and predestination of God concerning the man, Christ Jesus, does not speak of God looking down the annals of time and foreseeing that a man would be born, who would be called Jesus Christ, a man who would keep his covenants perfectly, a man who would do everything that God wanted him to do, and that this man would allow himself to be crucified for our sins. No, the election, foreknowledge and predestination by the Father concerning Jesus Christ was according to his plan **determined by his eternal purpose**. The Father predetermined that Jesus Christ would be born at a certain point in time, that he would be uniquely qualified to carry out every aspect of his plan, that he would be crucified for our sins, that he would be raised from the dead, that he would ascend into heaven and that one day he will reign on the earth with a people given to him by the Father. This is the foreknowledge of God.

*“He also did predestinate” - kai proorisen. **Predestined** here is the orist active indicative of *proorizo*. *Orizo* is to mark out a boundary, to set a limit, to determine something. *Proorizo* is to do it beforehand, or to determine to do something beforehand. God's **foreknowledge** is God's knowledge of what was going to occur in the future based on what he had decided to do beforehand. While **predestination** looks at the aspect of what God had decided and **determined** to do beforehand.*

Proorizo is found in:

*“For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel **determined before** to be done.” Acts 4:28, where God had determined beforehand that his Son would be crucified at the hands of the Jews and Romans. This was an exclusive function of his will.*

*“For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:29, where we, the elect, and the ones to come, would be conformed to the image of his Son. This is our predetermined destiny.*

*“Moreover whom he did **predestinate**, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Romans 8:30*

*“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God **ordained before** the world unto our glory.” 1 Corinthians 2:7, looks at the secret wisdom of God that had existed from eternity past, but was predetermined to be revealed in Paul's day, namely Christ crucified and risen and with that all the wonderful things God had prepared for the elect. *“Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:8,9**

*“Having **predestinated** us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,” Ephesians 1:5, is where God determined beforehand that the individuals he had chosen would be adopted as sons.*

*“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being **predestinated** according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Ephesians 1:11, tells us that we were predestined according to the purpose of God, who works all things together to accomplish his will.*

The idea of predestination has been misunderstood and rejected by many Christians. They surmise, somehow, that it isn't fair. That even though they have the right to choose, it isn't fair that God does. But as long as God is fair to everyone, does he not have the right to be merciful to those he chooses? *“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” Romans 9:15* Being fair means that he gives back to people according as their acts deserve. And if he is merciful to some, but fair to all, then where is the unfairness?

What is unfair about God giving a people to his Son that he chose? What is unfair about Christ choosing who will be his bride? Does not a man have the right to choose whom he will be in covenant with? Why couldn't God not only predestine his Son to be his eternal High Priest, but also those He wants to serve him as priests? What is wrong with Christ paying the penalty for the sins of those he had chosen, as long as he paid the penalty for the rest in the process? Predestination is not about **our** will, but the will of **God**!

“To be conformed to the image of his Son,” - *summorphous tes eikonos tou huiou autou*. There are two words in the Bible used to describe the form or fashion of something, *morphe* and *schema*. *Morphe* would look at the inner essence, while *schema* would look at its outer appearance.

Morphe is found in Philippians 2:6,7, “Who, being in the **form** (*morphe*) of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:”, which looks at Christ's inner essence of deity. But Christ's outward appearance was that of a man. “And being found in **fashion** (*schema*) as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:8

The verb morphoo was used to denote the changing of the *morphe*, the inner essence, such as in Galatians 4:19, which describes the inner spiritual growth of believers in Christ, which is accomplished through faith, Bible Doctrine and the filling of the Holy Spirit. “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be **formed** (*morphoo*) in you,”.

Metaschemizo is used to denote the changing of the outer appearance, as in the case of changing our old bodies into the new glorious body God has prepared for us. “Who shall **change** (*metaschemizo*) our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Philippians 3:21

Metaschemizo is also used to denote the false apostles, all other false communicators, and the devil himself, as to how they change themselves outwardly so as to appear to be something they're not, so that they may deceive others! In the case of Satan he can **change** (*metaschemizo*) his outer appearance (*schema*) to be an angel of light! While his **inner essence** (*morphe*) is evil and one of darkness. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, **transforming** (*metaschemizo*) themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is **transformed** (*metaschemizo*) into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be **transformed** (*metaschemizo*) as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

Metamorphoo deals with an inner changing of the believer, (*morphe*), which is accomplished through the renewing of their minds by the Word of God and filling of the Holy Spirit. “And be not **conformed** (*suschematizo*) to this world: but be ye **transformed** (*metamorphoo*) by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:2 This is to keep them from outward conformity (*suschematizo*) to the ways of the world system and this is done by an inner change through the spiritual life dynamic. We note the one deals with outer conformity, and this is due to the fact that our inner *morphe* can never be like the people of the world because we have believed on Christ and he changed us inside to be like him!

The outside (*schema*) of the Pharisees, like whitewashed tombs, appeared to be righteous, but inside (*morphe*) they were dead men's bones, that is, unrighteous. They changed their outside appearance, like Satan and so many today, to appear to be something different than they were inside.

One can have wine in a bottle, change the label on the bottle, but the wine still stays the same. One deals with the inner (*morphe*), the other with what appears on the outside (*schema*). It could be expensive wine inside, but be inside an old, ugly bottle. And so it is with our bodies and souls. The outside, (*schema* - the body), changes as we get older. But the inside, (*morphe* – the soul), is precious and beautiful. And as the outside changes due to aging and other things, the inside, the soul, needs to be changing, growing into the image of Christ.

In Greek thought the **image**, *eikon*, shared in the reality of what it represented. The essence of the thing, (deity), appeared in the image, therefore the deity himself was present and operative in the image. For example, if there was a statue of Zeus, (large or small), or a mosaic of Zeus, or even a painting of him, which would be the image (*eikon*) of Zeus, then it meant that the essence of Zeus was present and operating in it.

Christ was and is the image of the Father. “*Who is the **image** of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:*” Colossians 1:15 And he told that to his disciples. “*Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?*” John 14:9 Which meant that all the essence, presence and power of deity was active in him. That is, Christ was and is God in the flesh.

And when it comes to born again believers in Christ, we are the image of Christ! Into which our inner essence is being conformed through the spiritual life dynamic. “*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be **conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*” Romans 8:29 Christ's essence and presence is operating in us, (this is why we were called “little Christs” in the first century), and becoming more so each day as we are growing and being conformed to the image of Christ. **Christ is in us!**

Our inner man is being changed into the image of Christ, but the outer man remains the same. Well it changes, but along the lines of corruption ending in physical death. But there will be a change of the outer man, not that **it** will change, but that we will get a new, eternal outer body at the resurrection, which will be just like the glorified body of Jesus Christ. So that inside and outside, for all eternity, we will be the exact image of our Lord and Savior. “*Who shall change our vile body, that it may be **fashioned like unto his glorious body**, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*” Philippians 3:21

Religion and legalism focus on *metaschemizo*, the changing of one's appearance. Their concern and emphasis is on **how they appear to others!** While true Christianity focuses on the spiritual change that takes place in the inner man, or *metamorphoo*. Religious buildings, religious garb, robes and finery, or suits for protestants, religious words and tone, the doing or not doing of certain things, touch, not, taste not, handle not, etc., all these things and more deal with the externals, the appearance. When they should be focusing on the internal, the total changing of the inner man, which can only be done through the consistent intake of Bible doctrine, faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Religion forces people into molds. Their outer requirements make people conform to certain things. While Biblical Christianity develops and brings out what is already there; what God has created. For example, bricks are stamped out one after another, with very little difference between them. They're all the same length, height and width. While stones are another matter all together. Stones are different sizes, shapes, configuration, texture, grain, coloring, etc.. **There are no two stones the same on earth!** Which is a remarkable thing.

Now when laying stones in a building, the mason chooses the very stone that he wants for a particular place and purpose, knocks off the rough edges, and then sets it in place. If the stone is going to go into an important place, such as a temple, then one would be selected that has the color, grain, pattern and size that he wants for that spot, then that stone would be polished to bring out all its beauty that lies inside! And so it is with us as living stones. “*Ye also, as **lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” 1 Peter 2:5

“That he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” - eis to einai prototokon en pollois adelphois.
“For him to be the firstborn among many brethren.” **Firstborn** comes from *protos* – the first, and *tikto* – to beget, to be the first one born of a certain species. It was used of Jesus as the firstborn of Mary.
“And knew her not till she had brought forth her **firstborn** son: and he called his name Jesus.” Matthew 1:25 “And again, when he bringeth in the **firstbegotten** into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” Hebrews 1:6

It was used of Christ as the first one born from the dead. “*And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the **firstborn** from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*” Colossians 1:18 “*And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the **first begotten** of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*” Revelation 1:5

Even though Christ is God's only begotten Son, that is, uniquely born Son, who was raised from the dead, and we are legal sons through adoption, we are all counted as God's sons and brothers of Jesus Christ through our union with him making him our brother and the first one to be born from the dead. As it says in Revelation 1:5, that he was the first one to be born from the dead, “*first begotten of the dead,*”, *ho protokos ek ton nekron*.

And as the firstborn from the dead, (who is also referred to as the **firstfruit** from the dead, “*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept.*”, 1 Corinthians 15:20), and is the firstborn of many brothers, there is the very strong sense of Hades as being the womb of the earth giving up its children, the sons of God, to be revealed in all their glory to take reign over the entire earth with Christ being the head over all.

Christ is also the **first** and last stone to be laid in the temple of God. Christ is the corner stone, that is, the first and the most important stone to be laid. “*Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a **chief corner stone**, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*” 1 Peter 2:6

The apostles and prophets were the **foundation stones** of the temple. Which are also an important part of the structure. “*And are built upon the **foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,*” Ephesians 2:20

From the foundation of the temple we now have many stones being set in place, **living stones**, as God's temple gets higher and higher each day. These living stones are the born again believers in Jesus Christ, whom God is placing in his temple where he wants them to be. “*Ye also, as **lively stones**, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*” 1 Peter 2:5 And we must remember that God is the architect and builder of his temple, and when he has laid the last living stone in its place, then the capstone will be placed and his work finished.

And Christ is also the **capstone** of the temple, which is the body of Christ, the Church. “*Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the **head of the corner**,*” 1 Peter 2:7 The chief cornerstone which was laid was the most important stone in the building for everything stemmed from it. Then the foundation stones were laid and upon them the edifice was erected with other stones. And at the end of construction a capstone was set in place that held them all together, similar to the keystone in an arch. So Christ is the **alpha** and the **omega**, the first and the last stone, in God's temple.

“That he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” And this is what we have been predestined for. Back in eternity past, before there was a beginning, God in his great love for his Son desired a people and kingdom for him. He decreed that the second person of the Godhead would become a man, a perfect man, a glorified man, and that he would give to his Son a people perfect and glorified as well.

God determined beforehand, (predestined), that we would be conformed to the image of his Son. He would be the prototype, and we, like so many models, would be patterned after him. Perfect inside, perfect outside in our eternal bodies. God determined beforehand that we would be presented to himself perfect, glorious, mature sons and daughters in all the glory he has given us. He determined the day of our adoption, the day we enter into marriage with Christ, the day we receive our inheritance, the day we begin our reign here on earth and the day all creation eagerly awaits.

What a comfort to know that our end, our destiny, has been determined from the beginning. Regardless of what life holds for us, regardless of the decisions we make as believers, whether good or bad, we know that we will all stand before God in all our glory and see him face to face. And not only that, we will be assigned to where we will live for all eternity, what we will be doing throughout eternity, and what our position is in the celestial hierarchy.

I might add that most translate this word foreknow as foreordain, due to the fact that the foreknowledge of God is based upon what he decreed in eternity past. You see, God also determined that he was going to create man, and he decreed that the second member of the trinity, his Son, was going to be a man, and that he was going to create a race of glorified men and women, who were going to live on a new earth that he was going to create, and that he was going to move his throne and residence to this new earth, where he was going to dwell with man forevermore.

Once the student of God's Word is able to comprehend the doctrines of election, predestination, calling, glorification, etc., with a thorough grasp of what each one means, then he will be able to relate to and understand passage after passage in the Bible, for these concepts are found everywhere in the Word. Learned and believed doctrine is the foundation for understanding other passages in the Bible.

In *“bringing many sons to glory”*, Hebrews 2:10, *“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in **bringing many sons unto glory**, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”*, tells us about our adoption our inheritance, our final glorified state, our election and calling, and our predestination toward that end.

Jesus Christ fittingly, and such an honor to us, calls us his brothers when he will be singing to the Father. *“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them **brethren**, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I **sing praise** unto thee.”* Hebrews 2:11,12

Hebrews 2:13, *“And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath **given** me.”*, along with verses 10-12 is very dramatic. Hebrews 2:10 tells us that the Father is bringing many sons into glory, *“In bringing many sons to glory”*. It is these sons that he is bringing into glory that are the ones that he has given to his Son. The scene now is in heaven where the great assembly of redeemed have been gathered before the Ancient of Days with the Captain of their faith, Jesus Christ. Who is now going to sing praises to the Father and declare the name of the Father to us. It is this scene, **this grand event, that is the fulfillment of the promise that the Father made to the Son in the timeless past of eternity.** And it is at this moment that the Son says, *“Behold I and the children which God hath given me.”*

The word *idou* has been translated as behold, sometimes to pay attention. The problem is there is no exact English equivalent. So we will try to cover some concepts that may touch on the full force of the meaning as people thought and felt it in those days. It's kind of like going back 2,000 years and trying to explain the full force of the meaning of the word, “wow”, to people!

Idou is a demonstrative particle that is used to draw our attention to something, to point to something, to illustrate a point, to prove the truth of something, an outward expression or open exhibition of feelings, to explain or illustrate something, to enliven a narrative, to emphasize the importance of something, as a call to closer consideration.

It is used in this passage **to illustrate and dramatize the enormity of this event**, Jesus Christ standing there in glory before the Father and the billions of his celestial beings, standing there with this innumerable company of believers in glorified bodies, and the statement that follows, “*Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*”. **And, at the same time, connecting it to something else that had transpired in the past leading down to this very moment in time.**

Now we go back to the promise that the Father had made to his Son in the timeless eons of eternity past which was to give a people to his Son. It is very clear that the Father gave these people to his Son. It was something that the Son was well aware of for he spoke about it in John 6:37-65. “*All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.*” John 6:37 “*And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.*” John 6:39

All that time the Son patiently waited in faith for the fulfillment of the Father's promise that he had made to him in eternity past, and then one day, it is **fulfilled!** *Idou* - breathtaking, mind boggling, wonderful, startling, every wonderful adjective you can use to describe it is there. From the standpoint of the Father it is demonstrable proof, once again, that God keeps his Word. From the standpoint of the One who has received what the Father has promised, the Son, it is demonstrable proof that the concept of faith in the Father, that he originated here on earth and brought to perfect completion – works! There he stands in glory with the ones that the Father promised him!

The use of the word **I**, *ego*, in the passage, “*Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*”, draws special emphasis to the person of Jesus Christ. For all of eternity past he existed in the person of the second member of the trinity and with the promise to give him a people made for him by the Father. And then one day there he is in heaven, once again, now with the children God promised and gave to him! The word to **give** is the aorist active indicative of *didomi*, which not only denotes the act of giving something to someone, but also the legal aspect of it as well. The aorist tense looks at an action that took place in the past with emphasis on its fulfillment. God the Father gave a people to his Son back in eternity past and **behold** - there they are with him in glory!

This body of believers that God has given to his Son are not only mentioned in John 6:37,39, but also in John 6:44, “*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*”, John 6:45, “*It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*”, John 6:65, “*And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*”, and in his prayer to the Father, John 17:6, “*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*”

These children are the **sons** and **brothers** of Hebrews 2:10,11, “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,”.

They are given to Christ by God. Christ will not reject any of them! Everyone that God gives to his Son will come to his Son. Christ will not lose any of them! He will resurrect everyone of them on the last day! They will all be taught about the Son by the Father. They will be sanctified by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. They will have protection from the evil one. And they will be brought into glory holy. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,” Jude 24. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified (made holy) are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,” Hebrews 2:10

2. “And again, I will put my trust in him.” - και παλιν εγω εσομαι πεποιθως επ αυτω

This clause actually comes first in the original, but I started with the other one first to emphasize the fact that Jesus Christ is there in heaven now with all the ones that the Father had given to him. The passage reads, because of the use of *ego*, **I**, as, “And again, **I**, I will trust in him.” This draws our attention to the fact that Jesus Christ trusted in the Father to fulfill the promise that the Father had made to him in eternity past and continued to trust in him, even up to this point in time.

Esomai is the future active indicative of *eimi* and is a predictive future, where the future tense is used to predict an event taking place in the future. What event? The Lord Jesus Christ in his humanity will be trusting in *Yahweh*.

To understand this we need to see that this was written by the prophet Isaiah during his time and he was prophesying about the Messiah in the future and was stating that when the Messiah came to the earth he would be trusting in *Yahweh*. To **trust** is the perfect active participle of *peitho*, to trust, to have confidence in. Now the perfect participle looks at action that has come to a completed state of being. And it's a consummative perfect emphasizing the consummated process of the verb.

Christ trusted in the Father's promise **in eternity past**; he trusted in the Father **in his humanity** here on earth; and he trusted in the Father in the most difficult part of his journey here on earth, when he was **hanging on the cross** bearing our sins and abandoned by the Father.

The word for **faith**, *peitho*, in Hebrews 2:13 comes from Isaiah 8:17 where it reads as, “I will wait on *Yahweh*.” It is used in the Greek to translate the Hebrew word for **faith**, *chakah*, found in the first person singular, piel preterite. **וַחֲכַחַתִּי לַיהוָה**

Now the word *chakah* was another word for *waiting*, like *qavah*, and it too in the Greek is translated by *hupomone*, *endurance*. It has the idea of waiting, hoping for God to come through and help the believer, with the idea of confidence. And is found usually in the intensive stem. But there is a difference. If we had to make a distinction it would speak of not waiting for a specific period of time, nor awaiting some desired goal, not unless there is a specific reference to a goal. The emphasis would be more on the concept of just waiting. In *chakah*, there are three main emphases: trusting in God, waiting on God, and being mentally geared to wait on God.

The idea would be more like this, "I know the Lord's going to deliver us, but it's going to be awhile." Here the believer is not expecting that deliverance, or whatever it is that he's looking for from the Lord, is going to happen at any moment, but that it's going to take some time. **So, he gears himself up to wait. The emphasis on *chakah* is not waiting for a fixed period of time, nor waiting on the fulfillment of the goal, but upon waiting.**

Obviously there is always a time factor involved in waiting on the Lord, but we don't know what it is! So during the time that you are waiting on him, you need to be mentally geared to wait and you must learn to utilize the various grace provisions of the filling of the Holy Spirit, prayer, the faith rest dynamic and occupying ourselves with the Lord that he has supplied to us, to sustain us during the interim. For often during this period of time there will be pressure, suffering, pain, etc., and these painful concepts intensify the situation. But there is the comfort and hope that those who wait on the Lord will not be disappointed. "*For they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.*" Isaiah 49:23b.

This tells us that the type of faith the Lord exercised in trusting the Father was where **he was willing to wait for any length of time for his Father to fulfill the promise he made to him.** He did not even know when the Father was going to send him back to earth to claim his rightful inheritance. He was, and is, content to just wait. And this is the kind of faith that we are to have in God in our lives.

Now Christ had perfect faith in the Father back in eternity past, he had it all during the interim before his incarnation, and all during his incarnation here on earth, but it was the advent of the cross that brought it up to a different level. "*Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*" Hebrews 5:8,9

So how does that work? **It's one concept of faith** to believe something that is is taught, or promised you. **It's another concept of faith** altogether to keep on believing it year after year of waiting for its fulfillment. And **still another concept of faith** to believe it in the middle of a trial when all looks like it will never be fulfilled, or is able to be fulfilled. It's this last concept of faith where faith is brought to its full and completed state. For an example, see the life and faith of Abraham and God's promise to him. Christ always believed the Father, but his faith was completed on the cross.

This whole business of Romans 8:29, "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*", centers around Christ and the people the Father gave to him in eternity past, which is going to culminate on the day being referred to in Hebrews 2:10-13

Yet the Father had promised the Son that this would happen and the Son believed his Father and has waited all this time for its fulfillment. We become impatient when we have to wait a few days for God to answer our prayers, but think how long the Son has waited and still is! This passage in Hebrews brings out the tension, the drama, the eager anticipation all exploding in its fulfillment on that day, when the promise is finally and completely fulfilled and faith's journey receives its promise, and that's when Christ states, "**Behold I and the children which God hath given me.**" Hebrews 2:13

What it's saying is, "**Behold I and the children which God hath given me.**", the children whom God promised me in eternity past! The children whom God saved, redeemed in his grace and are now glorified. The children whom God has changed so that they are now like me both in my inner essence and my outer body. **And we are one!**

Romans 8

DD. The sequence of things for the elect. v.30

“Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Romans 8:30 - ους δε προωρισεν τουτους και εκαλεσεν και ους εκαλεσεν τουτους και εδικαιωσεν ους δε εδικαιωσεν τουτους και εδοξασεν.

“Moreover whom he did predestinate,” - *hous de proorisen*. To **predestinate** is the aoist active indicative of *proorizo*, which, as we have seen, comes from *orizo* with *pro* prefixed to it. *Orizo* is to mark out a boundary, to set a limit, to determine something. *Proorizo* is to do it beforehand, or to determine to do something beforehand. God's **foreknowledge** is God's knowledge of what was going to occur in the future based on what he had decided to do beforehand. While **predestination** looks at what God had decided and **determined** to do beforehand.

It is the act of one's **will** where one decides what it is that God wants to happen, but also determines that it will happen. A **plan**, then, is put in place that ensures that his will is done. And, in the case of God, it is his **omnipotence** that guarantees that his will is carried out.

The subjects that are in view here are the **elect**; them that **love God**, v.28; to them who are the **called** according to *his* purpose, v.28; those he **foreknew**, v.29; those he **predestinated** to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, v.29; those he **called**, v.30; those he **justified**, v.30 and those he **glorified**, v.30.

“Them he also called:” - *toutos kai ekalesen*. To **call** is the aoist active indicative of *kaleo*, which has been rendered as an invitation, but whenever that word is used of a king or deity, then it takes on the idea of a divine summons. This calling embraces the idea of being set apart by God from birth, being taken out of the world system and brought by the Holy Spirit to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

“And whom he called, them he also justified:” - *kai hous ekalesen kai edikaiosen*. To **justify** is the aoist active indicative of *dikaioo*. We notice the certainty of all this. The ones he called, he justified; the ones he justified, he glorified. Nothing was left to chance. And we notice **who** is the one who is doing all this? **God!**

To **justify** does not mean that one is made righteous in the eyes of God, but the he has been **declared righteous** by God! It is a legal action that takes place subsequent to the moment of salvation, where God in the court of heaven now declares the believer in Christ to be righteous.

Paul wrote this out very clearly in Romans 5:1, “Therefore being **justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”, where he stated that we are justified by faith alone, (*sola fide*), in Christ alone, (*solo Christo*). It was Martin Luther's understanding of this verse that launched the Protestant Reformation, where countless millions of Roman Catholics left the Roman church. They finally realized that they did not need the Roman Pontiff, or the sacraments of the church, to be saved. And we notice that **justification** is found in the passive voice, which tells us that the believer in Christ **receives** the action and it is God who is the one who is justifying them. All they needed was faith in Jesus Christ! And how it works is that when God views a person's faith in Christ, he **counts** that faith as righteousness, then he **declares** him to be righteous. “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness**.” Romans 4:5

“And whom he justified, them he also glorified.” - *hous de edikaiosen toutous kai edoxasen*. All four of these verbs: predestined, called, justified and glorified are in the orist past tense, with one event occurring before our birth; one occurring when we were born; one when we were born again; and one yet to occur in the future. In the mind of God they have ready taken place.

What God has predestined will come to pass, because in the exercise of his will he has determined it so. That's why God can say that we have been glorified, even though that will not occur until the day we receive our resurrection body. How secure our lot is with God. Nothing has been left to chance or luck. Remember, the word “luck” was the term used to denote the arbitrary favor of the mother goddess cult. From which we get the expression today of “lady luck”. There is no luck with God, only grace.

EE. God is for us. v.31

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31 - τῶν εἰς ἡμᾶς ὑπὲρ πάντων θεῶν ἡμῶν.

“What shall we then say to these things?” - *to oun eroumen pros tauta?* To **say** is the future active indicative of *lego*. But we want to focus on the word **then**, or therefore, which is *oun*. *Oun* is used when we have a statement, or discourse, and one wants to draw it to a conclusion from the subjects being mentioned with a view toward application.

Romans 8:29,30, “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”, is a repeated anadiplosis, where words are repeated in a gradual ascent building up to a climax. Those he **foreknew**, he **predestined**; those he predestined, he also **called**; those he called, he **justified**; and those he justified, he **glorified**.

Paul is building up to a climax of reasoning. Each great fact is to be weighed and duly considered. And as one understands one concept, and goes from it to the next one, finally building up to our final glorification, he is left with a great conclusion. And that great conclusion is, “**If God be for us, who can be against us?**”

Paul's chain of reasoning, followed by his concluding statement, of, “**If God be for us, who can be against us?**”, leaves us with faith, hope, confidence, a sense of security and reassurance toward, not only our temporal future, but our eternal future!

“If God be for us,” - *ei ho theos huper hemon*. The first class condition of if, if something is true and it is, tells us that, **if God is for us and he is!** Everything that we have read from v.28-30: God working everything out for our good, our predestination, our election, our calling, our justification and our ultimate and eventual glorification, all these things go to prove that **God is for us!**

The first class condition of if, if something is true and it is, can also be translated into the English as **since**. This would give us the translation of, “**Since God is for us, who can be against us?**” **For** us is the preposition huper and it has the ideas of love, protection, caused to do things for another person, a close relationship, substitution and representation and can also be rendered as **on our side**. “Since God is on our side, who can be against us?” For a full study on the preposition huper see my Online study entitled, “Doctrine of Election” at www.pacificrimbible.com.

“Who can be against us?” - *tis kath'hemon?* These two ideas are contrasted that's why we can translate *huper* as being on our side. “If God is for us”, (and he is), that is, **working on our behalf**, or, **for our good**, or, **on our side**, then, “who can be against us?”. **Against** us is the preposition *kata* which has the idea of hostility from others directed toward us.

This is not to say that people won't be against us. They are and have been since the beginning. Satan, and the people that he rules over, are not only against us, but hate us! But whatever the evil they do and try to do against us will have no lasting effect. **Why? Because God is on our side and he will work it out for our good!**

God's eternal purpose concerning those he has chosen and brought to Christ is for their ultimate good. And these passages have effectively concluded that God is on our side and is working on our behalf. If God is for us, and he is, then who can be against us? They can try, (and they do), to do harm to us, but he always works it out for our good! Joseph was a classic example of this. “*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*” Genesis 50:20

FF. Much more grace. v.32

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” - Romans 8:32 - ος γε του ιδιου υιου ουκ εφεισατο αλλ υπερ ημων παντων παρεδωκεν αυτον πως ουχι και συν αυτω τα παντα ημιν χαριζεται.

“He that spared not his own Son” - *hos ge tou idou ouk epheirato*. The word **spare** is the orist active indicative of *pheidomai*, which meant to forego affliction designed to occur, to relieve someone of pain, suffering and injury. A woman giving birth is going to have to go through pain and suffering. *Pheidomai* would be to spare her from that. But, as women know, they will have to go through it.

The way this is worded in the Greek with the words *ge* – even, and *ouk* – not, brings home the point even more, in that God did not even spare his own Son! *Who even his very own Son he did not spare!* God loved us so much that he did not hold his own Son back from suffering an especially cruel and painful death on a cross.

This whole passage is designed by God to let us know where we stand with him and what his attitude is toward us. It is also designed to strengthen our faith, to build up our confidence, to give us assurance and to develop our spiritual self esteem. He is going to resurrect us and give us new eternal bodies; he is going to give us an eternal home and inheritance; he has given us his Spirit to help us in our human infirmity; he makes everything in our lives, whether good or bad, work out for good; he has given us his armor to fight against the devil, etc., etc..

God wants us to know that he is for **us**, that he is **on our side!** And if God is for us, then who can be against us? Why even his own Son he did not spare for our sakes! So many Christians believe that they are unloved, unlovely and unlovable. Their experiences in life have brought them to this place in their thinking. One cannot go back and take away the bad things that people have gone through in their lives. But what we can do is reveal the truth to them concerning their new position in Christ. This is why the teaching of God's Word is so important in this. From the Scriptures they need to see that God does love them **and how much he loves them!** And the only way that can be done is by showing them the extent of his love by the sacrificing of his Son for our sins!

“But delivered him up for us all,” - alla huper hemon panta paredoken auton. The word **gave** is the orist active indicative of *paradidomi*, which comes from two words, *para* and *didomi*, to hand over, and was used in the sense of handing someone over to the authorities.

The orist tense tells us that at a point in time in the past the Father handed his Son over to the authorities, whereupon he went through a mock trial and was taken out to be nailed to a cruel cross. There he was surrounded by a circle of men, whose evil so was so dark you could only call it diabolical, men who were trying to channel demonic energies toward Christ to destroy his soul. (See my Online audio library on Psalms 22 to see what really took place on the cross).

The preposition huper, for, tells us that the Father did it for **our sakes!** He did it to **benefit us**; he did it to **protect us** from his coming wrath; he did it out of **his great love** for us! And he did it for Christ to be **our substitute**. If one has ever doubted the love of God for us, and many do, then we are compelled to go back and look at the **demonstration** of his love by handing his Son over to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins! *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* Romans 5:8 *“But God **demonstrates** his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* NIV

The experience of most people living on earth, at one time or another, has been one of rejection, hatred, violence, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, lonesomeness, etc., it becomes difficult for them to believe that God is a God of love. They look around and see the atrocities that man commits against his fellow man and asks the question, if God is a God of love, how can he allow these things to go on? They blame God, when it is the devil who is behind all this.

What they do not know is that ever since the fall of man satan has been ruling this planet! Not to mention that man acquired a sinful nature due to the sin of the original couple, Adam and Eve. What they are blaming God for is really the work of fallen, sinful man and the devil! *“In whom **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”* 2 Corinthians 4:4 *“Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** will be cast out.”* John 12:31 *“and concerning judgment, because **the ruler of this world** has been judged.”* John 16:11

Dying for someone is the ultimate act of love. *“**Greater love** hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* John 15:13 **Women** will put their lives on the line to protect their children. **Men** will go to the battlefield and offer up their lives in defense of their country to save their families. A **few** might die to save a good man and **one** might die to save a righteous man. But **God** sent his Son to die for wicked, sinful man! *“For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**”* Romans 5:7,8

If one ever had any doubt in their mind that the Father and the Son do not love them, they always need to go back to the great sacrifice that the Father and the Son paid as proof of their love! He gave his Son over to pay the penalty for all our filthy sins, and the Son willingly bore our sins on himself to do so.

Christianity is the only “religion”, if you will, that is redemptive. Unlike so many others, who go out and kill in the name of their God, ours is one where our God died on the cross for our sins! Ours is one of redemption, love, peace with God, peace with each other and peace in our souls. And we want to notice that he died for us all.

“How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” - pos ouchi kai sun auto ta panta hemin charisetai? The word pos is an interrogative particle that asks the question how. In what way? Used here as a rhetorical question. Paul is rejecting an idea, while establishing another. The question is, does God want to do things for us? Does he want to give us things, blessings? Does he want us to be happy, or have peace of mind? Does he want to be nice to us?

To which virtually every Christian would answer yes! But deep down inside, and by the way they live their lives, the answer would be no! They do not really believe that, because they have never been truly convinced that God exists and is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. If they do somewhat believe that, it's usually along the lines that God wants to and does bless - others! But not them!

They can believe it concerning others, but it's so hard to believe it concerning themselves. Which I believe is due to a large degree, of course, a lack of faith, but also along the lines of feeling guilty about things and having a lack of self esteem. “Why would God want to bless me? 'I'm no good!' Or a fear of loss; having something or someone you love taken away from you. 'If he did bless me, he'd probably take it away from me, or let someone else take it away from me.'”

There are a lot of things we wrestle with preventing us from really believing in our hearts that God does love us and wants to bless us. These things are really thresholds. They may be higher in us than someone else, but they all can be overcome by faith and a constant intake of Bible Doctrine.

And one way is by the use of the *a fortiori* logic used by the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If someone has already done the most for you, why wouldn't he do something less? If someone has already given you a billion dollars, why wouldn't he buy you a cup of coffee when the two of you go out? If God has done the most by forgiving us and saving us, and has given us the most by handing his Son over to die on the cross for our sins, why wouldn't he give us everything else that is less than that??

And not just **along** with him, but because of the use of the preposition, sun, in union with him! All the wonderful things that God has in store for us and wants to do for us, is reserved for those who are in union with his Son, Jesus Christ! If God has already done the most for us, a fortiori logic tells us that he is willing to give us anything less than that!

To **give** is the future middle indicative of charizomai. *Charizomai*, from *charis* the word for grace, is to show favor, to give freely, to bestow graciously, to give to someone based on the concept of grace. It is to receive something from God, even though we don't deserve it, we can't do anything to earn it and we don't merit it.

In grace the basis for giving lies not in the recipient of the gift, but in the one who is doing the giving. It eliminates man's striving, trying, works and merit. And in grace it must be **all of grace**, or not of grace at all! *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”* Romans 11:6

And when it is all of grace, then God alone gets all the glory and God alone gets the thanksgiving. So what is there on the part of man that pleases God and is compatible with his grace? **Faith!** Faith in God and faith in his Word and nothing more. As it says, *“But **without faith** it is **impossible** to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* Hebrews 11:6

GG. The righteousness of God's elect. v.33

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.” Romans 8:33 - τις εγκαλεσει κατα εκλεκτων θεου θεος ο δικαιων.

Here we have an ***erotesis***, or interrogation, the asking of a question without waiting for an answer. It is used to teach and give us greater insight into Bible doctrine. From v.31-v.35 we have several questions asked by Paul, but **each one is answered by a question**. All of these verses begin with *tis*.

An ***erotesis*** is used when a speaker or writer asks animated questions, but not to obtain information. Instead of making a plain and direct statement, he suddenly changes his style, and puts what he was about to say, or could have otherwise said, into the form of a question without waiting for an answer.

“What (tis) shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who (tis) can be against us?”

“Who (tis) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.”

“Who (tis) is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,...”

“Who (tis) shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,...?”

In addition to an ***erotesis*** being used in these four verses they also contain another grammatical structure called an ***anaphora***, where we have a repeating of the same word, in this case *tis*, at the beginning of the sentence or clause, thus adding weight and emphasis to the statements.

The two words, “*It is*”, in verses 33 and 34 have been added by the translators and should be left out and translated differently using the question demanded by the ***erotesis***. Notice the change.

“What (tis) shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who (tis) can be against us?”

*“Who (tis) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? **God? The One that justifieth?**”*

*“Who (tis) is he that condemneth? **Christ? The One that died,...**”*

“Who (tis) shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,...?”

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?” - *tis enkalesei kata eklekton theou*. **Lay anything to the charge** is the future active indicative of *enkaleo*, which meant to call in, to bring a charge against, to come forward as an accuser against someone. It was a legal term used in a court of law for a party bringing charges against another party that they had broken the law.

It was used by the townclerk in Acts 19:39,40, when he told the people that if they had a complaint against Paul and company, they were to bring it before the ***ekklesia***. *“But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a **lawful assembly** (assembly). For we are in danger to be **called in question** for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.”*

The important issue here is not only **who** will bring a charge against God's elect of violating God's Law, but **who is qualified to do so??** And that, of course, can only be done by one who, himself, has never sinned! There is an axiom in law, that one who is involved in legal proceedings must have “clean hands”. So what we are left with is that God is the only one who has the right to bring a charge against anyone because it is his Law and because he is the only one who has clean hands. Which “clean hands” are found in the person of his Son, the man Christ Jesus, who, when he walked here on earth as a man, kept the Law of God perfectly.

To the charge of God's elect, or against God's elect, has the preposition kata which denotes an hostile action, whether physically, verbally, or as we have here, legally. The **elect** here, *eklektos*, are the community of those whom God has chosen.

“It is God that justifieth.” - theos ho dikaion. The word **justifieth** is the present active participle of *dikaioo*, which meant to declare one righteous, an act that takes place in a court of law, namely, God's court in heaven. Because God is the only one who is righteous and because he is the judge of all, and because the Law is God's Law, then God is the only one qualified to condemn, or to declare someone righteous. We find this also in Romans 5:1, where it tells us that we have been justified by faith in Jesus Christ. *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

It goes back to the idea of the Law and where one stands in relation to it. If he has not broken the Law, then he is considered as being in “right standing” with the Law - **righteous**. But if he has broken the Law, then he is not right with the Law – **unrighteous**. And if he has broken the Law, he is then, also, under a curse. *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Galatians 3:13* *“Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.” Deuteronomy 27:26*

Being righteous or unrighteous refers to one's legal standing before God. And if God declares someone to be righteous, (and he is the only qualified to do so), then who can come before God with a legal charge that we have broken the Law and are unrighteous now that we are believers in Jesus Christ? We may have broken the Law, (and we did over and over), before we were believers in Jesus Christ, and we certainly, before we were believers in Christ, were unrighteous in the eyes of a holy God.

But when we believed on Christ as our Savior, our faith in Christ was counted as righteousness by God, then he declared us to be righteous! *“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is **counted** for righteousness.” Romans 4:5* Faith is not righteousness, but it is considered as righteousness because there is no merit to faith at all. In fact, **when faith is exercised it receives its merit from the object of its faith**, which is in this case, **Jesus Christ!**

So, if someone brings a charge before God against a Christian thus stating that he is unrighteous, it is not entertained because God from his heavenly throne has declared him to be righteous! And if God has already declared him to be righteous, who can claim the opposite??

So in our verse, v.33, *“**Who (tis) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? God? The One that justifieth?”***, it recognizes that the only one who is qualified to charge us is God himself and it asks that very question. *“**Who (tis) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? God? He is the one who is justifying us!!!**”*

But there is one who is continually doing this before the throne of God in heaven. Satan is constantly going before God with charges against the elect stating that we have done thus and so. And even if the charges against us are true, and they probably are because we do sin in one area or another after we were saved, God throws the charges out. *“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the **accuser of our brethren** is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” Revelation 12:10* Why does he throw the charges out? Because he has declared us to be righteous! And how is it that we are now righteous? Because the righteousness of Jesus Christ has been imputed to us!

HH. Christ our Intercessor. v.34

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” - Romans 8:34 - τις ο κατακρινων χριστος ο αποθανων μαλλον δε και εγερθεις ος και εστιν εν δεξια του θεου ος και εντυγχανει υπερ ημων.

“Who is the one who condemns” - *tis ho katakrinon*. To **condemn** is the present active participle of katakrino, (a strengthened form of krino), meaning to give judgment against, to pass sentence upon, to condemn someone, or to pronounce a sentence upon someone. **Krasis** - would be the process of investigation; **krites** – to judge; **krino** – to determine if one is guilty or innocent; and **katakrino** – to pronounce the sentence.

God found Sodom and Gomorrah guilty, thereby condemning them to ashes in destruction. “*And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes **condemned** (katakrino) them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*” 2 Peter 2:6 This entailed the act of the one sitting in judgment - katakrinon, the investigation into the matter - krasis, the determination of guilt - krino, the pronouncing of the sentence, krima – the sentence itself, katakrima - the sentence with the pronouncement of what the punishment is, and then the carrying out of the sentence, and **enkaleo** – to accuse someone, to bring a charge against them.

In a court we have: the court, the judge, the charge, the producing of the evidence, the party accused, the inquiry into the matter, the determination of guilt, the pronouncement of the sentence, which is the pronouncement of the punishment, and then the execution of the sentence. Here we have a charge being brought forward. The charge is breaking the Law. The individual is found guilty or not guilty. The punishment is death. The sentence of death is announced. And the execution would be casting into the lake of fire.

At the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20:12, “*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*”, we find that God is going to judge all mankind. And those whose names were not found in the Lamb's Book of Life, “*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*”, Revelation 20:15, were thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Why is that? Because those who had rejected the gracious gift of salvation from God through faith in Jesus Christ wanted to be judged by their works, self righteousness and human good. So God is going to do that and the comparison he is going to use is the man, Christ Jesus! And seeing that their righteousness does not compare to the righteousness of his Son, they will be found guilty and cast into the Lake of Fire. While Christians will be able to avoid that because they came to Christ in faith and now stood before God, not in their own righteousness – but **Christ's!**

This begins like v.33, “**Who (tis) shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? God? The One that justifieth?**”, where we have the idea of who is going to bring a charge against us? God? The one who is justifying us? Now we have another question of who is going to pass sentence upon us? Christ? The one who died for us? “**Who (tis) is he that condemneth? Christ? The One that died,...**”. More than that, he also is at the right hand of the Father constantly making intercession for us **because of our sins!** It's absurd to think that Christ would pronounce judgment for us, when he is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for those things that we have done wrong!

Romans 8

HH. Christ our Intercessor. v.34 continued.

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” - Romans 8:34 - τις ο κατακρινων χριστος ο αποθανων μαλλον δε και εγερθεις ος και εστιν εν δεξια του θεου ος και εντυγχανει υπερ ημων.

“It is Christ that died,” - *christos ho apothanon*. What we have now is the answer to the question posed at the beginning of the verse. The question is, *“Who is he that condemneth”*, or rather, *“katakrinon* - who is the one who will bring a charge against us before the judgment bar of God?” We know a question is being asked because of the word *tis* at the beginning of the verse.

And because a question is asked, and we have the answer in the same verse, we then have it translated as, *“Who is he that condemneth?”*. *“Christ? The One who died?”* The only one who is qualified to bring a charge against us is Jesus Christ and that is because he is the only one without sin! As he said in the gospels, let he that is without sin be the first to cast the stone. *“So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.”* John 8:7

So we have, *“Who is he that will bring a charge against us? Christ?”* Why it was Jesus Christ who **died** for our sins! Christ was the one who paid the penalty for our sins! You have the one who is the **accused**, and the other party who is the **accuser**. And then you have one who is **paying the penalty** for the accused. The accused can never be his accuser, nor can the one who is paying the penalty for the accused be his accuser. **Died** is the aorist active participle of *apothnesko*, which can be translated as, the one who died for us.

“Yea rather, that is risen again,” - *mallon de egertheis*. To be **raised** is the aorist passive participle of *egeiro*. And we notice that the passive voice shows that the subject, Jesus Christ, received the action of being raised. He was raised from the dead by the Father according to the promise the Father made him. The action of the aorist participle, (which, in this passage is used in both dying for us and being raised from the dead), precedes the action of the main verb, which is interceding for us.

“Who is even at the right hand of God,” - *hos kai estin en dexia tou theou*. The right hand is the position of favor. Whenever anyone sits at the right hand of someone, it means that they have favor with that individual. It is the position of power, honor, glory and favor. It means that out of all the people on earth, or the kingdom, this person has the most favored position with the ruler. He is favored above all other people.

After Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, and was raised from the dead, he now sits at the right hand of the eternal God of heaven and earth. He is **not before** God bringing an accusation against us - that's what Satan is doing. But, instead he is sitting at the right hand of the Father. And what is he doing there? Interceding for us!

“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.” **God??** *The one who justifies us?* *“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”* **Christ?** The one who **died** for us?

“Who also maketh intercession for us.” - *hos kai entunkanei huper hemon*. **Intercession** is the present active indicative of *entunchano*. We have seen that there are four ideas found in *huper*: protection, causal, representation and substitution, with the three proceeding from the original idea of protection. First came the idea of protecting someone, then causal, representation and substitution.

In a court of law there was: the court, the **judge**, the **accuser**, the **accused**, a **defense attorney**, the **accusation** or charge brought forward by the accuser, the **evidence** was presented to the court, the evidence was **reviewed**, the **determination** of guilt or innocence by the judge, the **pronouncement** of the **sentence**, and then the **execution** of the **sentence**.

Here we have God sitting as judge over all. Satan is the one who is accusing us, which is what his name means both in the Hebrew and Greek. In the Hebrew it's **Satan** – our adversary at law, and in the Greek it's **diabolos** – our accuser at law. “*And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*” Revelation 12:9

In Revelation 12:10 he is also called the **Accuser**, for he accuses the people of God night and day before the throne of God. “*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*” The word used here is *kategoroo*, which refers to a plaintiff in court who brings a charge of some offense before a judge.

Now we know who the four parties are: **God**, his **Son**, Jesus Christ, **Satan**, and **believers** in Christ. Satan is the one who is bringing a charge against us; we are the ones being accused; God the Father is the one who is hearing the charge; and it is Jesus Christ, who not only is the one interceding for us, but does so as our defense attorney! “*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”* 1 John 2:1 The word here for **advocate** is *parakletos* and it referred to a defense attorney.

So it goes back to the question, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* Who is going to declare we are sinners. **God**? He's the one who has declared us to be righteous!! “*Who is he that condemneth?*” Who is going to pass sentence upon us? **Christ?? He's our defense attorney!!** He's our defense attorney interceding for us at the right hand of God!! It's absurd to think God is against us!

The word *entunchano* was a technical term for one who approached a king with a petition; something Paul was familiar with in his culture. Only the one here who is approaching God is at his right side, the position of favor. And it's not just that he is his Son; and it's not just that he holds position of favor in God's kingdom, but that he is also God's High Priest! “*Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;”* Hebrews 7:25,26

Under the old covenant the high priest would enter into the presence of God once a year with the blood sacrifice that atoned for the sins of God's people. Under the new covenant Jesus Christ is continually in the presence of God, and will be for all eternity, having paid the one time blood sacrifice for our sins. Whenever we sin against God, and Christians do after salvation, Jesus Christ intercedes on our behalf bringing up the issue that he has paid for that sin in his own blood. The legal case against us is dismissed and God now deals with us as a father would his child.

II. Inseparability. v.35

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” - τις ημας χωρισει απο της αγαπης του χριστου θλιψις η στενοχωρια η διωγμος η λιμος η γυμνοτης η κινδυνος η μαχαιρα.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” - *tis hemas chorisei apo tes agapes christo*. Literally, “Who shall separate us from the love of the Messiah?” To **separate** is the future active indicative of chorizo, which meant to sever a connection, relationship, or association, to take something or someone away from someone else. And with the preposition apo used, **from**, it's to separate us totally from, or apart from, the love of the Messiah.

What Paul is showing here is the **inseparability** of Jesus Christ and those who believe in him. The idea of being **inseparable** means that there is no thing, no situation, no one on earth, and no one in heaven, that can separate Jesus Christ and those who trust him as their Lord and Savior, because the two are incapable of being separated, parted, or disjoined. And Paul is showing this by another retorical question, his third one in a string of questions, all to be answered with a negative reply.

Paul names **seven** of the major crises in life that people go through, situations which have certainly separated many a relationship, or friendship: tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword; and states that even these, the worse there are, **are unable to separate the believer in Christ from the love of Christ!**

The first one is **tribulation**, *thlipsis*, and denotes anything that burdens the soul, or puts pressure on the soul. Now pressure in life is inevitable. It comes from living in the devil's world on a sin-cursed earth, where everyone that exists upon it has sinful natures. “*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, thlipsis, (pressure): but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*” John 16:33

In ancient England one of the punishments meted out to prisoners was the placing of heavy stones on their chests, thus crushing them to death over a long period of time. *Thlipsis* would be used to denote that crushing pressure idea. Today believers are under so much pressure from their health, finances, the economy, family, evil trends in government and society, etc.. In fact, the term, “The Great Tribulation”, refers to the idea of believers being under great pressure!

This brings in the two ideas of pressure and stress in this matter. One is that **pressure** is external from the soul, while **stress** is internal. **Pressure** is inevitable, while **stress** is optional. **Stress** is not sin, but is tantamount to sin because of the effect that it has on the soul. **Pressure** can be kept outside of the soul, by the exercise of the faith-rest dynamic in the filling of the Holy Spirit that produces peace in the soul. If the barrier of peace is not in place to keep pressure out of the soul, then it turns into stress in the soul. And it is through the exercising of faith in the promises of God, in the filling of the Holy Spirit, that gets stress out of the soul. **So peace is both the prevention and cure for stress in the soul!**

The word for **troubled** in John 14:17, “*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*”, is *tarasso*, which meant to be agitated, or in turmoil, and the modern day word for that is **stress**. And here the Lord tells us that we can, and are to, prevent that occurring in our souls, (which leads directly to fear in the soul), and we prevent this by exercising our faith in what he told us.

The second one is **distress**, *stenochoria*, and it denoted a narrow place, or a narrowed place, to be crowded into a narrow place with no way to get out, or to be trapped into a narrow place where one's movements are restricted. In ancient England it would refer to being placed in an iron cage, or worse yet, the Iron Maiden.

The emphasis of *stenochoria* is not the narrowness of space, but the physical and mental anguish that results in being confined, where one has no room to move or act leaving them with a sense of being trapped. Often *thlipsis* is followed by *stenochoria* with *stenochoria* being the stronger experience.

In today's world it has the idea where one **feels** trapped in a no way out situation. One can feel trapped by their economic situation, or responsibilities in the home, or job, by their physical limitations, and by many other things. A person may be trapped literally, and they can also **feel** like they're trapped! Most people in life, due to one reason or another, will get to the place where they do feel trapped by their situations having no way out. Which usually bring about a host of emotional reactor factors.

When one gets into these situations, it often can have a very negative emotional effect on the soul and you can feel like God is not there, or that he doesn't love you. Which is not true. The solution to being victorious over that trapped, "no way out" situation is through the faith-rest dynamic in the promises of God with the filling of the Holy Spirit. "*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses (stenochoria) for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*" 2 Corinthians 12:10

The third one is **persecution**, *diogmos*, which has the idea of being put to flight, to drive away. This comes about as the result of legal, social, political, even financial pressure, or hostility, being put on the believer in Christ forcing him or her to leave their job or business, their home, their town, even their country and go someplace else.

Persecution of believers came from different ways and still does today. They were often **unable to find work** to support themselves due to them being Christians, which forced them to move to other areas to seek employment. Because they **would not join the guilds**, (unions of those days), which were centered around the worship of certain demons, they were kept out of the good paying job in the community, thus forcing them to move to other places. If they **owned stores** or shops, often the townspeople would not frequent their places of business, because they were Christians, and they were forced to move to another town. Often believers, and/or their children, were **harassed, ridiculed, even threatened by townspeople**, thus forcing them to move to other places.

And they were persecuted because of **their refusal to go along with Caesar worship.** In those days, to find work, you had to have a chit signed by one of the priests who conducted Caesar worship. To get one of these you had to appear in person before a priest, burn incense on an altar in his presence, and confess with your mouth, "Caesar est Kurios", that Caesar is Lord. When the priest saw you do this, he would sign one of these chits, which would entitle you to work anywhere Rome ruled. Of course, no Christian could do this because he could only confess that "*Iesous est kurios*", that Jesus is Lord! Which meant that he was forced to leave and go some place else, so he and his family could survive.

Now, when one was persecuted he had to leave behind his work, business, home, friends, family, and all the other concepts related to security and go out in an unfamiliar world. The risk of death, danger, fear, deprivation, uncertainty, being alone and vulnerable were ever present with him. Yet in all this, **he was never alone because Christ would be with them no matter where they went!**

But persecution not only befell those believers because of their refusal to go along with the political status quo, or those who were affected economically, but for all believers who just wished to live a life based upon the teaching of God's Word! “*Yea, and all that will **live godly** in Christ Jesus **shall** suffer persecution.*” 2 Timothy 3:12

The word for **live** here is *zao* and it meant to pass time or life in a particular manner, to subsist in life, to exist, or to have being. Life, the noun, is the **state** of existing; to live, the verb, tells us something about the **manner** in which we exist. The verb *zao* it tells us something about the **manner** in which we are to live our lives here on earth. We are to live them by faith, and we are also to live our lives in the unique spiritual life that God created for each one of us.

The word for **godly** here is *eusebos*, an adverb from *eusebeia*. *Eusebeia* entailed, first of all, that God created in each believer in Christ their very own spiritual life. No one has one exactly like yours. It consists of living by faith, living in the new nature, living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, taking in the teaching of the Word of God, metabolizing it by faith where it becomes a part of our frame of reference, and one more thing, the application of it to our own lives. **Godliness** is living in the spiritual life dynamic, (living by faith in the Word being filled with the Holy Spirit), and the application of biblical principles to our own lives.

And this is where it becomes a problem, often resulting in the persecution of the believer by others and governments. Some governments will allow you to believe what you want to believe, but that's where it ends. Keep your opinions to yourself and certainly do not let your personal beliefs affect the way you live, if they go against public policy. Others don't even allow you to believe what you want to believe. They want you to believe what **they** believe!

After centuries of Christians being persecuted by Rome, they came to America to form a more perfect union and **the first amendment** to the constitution was to protect, not only our right to believe, but also the right to have the freedom to apply the teachings of God's Word to our lives. In other words, the **right to live godly lives!** 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, **or prohibiting the free exercise thereof**; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.'

Now the scriptures show that those believers, the ones who do not go along with the flow of the world system in their communities, but desire, that is, choose, to live godly lives, will suffer persecution. Not that they **might** suffer persecution, because they chose to live their lives based upon the Word of God and what it teaches, but that they **will** suffer persecution for it. “*Yea, and all that will **live godly** in Christ Jesus **shall** suffer persecution.*” 2 Timothy 3:12

But there is another promise from God for those believers, who choose the path of godliness, and that is he will deliver them through persecution and preserve their souls at the same time. “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in **persecutions**, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*” 2 Corinthians 12:10

Persecution is a level of difficulty above pressure and feeling trapped in life. There not only is a threat to one's security, job, home, community living, etc., but also a threat to one's person and family! When believers are persecuted, the experience is like being kicked out of one's home into the streets with no money, no place to go and no resources available to you. But, even if that does happen, **we have the promise from the Lord that he will be there with us and it will not separate us from his love**.

The fourth one is **famine**, *limos*, which has the idea of a lack of food in an area. The word *peinao* meant to be hungry, but the **hunger** of *limos* meant that it was due to a definite lack of food to eat in an area! Which could be caused by a drought, or due to war, or in today's civilized society, the addition of a breakdown in the infrastructure in bringing goods to the market.

Famines do occur periodically in nature due to plagues, pestilence, droughts, etc.. **Abram** left the land promised to him, because of a famine, and went down to Egypt. “*And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.*” Genesis 12:10 During the time of **Joseph** there was a worldwide famine affecting everyone in earth. “*And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.*” Genesis 41:56

And because **Joseph** was warned about this by God in a dream, he was able to set aside a certain amount of corn during the seven years of plenty to more than cover the seven years of want. To the place that he was able to have corn for the people of Egypt, but be able to sell the surplus to the rest of the people in the surrounding world. “*And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.*” Genesis 41:57

In the days of **Claudius** a great famine hit the entire world, as prophesied by Agabus. The word for **world** is *oikoumene*, and it meant inhabited world. “*And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth, (limos), throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.*” Acts 11:28

A great famine, **hunger**, will hit during the days of the **Tribulation**. This will come about as the result of **one**, the breakdown of the infrastructure of bringing food to the marketplace, which would encompass the growing of the food in the field all the way to getting it to the table. This will be caused by the war that the antichrist wages causing a breakdown in the whole international infrastructure. His war will devastate every area of the process needed from farm to table.

One of the factors involved in this will be due to the lack of gas and diesel for cultivating the fields, and the shipping and transportation of the food to the marketplace. And another is by a worldwide drought. The hunger caused by drought and the breakdown of the world's infrastructure will be so severe that one fourth of the world will die because of it. “*And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*” Revelation 6:8

There were times that Paul and other believers were hungry, but the Lord still took care of them. “*In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.*” 2 Corinthians 11:27

What we have here is an ascendance of the threat level to the believer's survival here on earth in the devil's world, and the risk of us wondering, doubting, if God still loves us? is God still with us? has God abandoned us?! We go from pressure (*tribulation*), to being or feeling trapped, (*distress*), to having to run for our lives, or economic survival, (*persecution*), to a worse scenario, having no food, (*famine*), which we can only survive thirty days max without, to having no clothes, (*nakedness*), where we could die in a day or two, to *peril*, to *sword*? And Paul asks the question will these things separate us from the love of Christ? And then answers it with absolutely not!

Romans 8

II. Inseparability. v.35 continued

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” - τις ημας χωρισει απο της αγαπης του χριστου θλιψις η στενοχωρια η διωγμος η λιμος η γυμνοτης η κινδυνος η μαχαира.

The next one is **nakedness**, *gumnotes*, which did not mean that you had no clothes, or were naked, but that you were scantily, or poorly, clad. It denoted the idea that one did not have sufficient clothing for the weather, climate and area you were living in. Warm clothes for the cold, rain gear for wet weather, or light, proper clothing for the intolerable heat.

Being without food at times, not having the proper clothing for the condition of weather, and not even having a dwellingplace at times was a condition that Paul and the other men suffered from time to time. Yet God was still with them. *“Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are **naked**, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace;”* 1 Corinthians 4:11

God did not promise us finery, or the latest cultural fashions in clothing, as so many wastefully go after today, even Christians. But what he did tell us is to be **content** with the **food** he provides for our bellies. Actually the word for **food** is *diatrophe* and referred to the nutrition our bodies need, which can come from a multitude of sources; and to be content with the **covering** we have for our bodies! *“And having **food** and **raiment** let us be therewith content.”* 1 Timothy 6:8

Peril, *kindunos*, meant to run a risk, to face danger, to be in some sort of jeopardy where one risks losing their life. What makes a peril a peril is not some theoretical possibility that something could happen and you might die; it's not where one thinks up ways where you could lose your life, but **a peril is where you are definitely facing something that could bring about your death!**

Paul gives us several examples of the **perils** he faced as he went out to serve the Lord. Things that he faced that he could have died very easily as the result. Things such as: **crossing rivers**, we know how dangerous just that could be; **robbers** in the city and the country, who would slit your throat just to get your money; from the **Judaizers** from Israel, who were trying to kill him because of the gospel of Christ; from **Gentiles** for the same reason; from just being in the **cities**, (which hasn't changed at all); from being out in the **wilderness**, which is still today a threat to one's survival; from being out at **sea** as one sailed from one place to another; and from **false brethren**. *“In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.”* 2 Corinthians 11:26

The word for **sword** is *machaira* and was the weapon of the Roman army. It was around eighteen inches long and double edged. A very efficient weapon in the hands of a trained soldier, especially when used with the Roman shield.

Now when the word *machaira* was used it could speak of basically three things. **One**, war and military conquest, either by another army, or by the putting down of insurrection. It has the idea of the military involved. **Two**, ordinary violence in an area. **Three**, when revolution sweeps through a country in an attempt to overthrow the existing government. All are threats to the believer. Yet Christ is with us.

JJ. The death of Christ's godly ones. v.36

“As it is written, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*” Romans 8:36 - καθως γεγραπται οτι ενεκα σου θανατουμεθα ολην την ημεραν ελογισθημεν ως προβατα σφαγης.

“As it is written, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long;*” - *kathos gegraptai hoti heneka sou thanatoumetha holen ten hemeran.* The word **written**, *gegraptai*, is the perfect passive indicative of *grapho* – to write. It is a quote of Psalm 44:22, “*Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.*” The Septuagint translation has it as, ὅτι ἔνεκα σοῦ θανατούμεθα ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλόγισθημεν ὡς πρόβατα σφαγῆς. - “*For your sake we are killed all the day; we are counted as the sheep for the slaughter.*” Psalm 43:23

Being a believer in Christ has never exempted God's people from the many forms of death. And history has certainly proven that. But **God has promised to be there with us in death**, and **he has also promised to give us the grace and strength to go through it!**

Some have glorified Christ on the battlefield of war, as they protected their families. Some have been killed as the result of ministering the Word of God. Some have died as the result of persecution. And some have died because they maintained their testimony for Christ and his Word. “*Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*”, Hebrews 11:34

“*We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*” - *elogisthema hos probata sphages.* The word for **accounted** is the orist passive indicative of *logizomai*. Now *logizomai* was the thinking of the accountant, which is a little disturbing in that it was void of feeling or compassion. To the accountant it was **all a matter of numbers, not any personal sentiment attached to it.**

Which gets into the idea of how the people of God were viewed, as they lost their lives for the sake of Christ. The death of God's children meant actually nothing to those who caused their death, nor to society in general. It was a simple matter of getting rid of people they did not want in society. Their mantra would be that 'the world was better off without them'!

We cannot say that the thinking of the world, (certainly not the thinking of our Father in heaven), was more than and something different than objectivity. It was a matter of total disinterest, no compassion, no feelings along the tender side. I guess it would be the thinking similar to taking the trash out to the garbage – nothing more.

It would be like the homeless on the street, who are hungry, cold and dying, putting their hands out for somebody to help them, only to have hundreds and hundreds of people walk by and not care at all. Or dying alone having no one who cares for you. Or dying with hateful, hardened people who are around you, **but could care less that you are dying!**

We are counted no more than sheep for the slaughter, which gets into the idea of **butchery**. The angry hoards come charging in slaughtering everyone in sight. But wait! I'm important, says the sheep to be slaughtered. I had people who loved me! I'm somebody! I'm a living soul! I'm a person! I'm a child of God! I live and I love! But in one savage moment the hate filled individual strikes you down with his weapon looking at you as nothing more than something to be butchered like an animal.

KK. The conquering Christian. v.37

“*Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*” Romans 8:37 - *αλλ εν τουτοις πασιν υπερνικωμεν δια του αγαπησαντος ημας.*

“*Nay, in all these things*” - *all'en toutois pasin*, refers back to the list of trouble in v.35, “*tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword*”. Paul is bringing out, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these seven categories of crises that believers have gone through, and will go through in life here in the devil's world, not to scare us, but to give us confidence that the Lord will be there with us and take us through the fiery trial!

Many believers incorrectly assume that now they are right with God, and that they have received his love by believing in his Son as their Savior, that they will be exempt from the trials and traumas of life. This is not true. There is something called undeserved suffering, where we suffer, even though we have done nothing wrong to deserve it. “*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*” Philippians 1:29

Suffering, regardless of the source it comes from as noted in our passage, when combined with Bible Doctrine, faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit, produces spiritual growth in the believer's soul.

“*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.*” 1 Peter 4:12 “*Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*” 1 Peter 4:19

“*We are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*” - *hupernikomen dia tou agapesantos hemas.* Just preceding this part of the verse we have *en plus the locative of sphere*. Which tells us that the activity of the verb, which in this case is being a super-conqueror, takes place in the sphere of the these things, which refers back to the idea found in v.35 again of: “*tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword*”. Which tells us that **we will be conquering the things we go through in life while we are going through them!** It's not that we will “get on top of things” **after** we get through them. But that **we will get on top of the negative situation while we are in it!**

Super-conquering is the present active indicative of *hupernikao* and is a combination of two words; *huper* – above, and *nikao* – to conquer. Now *nikao* had the idea of being the victor over a situation, battle, or fight, but by adding *huper* prefixed to it, it tells us that this conquering is brought up to an entirely different level! To be a super-conqueror means that one has gained a surpassing victory over the situation. It's not just to win, but to **overwhelmingly win!**

And here is how we do this. Here is the secret of how believers in Christ become super-conquerors of all the bad things that life has to throw at us, things that would destroy other people, and it is “*through him that loved us*” - *dia tou agapesantos hemas*. The preposition dia tells us the means by which something happens, and here it's telling us that we are victorious over the things we go through all due to our heavenly Father who loves us.

And how does he do this? By means of the spiritual life dynamic grace provision he has supplied to all believers in Christ in his grace, which consists of: the filling of the Holy Spirit, living in the new man, the provision of confessing our sins to God, prayer, faith in the Father, his plan, his promises, his provision, his protection, and faith in the process he has chosen to complete us.

LL. Paul was convinced in his faith. v.38

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,” - πεπεισμαι γαρ οτι ουτε θανατος ουτε ζωη ουτε αγγελοι ουτε αρχαι ουτε δυναμεις ουτε ενεστωτα ουτε μελλοντα.

*“For I am persuaded” - pepeismai gar. **Persuaded** is the perfect passive indicative of *peitho*, which has been translated as convinced, obeyed, persuaded and assured. It speaks of having the mental attitude where one has been absolutely convinced that something is true.*

To be **convinced** of something usually takes a period of time. It is not generally something that happens in a moment of time, but is a process that goes on until one does finally become convinced that something is true. As we see in the use of the perfect tense used with it. The perfect tense denotes that an action begins at a point in time, then it looks at the period of time following it where, in this case, other facts are brought in to support the original idea, to the place where the action is completed, which, in this case, is to be convinced of something, and the final result of being convinced carries on into the future.

Case in point was Abraham when God promised him a son. Now Abraham believed God when God promised him a son. And he still believed him over the years. But it wasn't until many years down the road that Abraham was fully convinced that God was going to deliver on his promise, even when he got to the age that he was sexually impotent! **So what was it that convinced him? It was when he was convinced that God had the power to do what he promised to do!** *“And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to **perform**.” Romans 4:21 And **what convinced Sarah to believe God about a son was because she saw the integrity of God!** *“Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him **faithful** who had promised.” Hebrews 11:11**

Being **persuaded** here is in the passive voice, which brings out the idea of the subject receiving the action of the verb. Which tells us **Paul received the action of being persuaded**, or convinced, of something to be true, which things he lists in this passage. To be persuaded is to be caused to believe something, either by reason, or by the force of evidence. And in the cases of Abraham and Sarah they **both believed God, but they also observed the evidence that every time that God said he was going to do something for them, he always carried through on his promises!**

To be persuaded is to be caused to believe something, either by reason, or by the force of evidence. But it always implies that there is a threshold one has to overcome to believe something to be true. Now there can be doubt, perhaps some skepticism, which is normal because one should not believe everything that people say in life. But persuasion starts from the standpoint to begin with that one does not know if something is true. Now it may be true. And then it might not be! So, if someone is going to accept something to be true, then there has to be the force of reason or evidence to prevail over my barrier of doubts. That is also assuming that the one you are dealing with is willing to accept the evidence or logic involved and not totally entrenched in negative volition.

That's what being unpersuadable is all about, which is what the problem the Israelites had in the wilderness. God told them to go into the land, but they refused to obey him, because they refused to believe him! But worse than that was **they refused to be persuaded!** *“And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?” Hebrews 3:18*

The word for **believed not** in the passage is *apeitheo*, which denoted the idea of not believing God, but worse than that, **refusing to be persuaded to believe God!** One should believe what God says simply because he says it, which many do. But for some, for whatever the reason, they have a problem believing what God says. It's not that they don't want to, but there is some wall they have in their minds or hearts that keeps them from fully believing him. This is where persuasion comes in. **Persuasion** comes in by using the force of **reason**, or **evidence**, which would be God's mighty works in life, **to prevail over our wall of unbelief!** But the ancient Israelites simply would not be persuaded, no matter what force of doctrinal logic that was used, nor by witnessing the mighty acts he performed with them!

Now persuasion usually takes a period of time. And during that period of time the believer will be going over the promises of God, being taught on various doctrines that pertain to the subject, reviewing what one has learned, being put into a variety of trials where one has to apply by faith the doctrines one has learned, and throughout all this the believer will finally become convinced in his heart. Concerning the trials we go through, we only pass them by the exercising of faith in the Word of God! **If we fail to exercise our faith, then we fail the test!**

Now Paul had become convinced of something in his life regarding his relationship to God. And, as we will see in the grammar, that it didn't happen overnight, but involved a period of time. And as time went by, and as he learned Bible Doctrine and lived by faith, and as he saw God operate over and over in his life, he became convinced, confident and assured of his relationship to the Father and the Son. He was absolutely confident that nothing could separate him from the love of God.

Faith developed to its maximum level, which is what perfected, or completed faith is all about, becomes **confidence**. And with confidence is rest and peace for the soul. Faith in the Word is absolutely crucial in this matter, for believing God and his Word is a continuing process. We take in various doctrines over the years; we apply these doctrines by faith to the various things we go through in life, and this goes on to the place where we are fully convinced and our faith is completed.

The perfect tense of *peitho*, **persuaded**, shows this very thing. It was not an overnight phenomenon for Paul. But one that began at a point in time, his salvation; then it went on over the years, his growth in grace, faith and the Word; and then finally reached its culmination where he was totally convinced. From that point of completion it became a settled part for the rest of his life.

Being **persuaded** here is in the passive voice telling us that Paul did not convince himself of these things, but that it was God who convinced him through the teaching of his Word and seeing God's faithfulness to Paul in his life. Just like Abraham became fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he promised he would do for Abraham in giving him a son!

“Neither death” – *hoti oute thanatos*. The word *oute* is used ten times here in the passage and it means **not**. Who, or what, can separate us from the love of God? Not death! Not life! Not angels! Not demons! He starts off with one of the deepest fears that many people have and that is what is going to happen to me when I die?

Death is a subject that most people, especially unbelievers, do not want to talk about. Yet it is something that all are subject to and what we will all have to face! All, that is, except those believers who are alive at the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. Remember what **death**, *apothnesko*, is. It is the separation of the soul from the body. The body dies, but the soul doesn't. And **even though there is a separation of the soul from the body there is no separation of the soul from Jesus Christ!**

“**Nor life**” - *oute zoe*. Most people are afraid of death, afraid of how they will die, but they are also afraid of **life**! We wonder what does life hold for me? Will I make it? Will I be a failure? Will I become a cripple, or physically incapacitated in some other way? Will I go crazy? Will I end up in jail? Will I be persecuted? Will I end up homeless? Will I be able to handle the things ahead?

To some **life** is a mountain to be conquered, a challenge awaiting them. While to others, it is something to be endured; a frightening prospect that they hope, somehow, they can make it through. We have all wondered about these things at one time or another in our lives, but instead of talking to us about God's power to get us through all these things in life, which is certainly sufficient for them, Paul talks to us about God's love for us. Life cannot separate us from the love of God/

But whether life to the individual has been one of success or drudgery, boring or fun, enjoyable or tolerable, rewarding or miserable, really doesn't matter, for life itself cannot separate us from the love of God. We have had God's love for us every single moment of our existence here on earth, not matter what the quality of our existence was. Whether we had to live on the street in poverty, or we were able to live in a castle.

“**Nor angels**” - *oute angeloi*. One would have to assume, of course, that this is referring to the evil angels who sided with Satan in the rebellion against God. They can do nothing to separate us from the love of God in this life and in the life that exists after death! But aside from that fact, it lumps all angels together and there are no angels, fallen or unfallen, that can separate us from the love of God.

“**Nor principalities**” - *oute archai*. The word *arche* refers to those who held the highest authority and rank, the first, the pre-eminent of things, and was the term used for fallen angels, unfallen angels and men. It always referred to the highest rulers. “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*” Ephesians 6:12

The word had its background in the governmental structure of the ancient democracy of Greece, where the nation was ruled by a college of **nine archons**, who ruled over a city. Even today the past director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover, said that the world is ruled by a secret group of nine men, but he could never uncover their identity.

The **nine archons** were broken down into the following levels. **Ho Archon** - was the president of the college and he held the highest rank of all. **Ho Basileus** - was the king archon, who ruled under the president of the college, and his position was hereditary. **Ho Polemarchos** - was the military ruler, that is, he ruled over the army of Greece. And then there were the six - **Ho Themothetai** - who were six legislators who formulated policies.

We don't know if Paul borrowed from the Greek structure to explain the demonic structure, or if the Greeks patterned their ruling structure after the demonic! It makes sense to say that the Greek structure of rule is patterned after the demonic, because Satan and his angels were in total control of Greece, (and all other earthly nations for that matter), and it makes doctrinal sense to say that the earthly pattern is a type of the heavenly one.

And if Greece is patterned after Satan's hierarchy, could this same Grecian/Satanic hierarchy be the pattern for ruling the world today? And could this structure of hierarchy be divided into 6 legislators, 60 authorities and 600 *kosmokratoras*?

We do know that the dwelling-place of demons is in **the second heaven** somewhere between our direct sky and the third heaven of God. This places it either outside of the known universe, or it is where the **known universe is their domain!** And remember, the original idea of demons, *daimones*, was one where they were thought to be extra-terrestrial beings of races superior to humans, or aliens.

Some of the references to the dwelling-places of these celestial beings are found in: “***Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,***” Ephesians 1:20,21 “*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*” Ephesians 2:2 “*To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*” Ephesians 3:10

Christ defeated these archai on the cross and his victorious resurrection from the dead and took some of them as captives in his triumphal march into heaven. “*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*” Colossians 2:15 “*And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*” NIV And if Christ defeated the *archai*, then they pose no threat to us because we are in Christ!

“***Nor powers***” - *oute dunameis*. The ancients regarded all celestial beings as powers, or cosmic powers as they called them, which could be good or bad. They also referred to these cosmic powers as *daimones*, which is transliterated into our English word demons. They were thought to be celestial beings from different galaxies, who came to earth periodically to interact with man. Some were regarded as being good, having good intentions for mankind, while others were thought to be bad, having bad designs for man.

They were a level of beings that existed in power and scope somewhere between the higher celestial hierarchies, the rulers and authorities and the lower demons. The higher ones were referred to as the Titans, or Theitans in the Chaldee, who were thought to have interbred with human females creating a race of giants or titans on earth. Anyway, the Lord was victorious over them and they also cannot separate us from the love of God.

“***Nor things present***” - *oute enestota*. The word for **things present** is the perfect active participle of *enistemi*. And comes from two words *histemi* – to stand, and *en* – in, which meant to be at hand, to be present. *Enistemi* had the idea of something that has been coming upon us and is now present, or as we would say, the things presently upon us.

Political situations, economic uncertainty, social unrest, health problems, family crises, inflation, devaluation, tyranny of government, retirement funds being wiped out, the wicked in high places of government, military threat, the list goes on and on of things that we are presently faced with; things that threaten us, yet none of these things we are facing in life will separate us from the love of God! Not even our sins and failures in life!

The problem goes back to our feeling vulnerable and insecure, because we feel like there are things out there that can hurt us. Things that threaten our bodies and souls. And out of that feeling of insecurity comes the emotion of fear! And the fear complex torments our souls every moment of the day. But, if we know that we are loved by God and nothing can separate us from his love, then we will be OK.

*“Nor things to come.” - ou te mellonta. Things to come, or the future, as translated by the NIV, is the present active participle of *mello*. “The things that are upon us in the **present**, and the things that will come upon us in the **future**.” There are two things that bother us. The things that we are presently facing in life, things which could pose a threat to us. And the things that we could face, or will face, in the future. And this due to our feeling vulnerable and insecure. But remember, **nothing in the present and nothing in the future can separate us from the love of God!***

MM. Continued. v.39

“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:39 - ουτε υψωμα ουτε βαθος ουτε τις κτισις ετερα δυνησεται ημας χωρισαι απο της αγαπης του θεου της εν χριστω ιησου τω κυριω ημων.

*“Nor height” - ou te hupsoma. Height, hupsoma, was an astrological term, but it was one of the two words that were used to denote the very highest of something versus *bathos*, the very lowest. **Height** spoke of the heavens, the abode of the angels, so it is referring to any angelic creature, regardless of their position in the celestial hierarchy.*

*“Nor depth” - ou te bathos. Bathos referred to the very lowest depth of anything, such as, the deepest part of the sea, or the deepest part of the earth, which would refer to Hades, or Sheol in the OT. “If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in **hell**, behold, thou art there.” Psalm 139:8 Heaven and Hell are put as the ultimate heights and depths of everything. “But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of **hell**.” Proverbs 9:18*

In theology there is a term given to the work and action of Jesus Christ in his coming down to earth and his going back to heaven. It is the **katabasis** and **anabasis** of Christ. The **katabasis**, from *katabaino* – to go down, is the coming down of Christ from the heights of heaven, down to the depths of Hell. And the **anabasis** of Christ, from *anabaino* – to go up, is his going from the depths of Hell back up to the heights of heaven once again. There is nothing in heaven or Hell that can separate us from God's love.

*“Nor any other creature,” - ou te tis ktisis hetera. The word for **creature** is *ktisis* and refers to a created thing, and *hetera* refers to different kinds of created things. What Paul has done, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is sum up all things created, whether they live in heaven or hell, and says **that there is not one of them that can separate us from the love of God!***

An interesting question is, why would he go through all the trouble of listing every single possibility of things that could separate us from the love of God? A simple, “nothing can separate us from the love of god” would suffice! The reason why is that there will always be someone out there who could come up with some possible scenario and this nips that in the bud!

*“Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” - dunesetai hemas chorisai apo tes agapes tou theou tes en christo iesou to kurio hemon. The word for **able** here is the future middle indicative of *dunamai*, which gets into the idea of power. And the word for **separate** is the aorist active infinitive of *chorizo* – to divide, or separate.*

This gets into the idea of **power** and what this tells us is that there is nothing and no one **that has the power** to separate us from the love of God, which exists in the person of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! **And all believers in Christ are in him!** Pastor Mike