

EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**UNDERSTANDING OTHER RELIGIONS WE
MEET IN EVANGELISM**

by

DR JOHN CAMERON McEWAN

Book 115

Revised 25 August 2016

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

Salvation is available for all members of the human race.

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation, neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise, nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

How do I become a Christian?

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (I Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

The results of Salvation

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:
My sins are taken away (John 1:29),
I possess eternal life now (I John 5:11,12),
I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),
The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (I Corinthians 6:19),
And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

© Evangelical Bible College of Western Australia – www.ebcwa.org.au

Many other Christian resources are available freely from our internet web site: www.ebcwa.com.au and [www.http://ebcwa.free.org.nz](http://ebcwa.free.org.nz) for weekly messages.

For further information contact Dr Peter Moses email pjmoses@bigpond.com.au – Dr John C McEwan at john.mcewan@xtra.co.nz

We encourage you to freely copy and distribute these materials to your Pastor and friends. You only, need written permission from EBCWA if you intend using the materials in publications for resale. We encourage wide distribution freely!

CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
What is a Religion?	8
2. What is Satan’s Strategy towards the Lost?	11
3. What is the true “Good News” for mankind?	17
4. What are the false views about our life here on earth?	25
Atheism	25
Polytheism/Pantheism	29
Neo-Paganism - the old gods/demons return	31
Legalism – Dangerous Orthodoxy in Church and Mosque	34
5. What does God’s Plan call for that individuals might be saved?	41
6. What must our “Plan” for evangelism look like, if it is to reflect God’s Plan?	44
7. Our “Action Plan”.	49
8. Concluding Remarks - Executive Summary restated	50
Appendix 1 - Spiritism in Africa (Dr Howard Mwindula) the old pagan world’s ongoing work	51
Appendix 2 – Summary of what are the differences in religious beliefs between religions	63

Auckland, New Zealand, Revised 25 August 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this review is to confirm the following critical principles

- 1 The richest man in the cemetery is still a corpse – and all men know death mocks their wealth, their power and their status in time. Man hungers for fellowship with God, or at least understanding of the meaning of their very brief existence here on earth in space and time. Religion answers from man’s perspective – reaching up towards God or philosophy, but Christianity gives the good news that God has reached down to meet man’s true needs and open the door to genuine fellowship with their Maker and their Saviour from sin and death.

2. There is an essential mystery at the heart of man’s existence in this space-time bound universe. We understand the concept of eternity but are unable to reach it. The “good news” is, that in the incarnation, Jesus Christ has entered space and time and opened the door to enable us to enter eternity with him.

3. Man selects his path through this life and his destiny in eternity by this choice in time and space. One path is characterized by revelation, absolutes, accountability and righteousness, the other by relativism, and an arrogant rejection of all that Christ preaches and stands for.

4. Religion is the satanic counterfeit of the truth of relationship through grace by faith in Christ Jesus. Religion seeks God’s approval by works and ritual, whereas Christianity delivers the truth that relationship is only available through the completed work of Jesus on our behalf, and our full acceptance of God’s terms for relationship.

5. Four great faiths have stood the test of time and are examined in this book, but all fall short of the revelation that is in Christ Jesus – in his person and his work for mankind. Religion in all its forms falls short of the righteous standards of Almighty God. Only grace meets the standards, for it is God’s gift to us.

6. The challenge the creator gives us is that Sin and Death must be eliminated in this present universe, for there is no place for them in eternity. Only the person and work of Jesus Christ achieves the aim of eliminating sin and death, and so there is blessed entry into eternity only of those in living relationship with Him.

7. Living faith is embracing the truth about the fact that this is the “visited planet” and that in grace the maker has spoken fully and finally to his creation, and acted fully and finally to deliver mankind salvation. The journey we are all on in this life has only one end point and that is the end of this space and time universe in fire. We are either with Jesus or we are bound up forever with this doomed universe – for this universe implodes and becomes the “Lake of Fire”. 2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8, 27.

8. Man is either “with Jesus”, or with the enemy in the Lake of Fire – for that is where the evils of the old creation are forever to be locked away, without any distress to those fellowshiping with the Lord forever – for all have made their choices freely. The choice bluntly put to mankind is – will it be your works that you depend upon to save you, or will you accept Christ’s work to save you? The Bible makes it clear that mankind has only two options; religion or relationship. Do you believe you are fit and ready for the eternal state without God’s provision for you? We must either accept Christ’s work for us, or depend upon our works, as Cain did all those years ago. What will it be? Let us proclaim the stark choice and its eternal consequences.

UNDERSTANDING OTHER RELIGIONS WE MEET IN EVANGELISM

1. INTRODUCTION

Matthew 16:24-26 *“24. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

25. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

Man faces an essential mystery at the core of his existence. That mystery is the “mystery” of our very existence itself. We are creatures of space and time, and yet we can speak of eternity and infinity. We cannot have a thought that isn’t presently limited by space and time and yet we can conceive of a day when those limits might be broken. What is the explanation of these things? The evolutionist can only speculate further and invent new theories, but within historic Christianity we have an answer and we believe it is God’s revealed answer to man.

The truth about our existence here on this small planet in a corner of the Milky Way galaxy is that we live, and we certainly die, and unless there is a Maker, a caring Creator, then our life is pointless indeed. If we do not hear the voice of God to us we are left with wealth that we leave behind for others at death. The “richest man in the cemetery” is still a corpse. There is no purpose to this life in the context of eternity unless God has spoken and revealed it. The challenge we are left with by Jesus is to proclaim the truth he stepped into history to reveal to mankind.

God only needed to step personally into history once and our argument, our “good news”, is that he has done so.

Matthew 28:18-20 *“18. And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Amen.”

2 Corinthians 4:1-7 *“1. Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;*

2. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

3. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4. 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.

5. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 should also be read at this point – reminding us that we are called to be God’s ambassadors.

Our message is that all people need “to see Jesus” (**John 12:21**), and not be distracted by the enemy of mankind, who seeks to destroy all he can with him in the Lake of Fire. Satan, referred to as the “god of this world” in the passage above, has a strategy towards the lost and as we will see its main focus is religion, not immorality. All the enemy of mankind has to do is distract people long enough to have them die without Christ, without hope, and without eternal life. Christianity is not a religion – it is a dynamic and living relationship with God the Father, through the person and work of Jesus and is expressed on this earth through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer. It is walking in the light, whereas Satan’s strategy is to keep people in the dark of “alternative” religions that put the bushel of evil over the light house of God’s good news to mankind.

Matthew 5:13-16. *“13. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Religion is man trying to impress God by their rituals and works, but genuine faith produces a dynamic relationship with God, and it is expressed in Holy Spirit empowered good works. Christianity is God’s work in us – not our work for Him! Christianity is God’s positive “good news” to man, that he doesn’t need to do anything to try to impress God, for God has done all that is needed for relationship with him.

God wants man to bow before the Cross and Empty Tomb, and then open themselves to relationship with the one who stepped into history, destroyed the power of sin and death, and opened the door of faith for them. God doesn't want us caught in the negativity of man's hopeless efforts, but in the hope and confidence of God's completed work for us on the Cross and at the Garden Tomb.

Religion seeks to control man; God seeks relationship with mankind through the completed work of Jesus Christ – a relationship that will set men and women free in space and time for eternity. It is God's power unleashed within through the indwelling Holy Spirit and prayer that transforms mankind – and religious people need to see this power in us – for this is the very thing they do not know and need, in order to change their hell doomed lives

The "fruit" of religion is self centeredness and self righteousness - the fruit of the Holy Spirit's work in a life is altogether different! Jesus tells us to examine the "fruit" in people's lives to see where they are coming from (heavenly thinking or demonically inspired thinking). Religion is powerful, because it makes men feel they are accepted because of their "works" and rituals, and yet God's message is altogether different! Let us be obedient to the Lord and examine the "fruit" of religious people/groups/beliefs, for by the fruit of a philosophy it is to be truly known. As we will see below some of the fruits of paganism (active worship of the demonic forces) are indeed openly evil. **Romans 1:18-32, Galatians 5:16-21.**

Matthew 7:13-24. *"13. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:*

14. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:"

Evangelism is difficult in some places simply because the satanic religious framework is so strong within a community. This satanic religious "stronghold" must be broken and all who would be obedient to the orders of the Lord regarding giving the Gospel message must understand this and apply God's powerful means to obey the command. It is not broken by logic or reasoning, but by the Spirit of God. **Zechariah 4:6, John 8:37-58, 16:7-11.** People who are captured by religious beliefs have many reasons to hold those false viewpoints strongly – for their religious system tells them that unless they do they are damned! It is only the power of the Holy Spirit that breaks the satanic falsehoods and shows captured man the path to freedom in and through what Jesus has done for them on the Cross.

The biblical message is that the "Sin Problem" of man must be sorted out in space and time, for none with sin may enter eternity with God. Man either solves this sin/evil problem God's way or seeks to solve it their own way. This is the "battle for the heart and mind" of each person that Satan fights daily. The Gospel message is that God has solved the problems of mankind forever through the person and work of Jesus, but Satan's alternative is that by religious ritual and works that man may find perfection by himself and not need anything from God, or man may simply "ignore" God and get by. The biblical truth is that it is "God's way" or the enemy's way, and the result is either eternity with the Lord, or with Satan in the Lake of Fire. **Revelation 20:10-15.**

Biblical Evangelism is giving God's "good news", but it is doing it God's way, not according to any systems of man. Evangelism brings us face to face with the reality of the Angelic Conflict and this means that the weapons we must use are to be spiritual only – for all the devices and intelligent thoughts of men are inferior to the satanic strategies. He has had several thousand years to perfect his plan, but cannot do so. Remember the truth when facing the enemy of all truth. *"Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world".* **1 John 4:4.** Resist by the SPIRIT thru the WORD alone.

As long as we stick to God's Plan, God's Power, and lift up God's Person – the only Saviour – we will see the enemy defeated and his hold over the lost broken. Religion is his main tool to hold men captive and the focus of this little book is to help you understand religion in its main forms – so that your prayer may be targeted and your spiritual life focused. We are here to seek the salvation of the Lost – and that means introducing them to the one who can set them free from the invented nonsense that is man's religions!

There are many good people caught by the satanic counterfeits of false faith – both in the world of Christendom and in other religions. Many Moslems genuinely seek to serve the One True God, as do many Baptists, Brethren, Catholics and Sikhs, but while they try to impress God with their works they remain conned by Satan and needing liberation by Jesus.

2 Corinthians 10:3-7. “3. *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:*
 4. *(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*
 5. *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*
 6. *And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.*
 7. *Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's.”*

John 8:32-36 “32. *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
 33. *They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?*
 34. *Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*
 35. *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.*
 36. *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

As we draw closer to the days described by the Apostle John in the book of Revelation (Section 7 and below) we can expect to see more religious activity by the enemy, not less. This has been a surprise to many, but if we keep our biblical perspective we will not be surprised, nor caught off guard by Satan's newer forms of religion. Polytheism is still strong in many places (Africa and India-Asia) but in the form of nature worship it has seriously captured many in Western countries through “documentaries” on the wonders of the “natural world”. Understand the clever satanic deception here, for the push of the media is to present a world without an Almighty God who cares, rules, has a plan, and holds man accountable for the time he spends here.

Polytheism has made its comeback through nature worship, which sees the evangelists of it speak of natural processes in terms reserved by us for God the Creator. They deny a creator, and yet deify the creation. They then couple this with what they term “respect” for all the animistic and polytheistic religions of the “native people” of the countries they visit to film within. The “respect” they speak of only applies to the polytheistic nature religions, never to the Christian faith, even where it is the dominant faith of the people. Dr Howard Mwindula's paper on “Spiritism” gives insights into this area.

There is a new catch phrase in the professional, military, and political world. It is “safe cultural practise” for all professionals, and by that is meant, respect for the old pagan religions of all peoples, and that means more than just acceptance of other people's choice to worship the old gods (read demons). The new professional bodies are asking their members to “embrace” the old paganism as an early reflection of their own faiths. The new push is for all believers to accept paganism as a legitimate and truthful alternative version of their own faith. More below about this.

Ask yourself seriously, why has the media become so evangelistic towards pagan religion in recent years? Why do we see the pushing of homosexual, lesbian, transgender marriage by governments, even when the majority of the nation's people do not want it? What do we see going on in our media and our political worlds today? We see the world that Daniel, Zechariah, our Lord, Paul, and John described being laid out before us. We see a world where all religions are to be respected **except** the one that centres in the message of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. As we study the topic of “Religion” in this book, let us remember our context and our period of history (the space and time we are called to obey the Lord's commands within).

OUR RELIGIOUS/PAGAN DAYS

2 TIMOTHY 3:1-8. “1. *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*
 2. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*
 3. *Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,*
 4. *Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*
 5. *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*
 6. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*
 7. *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
 8. *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”*

These eighteen characteristics are a catalogue of the evils of selfishness, and self centeredness; both characteristics of Satan, who magnifies self above obedience to God. Verse eight reminds us that these characteristics were seen in the lives of the two magician-priests of Egypt who opposed Moses and Aaron. The characteristics listed here of what the bible refers to as “evil” (satanic policy in opposition to God's policy) are the very description of what satanic religion does to people over time. When you see these things, stop and pray for God's protection over you, for you face the enemy, just as Moses and Aaron did. This is our reality as we stand before the Lord on the eve of 2017, and the days will darken further, but our challenge remains the same – turn the light on and turn it up! **Matthew 5:13-16.**

Satan's main strategy is to keep men rooted and grounded in self centeredness and self righteousness or simply tranquilized by activity of any sort. Satan is happy for man to do anything except have a genuine encounter/relationship with God through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Saviour. **Isaiah 43:11, Acts 4:12, 16:31, 17:31.**

God wants relationship, but Satan wants pointless activity, and meaningless ritual. Religion always produces evil, for its source is evil, but genuine relationship with God through Jesus produces the Fruits of the Holy Spirit – genuine goodness.

We will review below the “Strategies of Satan”, for all religion is rooted and grounded in his main thrust to keep mankind away from love, grace and truth, and hold them captive in arrogance, legalism, and denial of their Maker. At the heart of all Satan’s strategies is self centeredness, rather than God centeredness. Religion is about celebrating self and the achievements of mankind – Christianity is about celebrating what God has done to win salvation for mankind through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Mankind has a choice – Religion or Relationship! Only genuine relationship with God through Christ Jesus saves man.

The command of the Gospel message is to be Christ Centred – taking his claims over us as the most important things in this brief life - not following the enemy’s viewpoint and being self centred! Satan wants man to celebrate what he can do to obey and impress God and himself – whereas God wants us to bow before His work for us and accept Him as our Saviour and Lord. Let us remind ourselves of the enemy’s viewpoint and plan, and see it’s manifestations in the various forms of Religion with which he blinds mankind to the truth. Our Faith is a relationship with our Father God through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ – and its fruit are quite different to the fruits we see below of satanic religion.

THE EIGHTEEN CHARACTERISTICS

The eighteen characteristics of those “captured already by the enemy” (these are our religious targets for evangelism), as recorded by Paul above, are as follows. **Ephesians 2:1-12** read also.

1. **Lovers of self** - To be self centred means that everything is interpreted in terms of selfish concerns; it is a moral relativism that centres on the self rather than God or others. Biblical Evangelism will magnify the Lord’s person and work in the life of the person. Christ is the centre of the life for all who know Him – whereas ritual, pride, or debate and conflict are at the centre of satanic religious systems.
2. **Covetous** - Lovers of money so that everything has a price and what is of value is what can be measured in dollar terms. The love of money is at the foundation of all satanic religion. Satan magnifies things of temporal value rather than eternal realities. When money, position in society, or power of any temporal sort is in view in an organization then that group is running on the “dark side”. Relationship with Christ as Saviour makes a person focused upon others and gracious giving, but satanic religion will always focus a person back upon themselves and on taking more from the world to enjoy. Those in living relationship with Christ Jesus focus upon saving men and women out of the world. Satan keeps the focus upon this world. Religion is centred in this world – relationship with Jesus focuses the person beyond this world, serving Christ and our fellows here, and serving into eternity.
3. **Boasters** - We would say people like this are "full of hot air"; they have neither substance nor heart, but love to speak great words about themselves. Relationship with Jesus as Saviour and Lord leads to humble words and humble service. Relationship with God creates passion for truth – not defence of self, or boasting about self. In relationship with Jesus we understand that all we have is by Grace, through Faith, from Him! There is nothing to celebrate or “boast over” other than his Great Grace towards us!
4. **Pride** - Arrogance knows no bounds when the opinion of God is ignored and the self is the sole criteria for decision making. Beware this satanic warning sign – for pride indicates the heart is unstable and the feet will soon fall into a hole the devil digs for all those who believe their own publicity. Religion that has its roots in satanic viewpoint is characterized by pride and arrogance towards others.
5. **Blasphemers** - When people think they know better than God they very quickly move on to directly insult God and his words, for they don’t think they are bound by the rules that govern those who are, in their eyes, foolish enough to believe in God! Do not arrogantly go beyond what the Scriptures teach regarding any truth lest you fall into this great sin. We can blaspheme God by insulting God directly, as do the atheistic religious unbelievers, but also by speaking “for God”, but in ways that bring dishonour to Jesus person and work. Jesus is not one of the “gods”!
6. **Disobedient to parents** - At heart a nation's strength is rooted in the strength and respect within the family unit. Where children grow up to despise, disobey, or ignore their parents they will grow up without a healthy sense of discipline. The society will then suffer, as the child who does not respect its own parents will not often respect the life or property of others. This point applies equally to children and parents; parents must live so as to be worthy of respect and children must respect as far as they are able their parents. Even within the ministerial office, when parents are possibly quite old, the pastor is to be judged on the basis of his/her treatment of them. We are to be characterised by loving care, not pious neglect. Respect for authority characterizes those in relationship with Jesus. There is no arrogant rejection of governments, even when they persecute true believers.
7. **Unthankful** - This term sums up a trait of people who are in evil that often baffles others. Why is it that you can do wonderful things for some people and they will despise you and insult you for the good you have done them, or they will use your very kindness against you? The answer is here. People who get into evil and false doctrine will lose all perspective and have as their character trait an ungratefulness that is destructive and nasty. Be a person known for thankfulness; both towards God and God’s people who support the ministry of the Word.

8. **Unholy** - Holiness means to be set apart for God and his service, and unholiness means the reverse; to be set apart for self and evil rather than God. "Unholy" in effect means to be active in the service of the enemy. In whose company would we be rather seen? Do we see our time here on earth as "set apart time", to be used in the service of the Lord? To the holy all space and time is simply to be used for the Lord who gave his all for them. The spirit of relationship with Jesus is a gratefulness that overflows to thankfulness, worship, and service of others.
9. **Without natural affection** - No capacity for love is an indication of deeper and more dangerous aspects of a person's nature. When people love only themselves they are incapable of truly loving others. To be in relationship with the one who "loved the world and gave himself for the world" is to be a person characterized by love for others. Love is a true fruit of the Holy Spirit and a sign of relationship with Jesus. This love is "agape love" – a deep care and concern for the eternal security and blessing of those we meet.
10. **Trucebreakers** - When people have morality that is rooted in self interest you can be sure of only one thing with them; that you cannot be sure of them at all. They will be as stable as the wind is! These are people whose word you cannot trust, whereas the believer who walks with Jesus must be trusted in all his/her words. By our life fruit we are known and those who truly know Jesus can be trusted because they are like Jesus.
11. **False accusers** - Malicious gossips will abound where-ever self is king. Let all who walk with Jesus be known for their enthusiastic and passionate words about the things of the Lord, and let us spot the satanic followers of false religion by their false words and false accusations against others.
12. **Incontinent** - No self control. People who follow their whims and fancies as if they were truth and righteousness, where-as they are simply lust and desires. No personal agenda or belief must distract us from the Lord's work in this life – and as we deepen our relationship with Jesus we will be more in control of temper and other aspects of our old sin nature. Religious people can be spotted for the opposite trait – that they are without any self control.
13. **Fierce** - Brutal men are Satan's men. Gentle men are God's. There is no place in the church for those who will tear another person apart with their words or their hands. We are not to be fierce like wild dogs, but gentle like our Lord. A fierce violent man is a false brother: a fierce and vicious woman is a false sister.
14. **Despisers of those who are good** - A man is known by his company and by those he loves. No good man will despise good men, but every evil man will. Look at the company others keep and see where their hearts are. All believers must be lovers of the good!
15. **Traitors** - If a person is dishonourable they will betray you without thought. Evil has no standards other than self gratification, and betrayal of the good for temporary gain is to be expected from evil men. Loyalty is a characteristic of true ministers.
16. **Heady** - Thoughtlessness of others is another trait of the evil man. They do not think about consequences, they are rash and foolish, lacking foresight and concern for others. All things done by genuine believers who have met Jesus will be thoughtfully and prayerfully prepared for and followed through with love and care. Religious people will be "thoughtless" of others.
17. **High minded** - While being rash and foolish themselves they use such terms of others. They do not see any problems with their own behaviours, for they are perfect in their own eyes. Beware of ceasing to examine yourself daily – for only in prayerful self examination is sin eliminated that would otherwise defile our holy service. Religion lifts man up in pride – but genuine relationship with Jesus makes us humble before Him.
18. **Pleasure lovers** - Their God is their belly. Philippians 3:19. They do things to feel good rather than because they are good, and will be of benefit for them and others. The sole focus of all genuine spiritual services is the blessing of others – they have nothing to do with the pleasure of the believer. We receive great joy in the Spirit as we serve, but our service is not for pleasure, but for blessing to be given to God's people.

WHAT IS RELIGION - THE QUESTION WE MUST ASK – "WHERE DOES THE POWER COME FROM?"

This terrible list is all too common in our day as it was in Paul's day. It is just another sign of the impact of evil upon the world. These are the things that Satan and his workers (both demonic and human) aim to foster within the churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques of this world, for these things will keep people away from God and God's purposes for them. Religion robs man of his rightful place – in relationship with God through the person and work of the real Jesus. All that hides the truth about the real Jesus works for evil, and all that stops men entering relationship with God through systems of works, serves evil.

We must set our hearts and minds firmly against any behaviour or thought that leads to this defiled and destructive way of living. In the fifth verse Paul identifies the central point about these people. The truly frightening thing is that these people are often in the churches as ministers, and in Paul's day they were claiming to be more spiritual than the genuine believers. Dangerous religion is not just amongst the non Christian sects and religions – it exists in the very heart of what some consider orthodoxy.

Let us understand clearly that all that separates man from living relationship with God is evil and whatever its name it is to be identified and those caught by it targeted for "liberation" with the truth of the Gospel message.

True spirituality centres in the source of each person's power to live as God requires; the deceived religious follower of falsehood has the power and the life style than comes from the self (or the demonic), while the genuine believer in the One True God has the power and life that comes from God. We are challenged by the Bible to see the difference between human viewpoint and divine viewpoint, human power and techniques, and genuine Holy Spirit enabled power. We are called to relationship with God that involves Holy Spirit power moving within us. We are called to expose the false human centred source of power to keep God's commands, for it can only develop self satisfied pride and all the evils that will flow from that mental attitude.

Remember always, Satan's objective is not to make people into the town drunk (for they get desperate enough to be saved), his real coup is to make them self righteous, legalistic hypocrites, and if he can get them into religious organizations he really creates chaos amongst God's people. Satanically deceived people have no real power except what pride and human strength can produce, and it produces the above list rather than the list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 6. Satan's policy is to rob people of God's power and distract them from God's purposes for their lives. Religion remains his main strategy to destroy mankind.

DOCTRINE OF RELIGION

1. Satan's religion is a humanly acceptable one where "salvation" is either not required, or already exists: he appeals to pride and smugness. His religions either encourage people to feel they are safe from Hell, or that there is for them no sin, no judgment, no Saviour and no Hell. He wants them to feel accepted and safe as long as they stay within the religion and fulfill its demands. Satan appears as an angel of false light, false hope. (2 Corinthians 11:13-19,26.)
2. Many pastors in the churches are servants of Satan's policy, knowingly or unknowingly. (Isaiah 30:12, Jeremiah 2:8, 2 Peter 2:1-10). They teach false doctrines and so deceive people into thinking falsehood rather than truth that will empower them for service.
3. Satan's strategy towards unbelievers is to keep them blinded to the true gospel. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Colossians 2:8, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10)
4. Satan's strategy towards believers is:-
 - a) to confuse by false teaching. (Matthew 7:15, Romans 16:18)
 - b) to appeal to pride. (2 Corinthians 10:12)
 - c) to promote idolatry. (Habakkuk 2:18,19)
 - d) to promote legalism. (1 Timothy 1:7-8)
5. Satan's policy calls for counterfeit faith:-
 - a) counterfeit gospel. (2 Corinthians 11:3-4)
 - b) counterfeit pastors. (2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
 - c) counterfeit communion. (1 Corinthians 10:19-21)
 - d) counterfeit doctrine. (2 Timothy 4:1)
 - e) counterfeit righteousness. (Matthew 19:16-28)
 - f) counterfeit way of life. (Matthew 23)
 - g) counterfeit power. (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10)
 - h) counterfeit gods. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

Many in the world want a religion that does not require any change to their sinful life patterns, or anything that would disturb their Old Sin Nature. Satanic forms of religion comfort the Old Sin Nature – building pride and self satisfaction, and practise rituals that tranquilize the soul and rest the body. Genuine Christianity is not the choice of those who wish to control their **Old Sin Nature**, but a counterfeit faith/religion is. We must keep reminding ourselves of the enemy's central desire, which is to keep people from seeing their need of a Saviour, and then hindering them from following the true Lord and Saviour. Satan wants people comfortable and distracted from eternal realities. He doesn't care much about what distracts people and will use sin, evil, as well as "good works" to do so. Satanic religion will go in either direction to secure its goal – to distract people from the truth to their destruction.

THE OLD SIN NATURE

1. We are born with an Old Sin Nature, inherited from Adam, which is against God and prone to sin (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 5:12).
2. The old sin nature is perpetuated in the human race by physical birth (Psalm 51:5, 1 Timothy 2:13, 14).
3. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).
4. Names for the old sin nature:
 - a) Flesh - Galatians 5:16
 - b) Old Man - Ephesians 4:22, Colossians 3:9
 - c) Carnal - Romans 7:14
 - d) Sin - Romans 5:12

- e) Heart - Jeremiah 17:9
- f) Member - Colossians 3:5.
- 5. The believer continues to have an old sin nature after salvation (1 John 1:8, 1 Corinthians 3:1).
- 6. The believer under the control of the old sin nature is called carnal (Romans 7:14, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3).
- 7. The old sin nature frustrates true production of the Christian life (Romans 7:15).
- 8. The old sin nature has two tendencies (Romans 6:6)
 - a) Area of weakness - pushes us towards lawlessness and sins (Hebrews 12:1)
 - b) Area of strength - pushes us towards asceticism and self-righteousness/religion (Isaiah 64:6).
- 9. The old sin nature is not found in the resurrection body (1 Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:23).
- 10. Victory over the old sin nature is achieved by considering your old life dead, surrendering to God, confessing sin and relying solely upon the filling of the Spirit – by spirituality rather than carnality (Romans 6:6-11, Colossians 3:9-10, Ephesians 5:18-21).

RELIGION IS.....

Religions are about trying to control the Old Sin Nature in ways that build pride and self satisfaction, but genuine “Living Faith” looks at the spiritual ways and means we need to employ to ensure we are always aware of eternal realities so that we walk in the Holy Spirit’s power and the light of biblical truth. We must stand against spiritual deception leading us away from biblical truth.

The challenge remains daily to “walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and so not follow after the desires of the old man/the flesh/the old sin nature”. **Romans 13:14.** Satan’s plan is to deceive us into following after religions that will either hold us in the power of our Old Sin Nature area of strength – for then we will become proud and self righteous – not thinking we need a Saviour. He is equally happy if we follow after a religion that grants easy forgiveness from sins, and actually encourages hypocrisy and immorality (opening the door to acceptance of our Old Sin Nature area of weakness) – with the promise of absolution in the end.

These are the two different strongholds of the enemy that must be broken in evangelism. They can only be broken by the power of the Holy Spirit, for since the Fall of Man we all have the enemy within – our Old Sin Nature that has the natural tendency to evil and sin. The Holy Spirit alone breaks the power of sin and evil, not any rituals, tricks, psychology, or protocols.

John 16:8-11. “8. *And when he (the Holy Spirit) is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*
 9. *Of sin, because they believe not on me;*
 10. *Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;*
 11. *Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”*

Galatians 5:16-18. “1.6 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*
 17. *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
 18. *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”*

Ephesians 5:15-21 “15. *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,*
 16. *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
 17. *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*
 18. *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*
 19. *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
 20. *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
 21. *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”*

2. WHAT IS SATAN'S STRATEGY TOWARDS THE LOST?

DOCTRINE OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

1. There is an angelic conflict and it is intimately related to our presence in this world. The context of religions relates to Satan's greater plans to deceive and destroy mankind in any way he can. He wins if he can blind people to the reality of the Angelic Conflict. The study of religion is the study of the greatest of the satanic plans to hold mankind captive in deception; anything to keep individuals away from the truth about the possibility of genuine relationship with God.

2. ETERNITY PAST
 - [a] Initially God created angels. At creation we are told that there was unity as all the angels sang in unison.
 - [b] Satan as Lucifer with the title Son of the Morning was the head of the angels. Isaiah 14. Ezekiel 28:12-15
 - [c] It is noted that the Lord Jesus Christ is now called Son of the Morning in 2 Peter 1 showing that the Lord has in his humanity replaced Satan as ruler, as a result of His victory at the Cross.

3. FALL OF SATAN
 - [a] Satan became proud and attempted a coup d'etat against God, described in Isaiah 14:12-17
 - [b] When Satan fell he took one third of the angels with him. Revelation 12:9.
 - [c] The angels who exist forever therefore fall into two permanent groups
 - (i) Elect Angels who remained faithful to God (1 Timothy 5:21) and serve believers now. Hebrews 1:14.
 - (ii) Fallen angels who chose to follow Satan who fall into two categories:-
 - (1) Imprisoned ones who were made inoperative at the time of the Flood (Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4)
 - (2) Demons who are currently operative (1 Corinthians 10:20, 21, Mark 5:1-20) and are behind pagan "gods". Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, Psalm 96:5, 106:37.
 - [d] There is therefore a spiritual warfare between elect and fallen angels, which affects the human race. (Ephesians, 6:12, Revelation 12)

4. SENTENCE ON THE FALLEN ANGELS
 - [a] In eternity past Satan and the fallen angels were judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire - Matthew 24:51
 - [b] It would appear that Satan appealed against his sentence and said, "how can a God of Love sentence any of his creatures to the lake of fire?"
 - [c] The answer is in the character of God who is HOLY as well as LOVE. His holiness can only judge sin and rebellion. Sin and Death must be eliminated in this present Space-Time universe before Eternity begins.
 - [d] The lake of fire therefore was not created for man. Man ends up in the lake of fire due to his own negative attitude towards God. The unbeliever has joined Satan in his rebellion by rejecting the importance of Jesus.

5. MAN'S ROLE IN THE ANGELIC CONFLICT
 - [a] This sentence which was given before man existed has not yet executed and will not be so until the end of the Millennium in Revelation 20:10.
 - [b] There must be a long lapse of time before the sentence is executed with this period being taken up with the whole of human history. Therefore the purpose of the existence of the human race and its relation to God can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.
 - [c] Through the creation of man God provides a clear legal witness to Satan and his angels of their sin. The whole of human history is to prove certain points to the angels. Things can happen in your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and these can only be explained as a testimony to the angels.

6. FALL OF MAN AND VICTORY OF THE GOD MAN
 - [a] Man starts off lower than the angels. Hebrews 2:9 tells us that Jesus Christ made Himself a little lower than the angels.

[b] Although Adam failed to be victorious the Lord Jesus Christ replaces Adam in history and won the battle in His humanity. 1 Corinthians 15:22 tells us that in Adam all die, but "in Christ" shall all be made alive forever.

[c] A new form of creature judges come into existence and will judge the angels. 1 Corinthians 6:1-3

7. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ANGELS AND MAN

[a] Angels and mankind have a number of parallels with human free will being tested in exactly the same way as angelic free will.

[b] Angels began in innocence and full obedience to God (Job 38:7 Ezekiel 28:14-15)
 Man began in innocence (Genesis 2:25)
 Angels sinned - rebellion of Satan (Isaiah 14:12-14)
 Man sinned - rebellion of Adam (Genesis 3:1-7)
 Angels are divided into two categories - elect or fallen.
 Man is divided into two categories - believers and unbelievers. (John 3:36)

8. ADAM AND FREEWILL

[a] God created Adam and Eve, to show Satan that mankind, created lower than angels (Hebrews 2:6-7), would choose to obey God. Mankind therefore, by a choice of freewill, would decide whether to obey God and be blessed, or to disobey God and be judged (the same choice that Satan had).

[b] A test was instituted for man's freewill - obedience to God or disobedience. (Genesis 2:16-17). Adam - and therefore all mankind - sinned and thereby rebelled against God. All of mankind, therefore, is in the same condition of sinful rebellion as Satan.

[c] However, God instituted another test of freewill for mankind - will they choose to return to God through Jesus Christ, or will they choose to continue in sin and rebellion (John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9).

[d] Anyone who chooses to return to God will be saved; anyone who chooses to remain in rebellion to God will be judged in the lake of fire, the same fate as Satan (Matthew 25:41)

[e] Therefore, by the work of Christ on the cross, and man's freewill faith in Christ, God has vindicated His love to save and His justice to judge.

9. RESOLUTION OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

Stage 1 - Salvation - by faith, man is saved and made positionally superior to angels (Hebrews 2:6-7)

Stage 2 - Christian Walk - by faith, the believer overcomes Satan (Ephesians 6:10-17)

Stage 3 - Eternity - in Christ, the believer will judge Satan and his fallen angels (Hebrews 2:8, 1 Corinthians 6:3)

10. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Angels watch the human race. (1 Corinthians 4:9, Ephesians 3:10, 1 Timothy 5:21, 1 Peter 1:12) Elect angels rejoice every time someone is saved and serve believers. (Luke 15:10, Hebrews 1:14, 12:1-3.)

11. THREE BASIC QUESTIONS

The angelic conflict answers three basic questions:-

[a] Why man? Inside man is a soul with mentality and freewill which when linked together resolves the angelic conflict, (Colossians 2:14-15, Hebrews 2). The cross is the real victory in the angelic conflict.

[b] Why sin? Sin's judgment resolves stage 1 of the Plan of God (see paragraph 9). At the cross sin was judged and the barrier between man and God was removed so that man's relationship with God depends on his free will. Every time a person accepts Christ, elect angels rejoice. In the garden man was innocent and all he had to do was stay away from one tree. Now man is guilty he has to come to a tree (the cross). (Genesis 2:17, 1 Peter 2:24)

[c] Why suffering? Suffering occurs due to the present nature of this fallen world, yet even now believers have victory over and through suffering through their relationship in Christ Jesus. Suffering involves the promise principle. (1 Peter 1:7-8, Romans 5:2-4). Suffering is designed for blessing and is a further blow to Satan. It is to demonstrate the love of God in a way that cannot be done in eternity as in eternity there is no more sorrow, pain or death. (Revelation 21:4)

12. STAGES IN THE CONFLICT [SEE SATANIC ATTACK ON THE PLAN OF GOD]

[a] From the fall of man to the ascension of Christ the line of Christ and Jesus Christ himself were the target of attack. Once the ascension was a fact in history Satan was unable to attack the line of the Saviour.

[b] The resurrection, ascension and session of the Lord Jesus Christ caused intensification in the angelic conflict, for we enter the "last days" at that time, as the clock is now "ticking" – and Satan knows he has limited time.

[c] Once Christ is glorified at the right hand of the Father the angelic conflict becomes intensified in the Church age.

[d] Every Church Age believer is now a target and because of this every believer has had special provisions made for him:

- (i) Indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 14:17)
- (ii) Indwelling of Jesus Christ (John 14:23)
- (iii) Completed canon of Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:16, 13:9-12)

13. PROGRESSION OF THE SATANIC TO THE LAKE OF FIRE

This explains the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ from the time he sat down at the right hand of the Father until the Last Judgement. Psalm 110:1 says "The Lord [God the Father] said to my Lord [God the Son], Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

[a] The first stage – Insurgency warfare – Pentecost - Rapture

During this time He calls out the personnel who will replace the angelic council members who have been condemned 1 Corinthians 4:8, 6:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 3:21

The angelic council comprises God and all the angels as seen in 1 Kings 22:19-23 and 2 Chronicles 18:18-23

[b] The second Stage – Rapture to Second Advent - Confrontation

During this time the new members of the angelic council are evaluated in relation to their divine and human good, rewarded [1 Corinthians 3:11-15], they lose their old sin nature and have a resurrection body. The rebellious members, Satan and his followers are cast out of heaven Revelation 12:4

[c] The third stage – Second Advent – Victory Stage

Christ casts Satan and the fallen angels into hell for a thousand years and rightfully asserts His authority.

[d] The fourth stage – The Last Judgement. The Lake of Fire was created for Satan and his angels Matthew 25:41

Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire with the demons and the unbelievers. Unbelievers join them in the Lake of Fire because they have not accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. They have selected their destiny by selecting their company and refusing to accept the truth about Jesus. The old creation is then destroyed and a new heavens and a new earth provided by God. 2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 21:1ff. At that point all knees shall bow, and the promise of making His enemies His footstool will have been fulfilled.

14. THE BELIEVERS AND RESULT OF THE ANGELIC CONFLICT

The result of the angelic conflict:

Stage 1 - Salvation - saved mankind is positionally superior to angels;

Stage 2 - Christian Walk - through suffering the believer develops his faith towards Christ to such an extent that he thereby shows the fallen angels the certainty of their doom;

Stage 3 - Heaven - In eternity the believer in his resurrection body will be physically superior to angels.

15. CONCLUSION

Through the fall of man Satan obtained control of the world though not control of all mankind at any point.

What makes it possible for man to live in the Devil's world and not be under his control? - Free will with the Holy Spirit.

By using The Word of God you can make decisions that are completely against Satan and his concepts.

Satan is the temporary and partial ruler of this world. (2 Corinthians 4:4, John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11, Ephesians 2:2).

However we have the Bible - the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). We should know it and use it, for in its pages there is the strategy to defeat the plans of the enemy of mankind. In Christ, through the filling of the Holy Spirit, every believer can say. "Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world." 1 John 4:4.

WHAT IS EVIL?

1. **DEFINITION:** Evil is Satan's policy in opposition to God's doctrine. Evil is therefore a collection of beliefs and practises that back up Satan's viewpoint rather than God's.
2. Evil is not necessarily obviously nasty or "bad", it is simply a policy that will take you away from the path that God prepared for you. It is the satanic alternative plan, and he is a great "marketing expert" and darkness masquerades as light with his policies.
3. False religion may be very moral and even ascetic (and therefore look "holy"), but if it is leading people away from God's revealed will/plan for mankind's blessing it is evil.
4. Often evil can masquerade as "good". People who believe that their "good works" can satisfy God's holy demands are deceived by evil doctrine. Romans 7:19,20
5. Only God's Word, Bible Doctrine, can help the believer distinguish between true good and evil, Hebrews 3:13,14.
6. Only a soul saturated in God's Word is truly protected from the subtlety of Satan's policy of evil. Proverbs 2:10-14, 3:7, 19:23.
7. Only applied knowledge of God's Word negates and neutralises evil. Psalms 54:5, Romans 12:21, Isaiah 45.
8. The issue for the believer is the daily choice to accept God's Word and therefore protect oneself against evil. God watches for our choices. Proverbs 11:18,19, 22:3, 24:1-4, Ephesians 5:16, 2 Thessalonians 3:2,3.
9. The company of evil people will distort the thinking of the believer and confuse his/her witness. Isaiah 5:20, 1 Corinthians 15:23.
10. There is no evil in God at all. Psalm 5:4, 1 John 1:5, 4:4.
11. God judges evil and will condemn it to the lake of fire for ever at the final judgement. Psalm 34:16, Isaiah 13:11, Revelation 20:11ff
12. In spite of evil still existing in the world due to Satan's on-going presence throughout the Church Age, the Lord is still on the throne, and his hand is on all things.
13. Satan only does things by "permission" and we are in the Lord's hands and so are, in Christ, safe. Job 1:6-12, Proverbs 16:3, 4, Isaiah 45:6, 7

UNDERSTAND SATAN'S STRATEGY TOWARDS MAN

ANGELS – SATAN'S STRATEGY

1. Believers are warned against him and his tactics. (Ephesians 4:27, 6:11-13, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8)
2. We must be ready and alert. (2 Corinthians 2:11)
3. Satan is a deceiver and a counterfeiter. He uses deception - not obviously wrong or sinful - but very subtle changes to the truth (Genesis 3:1). Remember, a counterfeit looks like the original.
4. Satan is described as an "angel of light" - often seeming attractive and "good". (2 Corinthians 11:14)
5. His tactics
 - a) Towards unbelievers.
 - i) to blind them regarding the gospel. (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10)

- b) Towards believers.
 - i) Satan seeks to hinder our growth and witness. (1 Peter 5:8)
 - ii) Satan will mislead into false doctrine and legalism. (1 Timothy 5:14-15)
 - iii) He persuades believers to ignore the will of God through disobedience (Genesis 2:17, James 4:7-8)
 - iv) Satan often attacks our assurance of salvation so that we doubt God.
 - v) Worry (1 Peter 5, 7-9)
 - vi) Fear of death. (Hebrews 2:14-15)
 - vii) He accuses believers of sin both to God and to the believer (using guilt). (Revelation 12:9-10, Job 1:6-11)
 - viii) He takes our focus off Christ by getting eyes on self (1 Corinthians 1:10-11), on people (1 Corinthians 1:12), on things (Hebrews 13:5-6)
 - ix) When we don't allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, we open ourselves up to Satanic attack. (1 Corinthians 7:5, 2 Corinthians 2:11, 1 Timothy 5:14-15)
 - x) The Lord will allow Satan to attack a believer as discipline for unconfessed sin. (1 Timothy 1:20 cf 2 Corinthians 12:7)
 - xi) Satan cannot indwell or possess a believer, only beguile them. (Galatians 3:1)

- c) Towards the world in general.
 - i) The World - Satan tries to deceive the nations. (Revelation 20:7-10)

ANGELS – SATAN'S WORK

1. **SATAN'S SPHERE OF OPERATIONS AMONG MANKIND (Psalm 109:6-13)**
 - a) Satan blinds mankind to the truth of the Word of God by means of religion. (v.7)
 - b) He has the power to shorten life. (v 8a)
 - c) He can remove persons from a place of authority (v 8b)
 - d) Satan can kill (v 9)
 - e) He can persecute children (v 10)
 - f) He can remove wealth (v 11)
 - g) Satan can turn people against each other (v. 12)
 - h) He can cut off man's posterity to the second generation (v. 13)

2. **SATAN AS A KILLER**
 - a) He has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14, 15)
 - b) Killed Job's children (Job 1:12, 18,19)
 - c) Motivated Cain to murder Abel (John 8:44, cf. 1 John 3:12)
 - d) Often administers the sin unto death (1 Corinthians 5:5)

3. **SATAN AS A SOURCE OF DISEASE**
 - a) Was responsible for Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (2 Corinthians 12:7)
 - b) Produced illness in Job (Job 2:6-8)
 - c) Uses his demons to inflict diseases (Matthew 12:22, Luke 13:16, Acts 10:38)
 - d) Causes certain types of deafness, dumbness, paralysis and crippling effect by means of demon possession (Matthew 4:24, 12:22, Mark 9:17, 18)
 - e) When demon possession causes the affliction, the removal of the demon or demons produces an instant cure (Matthew 10:1, Mark 1:32-34, 6:13, Acts 8:7, 19:12)

4. **SATAN AS AN INSTRUMENT OF DISCIPLINE**
 - a) Desired to discipline Peter (Luke 22:31, 32)
 - b) Was authorised to discipline the Corinthian adulterer (1 Corinthians 5:5)
 - c) Was called upon by the Apostle Paul to administer extreme discipline to Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:19,20)
 - d) May become involved in the discipline of ministers and deacons (1 Timothy 3:6, 7)
 - e) Attacks through a believer's lack of forgiveness and orientation to grace (2 Corinthians 2:10, 11)

5. **SATAN AS A HEALER**
 - a) Healing was a temporary spiritual gift before the completion of the Canon of Scripture (Acts 19:11, 12, cf Philippians 2:27, 2 Timothy 4:20)
 - b) God still heals today (Philippians 2:27)
 - c) Since Satan possesses the power of disease he often counterfeits healing by the removal of demons (Matthew 12:24, 24:24, 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Revelation 16:14)

6. **CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMON POSSESSION**
 - a) Loss of individuality: the demon-possessed person no longer has control of faculties of the soul (Mark 5:1-13, Luke 8:27, 9:39, 40)

 - b) Abnormal behaviour:
 - i) Convulsions (Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)
 - ii) Violence (Matthew 8:28)

iii) Abnormal strength (Mark 5:4, Luke 8:29, Acts 19:16)

iv) Raving (Mark 5:5)

v) Foaming at the mouth (Mark 9:20)

vi) Nakedness (Luke 8:27)

c) Loss of health:

i) Dumbness (Mark 9:17, Luke 11:14)

ii) Deafness and dumbness (Mark 9:25)

iii) Blindness and dumbness (Matthew 12:22)

iv) Epilepsy (Mark 1:26, 9:20, Luke 4:35)

v) Mental illness (Mark 5:15)

7. DEMON POSSESSION EXPLAINS:

a) Some so called divine healing

b) Alleged speaking in tongues where they is no spiritually good fruit in the life – eg, Voodoo

c) Faked contact with the dead (1 Samuel 28)

d) Success of self styled exorcists

e) Rise of certain world leaders (2 Thessalonians 2.9, Revelation 16:13, 14)

f) Cause of some wars (Revelation 20:8)

g) Reincarnation stories that appear to have early lives “remembered”

h) Fortune telling (Acts 16:16)

The impact of evil, and its “polite” face in Religion, is severe – to the damnation of generations of deluded people – and so we are seriously warned about religion’s power, and godly leaders are told that the Lord holds them responsible to warn against its deceptive power. Ezekiel is challenged and we have his challenge to meet in our day, for it is the Lord’s challenge to all who would stand for Him against the “wiles of the devil”. Let us not slide away from these challenges!

Ezekiel 3:17-20 “17. Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

18. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

19. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

20. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling-block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

Ezekiel 2:3-8 “3. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

4. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

5. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

6. And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

7. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.

8. But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.”

Ezekiel 3:8-11. “8. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads.

9. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

10. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

11. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.”

Ezekiel 33:1-7. “1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2. Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

3. If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people;

4. Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

5. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

6. *But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.*

7. *So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me."*

Peter backs Ezekiel's words also, and seriously warns us of the deviousness of the enemy by using the lion analogy for Satanic attack. **1 Peter 5:8-9.** Lions target the animal they wish to kill very carefully. They pick the weak, the sick, but particularly the animal that is isolated from the rest of the herd. Remember always the malice of the enemy. **John 15:18-27.** Satanic plans call for the hunting of the souls of men and women and their total destruction – and religious systems that delude and destroy are the best tools Satan has in his arsenal.

The one doctrine he hates above all others is that of his Judgement – this solid truth about his destiny at the Great White Throne. This is the truth that makes all demons "tremble". **James 2:19.** Our job as pastors is to make the Devil uncomfortable and his demons tremble, not make them feel relaxed and comfortable. We do this by turning the LIGHT of God's Word up to full power through the teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit.

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE (Summary)

1. The judgement of the Great White Throne is the last judgement. (Revelation 20:11, 15)
2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgement as there is no condemnation for Christians. (Romans 8:1)
3. The last judgement occurs at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:7-15)
4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works (Revelation 20:12)
5. The judgement is to show that the Human works of man (including especially religion) cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that He is only satisfied by "The Good Work" – the death of Christ on the Cross.
6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God by their religious/human works systems, the condemned are cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:15) None cry "unfair" about this – all recognizing that God is absolutely fair and just in his judgement. It is only on the doorway of eternity, beyond the limits of space and time, that all mankind sees the full truth about the events of space and time.

(This subject is covered more fully on page 35)

WHAT IS THE TRUE "GOOD NEWS" (GOSPEL) FOR MANKIND?

SALVATION

1. Salvation is the gift of God by grace through faith.
2. We cannot work for salvation - we must receive it as a gift. (Ephesians 2:8, 9, Romans 4:4-5)
3. The only means of salvation is by trusting that Jesus Christ died for your sins, was buried and was raised from the dead. He therefore paid the penalty for sin, and conquered both sin and death. (Acts 16:30-31, John 3:16, 14:6, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
4. We are saved so that we can serve God. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Our good works show that we have been saved.
5. Salvation includes many other doctrines such as Imputation, Justification, Redemption, Propitiation, Reconciliation and Sanctification.

SALVATION – SIN – MAN'S NEED FOR SALVATION

1. Sin means to fall short (like an arrow falling short of the target) of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
2. Therefore anything that does not meet God's standard of righteousness and holiness is sin.
3. It is clear to see, then, that mankind, in his own strength, cannot achieve the righteousness of God. (Romans 3:9-10)
4. The sin of Adam
 - a) Sin entered the world with Adam. (Genesis 3:1-5, Romans 5:12)

- b) The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
 - i) spiritual death - separation from God in time (Genesis 3:8)
 - ii) physical death - separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 3:19, 5:5)
 - iii) eternal death - separation from God in the Lake of Fire Revelation 20:13-14)
 - c) The man, Adam, as head over the woman, was therefore held responsible for sin (Romans 5:12)
 - d) The penalty of sin is imputed to all people, and, apparently, passed down through the male in birth.
 - e) Because Jesus was born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sin nature from Adam.
 - f) As a sinless man, He was therefore qualified to offer Himself as a sacrifice to pay the penalty of sin (death - spiritual and physical).
 - g) Because Christ has paid the penalty for sin for us, those who trust in Him are no longer condemned (Romans 5:19, 8:1)
5. All of creation is corrupted as a result of sin (Genesis 3:16-19, Romans 8:20-22)
 6. Three types of sin:-
 - a) Adam's sin is imputed to all mankind
 - b) As a result, we all inherit a sinful nature
 - c) As a result, we therefore commit personal sins
 7. Sin manifests itself in three categories:
 - a) Sins of action/deed
 - i) Examples include murder, adultery, stealing
 - b) Sins of the tongue/spoken
 - i) Examples include lying, slander, gossip, blasphemy
 - ii) Out of the seven "worst" sins, three are sins of the tongue. (Proverbs 6:16-19)
 - iii) Can result in the sin unto death. (Psalm 12:3)
 - iv) God protects and blesses the believer who is victimised by the sins of the tongue. (Matthew 5:11-12)
 - v) Troublemakers are always characterised by sins of the tongue. (Psalm 52:2)
 - c) Sins of the mind
 - i) Examples include pride, coveting, jealousy, bitterness, hatred, vindictiveness.
 8. Recovery from sin
 - a) When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and can no longer control your life.
 - b) Confess the known sin. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18) God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins.
 - c) Examine your motivation - this involves full surrender to God. (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:5)
 - d) Move on from the sin which you have confessed. Don't get tied up with guilt - this is another sin. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
 - e) Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
 - f) Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. (James 5:16)
 - g) In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).
 9. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples John 13:10
 - a) The body is clean - we were eternally forgiven once and for all at the cross. (Hebrews 10:1-12).
 - b) The feet need regular washing - we must confess our sins to the Father to restore fellowship (1 John 1:9)
 10. Satan constantly accuses us of our sins before God (Revelation 12:10). However, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate/Lawyer in heaven (1 John 2:1). He pleads for us by saying that the penalty for that sin has been paid in full.
 11. Names for sin include:-
 - a) Unbelief - denial of the truth. (John 16:9, Hebrews 3:12)
 - b) Lawlessness - rejection of rules of life. (1 Timothy 1:9)
 - c) Iniquity - evil acts. (Acts 8:22, 23)
 - d) Trespass - encroachment on God's authority. (Ephesians 2:1)
 - e) Disobedience - refusal to obey. (Hebrews 2:2)
 - f) Transgression - violation of law. (Luke 15:29, Galatians 3:19)
 12. The sin unto death is the physical death of a believer, due to habitual unconfessed sin or rebellion against God. (1 John 5:16, 17, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32) Examples
 - a) The Corinthian Pervert - (1 Corinthians 5)
 - b) The Corinthians who habitually came to the Lord's table in an unworthy manner. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)
 - c) Moses (Deuteronomy 32:48-52)
 - d) Achan (Joshua 7:16-26)
 - e) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1 -11)

13. There is only one sin which can't be forgiven - the unpardonable sin - rejection of Jesus Christ.
 - a) It is based upon rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. Genesis 6:3, John 16:7-11, Hebrews 10:29.
 - b) Synonyms for the unpardonable sin are: wilful sin Hebrews 10:26-31, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit Matthew 12:31, resisting the Holy Spirit Acts 7:51, insulting the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 10:29. By rejecting Jesus the unbeliever is saying they do not value his person or work and affirm that they do not need a saviour, and so they are given the right to be without one forever – but that means joining Satan forever.
14. The first recorded sin was that of Satan - pride (Isaiah 14:12-14)
15. God is not the author of sin nor the author of temptation. It is incompatible with the nature of God for Him to create sin because of His divine character. (James 1:13).
16. Temptation comes from the world, the flesh (sin nature within man), or Satan. If he entertains the sin, man then chooses to sin - sin is therefore a result of man's own free will. (James 1:14)

SALVATION – SANCTIFICATION (Spiritual Growth through grace by faith also)

1. Sanctification means to be made holy - to be set apart unto God. One who is sanctified is called a saint.
2. We are sanctified (made holy) in Christ Jesus (1Corinthians 1:2).
3. Sanctification is in three stages:
 - a) Stage 1: At salvation - union with Christ - positional sanctification (1Corinthians 12:13, Romans 1:1-7).
 - b) Stage 2: Christian way of life - filling of the Holy Spirit - spirituality (Romans 16:2; 1Corinthians 1-2).
 - c) Stage 3: Resurrection body - In heaven - Ultimate sanctification (1John 3:2).
4. Our position in Christ entitles us to share Christ's righteousness. It therefore:
 - a) protects us from divine judgement (Romans 8:1)
 - b) qualifies us to live with God forever
 - c) makes us a new creature in Christ (2Corinthians 5:17)
 - d) guarantees eternal security for every believer (Romans 8:38, 39).
5. However, because we still have the old sin nature, we will still sin during this life (Romans 7:21). When controlled by his carnal nature however, the believer is positionally sanctified but experientially carnal.
6. When we receive the resurrection body, we no longer sin - our sanctification will be complete (1Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1Thessalonians 5:23).

CHRIST – TESTIMONIES BY CHRIST OF HIMSELF

1. He claimed to transcend the Mosaic Law, and to be entitled to rewrite it. (Matthew 5:21-48.)
2. He claimed pre-existence as God. He freely used the divine "I am" which was the name of Jehovah God in the Old Testament. (John 6:35, 8:12,58, 10:7,11, 11:25, 14:6, 15:5)
3. He told the disciples to pray in His name. (John 14:14)
4. He claimed to have come down from heaven and that He would return to where He came from. (John 3:13, 6:33,42, 50-51, 62; 14:2-7)
5. He claimed power over death. He spoke of laying his life down and that He had the power to take it up again. (John 10:17-18)
6. He claimed that death could not hold Him and that he would rise up again in three days. (John 2:19)
7. He claimed to be able to raise up all the dead on the last day. (John 5:25-29, 11:25)
8. He claimed that he was the judge of all men. (Matthew 25:31; John 5:22)
9. He claimed that to trust Him was the same as trusting God; thereby making Himself equal to God. (Matthew 28:18-19, John 14:1)
10. He claimed that man can only really know God as He is revealed in Him. (Matthew 11:27; John 14:6)

11. He accepted worship as right for Himself, that belonged only to God; from Nathaniel (John 1:49), from Peter (Matthew 16:16), and from Thomas. (John 20:28)
12. He claimed that to see Him was to see God the Father. (John 14:9-10)
13. He claimed that He should be honoured as God is honoured, indeed that God is honoured when He is honoured. (John 5:22-23)
14. He claimed to be able to forgive sin, and give to all who believe in Him eternal life. (Matthew 9:2; John 10:28, 3:16-21, 6:35, 11:25)
15. He claimed that eternal judgement awaits those who reject him as Saviour. (John 3:36; Matthew 25:41-46)
16. He taught with absolute authority. (Matthew 7:29, Mark 1:22, John 14:6)
17. He claimed universal power. (Matthew 28:18)
18. He claimed that God the Father and He were one. (John 10:30)
19. He insisted that all revelation was fulfilled in Himself. He saw Himself as anticipated typologically in Jonah (Matthew 12:39-41, Luke 11:29-32), Solomon (Matthew 12:42, Luke 11:31), David (Matthew 12:3,4, Mark 2:25-26; Luke 6:3,4) and Isaiah. (Matthew 13:13,14, Mark 4:12 and Luke 8:10)

CHRISTIAN LIFE – LAWS OF LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBILITY – WALKING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. THE LAW WHICH WE ARE NOT UNDER - THE MOSAIC LAW

Christ fulfilled the requirements of the Mosaic Law (Matthew 5:17). If the Holy Spirit has control over us we automatically fulfil the righteousness of the Law.

2. THE LAW OF LIBERTY

This law is directed towards oneself. Biblically speaking you have the right to do certain things that will not cause you personally to fail the Lord in any way. (1 Corinthians 8:8)

3. THE LAW OF LOVE

This law takes other believers into consideration. In effect this law says that because of your love for the weaker brethren and in order not to offend or upset them you refrain from doing certain things which you have the liberty to do. You refrain not because they are wrong in themselves but rather you wish to help other believers rather than hinder them. (1 Corinthians 8:9)

4. THE LAW OF EXPEDIENCY

This law concerns the unbeliever. It is expedient that your life tells the world of Christ. The unbeliever has set up standards of conduct for the Christian. Therefore you refrain from or do certain legitimate things - not because they are wrong but because they may offend an unbeliever and prevent him from seeing the real issue that Christ Died For His Sins (1 Corinthians 9, 20-23)

5. THE LAW OF SUPREME SACRIFICE

This law is directed towards God. It involves the believer forsaking a completely legitimate function in life in order to more perfectly serve the Lord. Missionaries often function under this law when they live in primitive conditions on the mission field. This law can also operate under Australian conditions. (Matthew 3:1-6)

6. PRINCIPLE:

As Christians we have liberty, but total freedom for ourselves may enslave others. We have to use our liberty in such a responsible manner that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. As Christians we must act responsibly. (Ephesians 5:15)

HOLY SPIRIT – FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. We are commanded to allow Him to fill (or fully control) our lives (Ephesians 5:18).
2. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be broken by:

- a) Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) - sin, doing something you shouldn't.
 - b) Quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) - not doing something you should (like quenching a fire, allowing the flame to go out).
3. The filling (controlling) of the Spirit can be restored by confession of sin and full surrender to do the will of God (1John 1:9)
4. The Spirit produces the very character of the Christ in the believer: (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23, Ephesians 3:16, 17, Philippians 1:20, 21, 2 Corinthians 3:3)
- a) The fruit of the Spirit:
 - i) Galatians 5:22-23 - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.
 - ii) Romans 14:17 - Righteousness, Peace, Joy.
 - iii) Colossians 3:12-15 - Compassion, Kindness, Humility, Gentleness, Patience, Forgiveness, Love, Peace, Thankfulness.
 - iv) 1 Thessalonians 1:3 - Faith, Love, Endurance, Hope.
 - b) Rejoicing in Christ (Philippians 3:1, 4:4).
 - c) Loving one another (John 15:12, Romans 12:10, Ephesians 5:2).
 - d) Striving for the faith (Philippians 1:27, Jude 3).
 - e) Putting away all sin (1 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 12:1).
 - f) Abstaining from all appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).
 - g) Submitting to injuries (1 Corinthians 6:7).
 - h) Subduing the temper (Ephesians 4:26, James 1:19).
 - i) Shunning the wicked (2 Thessalonians 3:6).
 - j) Abounding in the works of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58 1 Thessalonians 4:1).
 - k) Showing a good example (1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Peter 2:12).
 - l) Following after that which is good (Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 6:11).
 - m) Perfecting holiness (2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Timothy 3:17).
 - n) Hating defilement (Jude 23).
 - o) Overcoming the world. (1 John 5:4-5)
 - p) Adorning the gospel. (Philippians 1:27, Titus 2:10)
 - q) Forgiving injuries. (Romans 12:20)
 - r) Living peaceably with all. (Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14)
 - s) Visiting the afflicted. (James 1:27)
 - t) Sympathising with others. (Romans 12:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - u) Honouring others. (Romans 12:10)
 - v) Submitting to authorities. (Romans 13:1-7)
 - w) Being content. (Philippians 4:11, Hebrews 13:5)
 - x) Walking worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
 - y) Walking in the newness of life. (Romans 6:4)
 - z) Walking as children of light. (Ephesians 5:8)
 - aa) Glorifies Christ in his body. (Philippians 1:20, 21)
 - bb) Christ is at home in his body. (Ephesians 3:16,17)
 - cc) A lifestyle which honours God in the presence of men. (2 Corinthians 3:3)
5. The filling of the Holy Spirit in every believer only occurs in two dispensations:
- a) Church Age - Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:22,23
 - b) Millennium - Joel 2:28, 29 (characterised by ecstasies)

CHRIST – WORK OF CHRIST COMPARED WITH WORK OF MAN

- 1. Christ was cursed having been innocent (Galatians 3:13). - The ground was cursed having been innocent.
- 2. Christ wore a crown of thorns (John 18:8). - The ground brought forth thorns. Men will continue to fight this reality as Cain did, but the weeds still grow.
- 3. On the cross Christ sweated drops of blood (Luke 22:44). - Man earns bread from the sweat of his face.
- 4. Christ is brought out of the dust (Psalm 22:15). - Man returns to dust, but God's forgiveness towards us is based upon knowing we are dust. Psalm 103:10-18.
- 5. Christ, by bearing our sins, died spiritually. - Man by sin died spiritually.
- 6. Christ died twice on the cross : spiritually Psalm. 22:1, 2 Corinthians. 5:21 - physically John 19:30 - Man died twice, spiritually immediately - physically eventually (Genesis 3:6, Genesis 5:5).

CHRIST – HIS PERFECT AND COMPLETE WORK ON THE CROSS

The work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross is:

1. Punitive - It was a payment, a judgement Jesus took on Himself, the judgement of all sin Galatians 3:13, 2 Corinthians 5:21
2. Substitutionary - Jesus Christ died in our place. Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be wounded for our iniquities and bruised for our transgressions. Isaiah 53:5,6, Leviticus 1:4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24
3. Voluntary - Jesus knew the plan of the Father and He went willingly to the Cross [John 10:18] Isaiah says that He set His face as flint Isaiah 50:7
4. Redemptive - "Redeem is exagorazo. Agorazo means "to buy in a slave market" Ek means "out". When Jesus Christ entered this world we were in the slave market of sin. He walked in, paid the price for all of us, and opened the gate so all who wanted to could go free. Galatians 3:13, 4:15
5. Propitiatory - It satisfied God's righteous demand for a perfect sacrifice for sin; Christ was the perfect sacrifice. Romans 3:25, 1 John 3:2
6. Reconciling - By it we are restored to a relationship of peace with God. Romans 5:1
7. Efficacious - It is effective. When anyone puts faith in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, that work accomplishes the salvation. Romans 5:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:13, Hebrews 9:11-12

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

1. True Christian character is Christ like ness. Ephesians 4:13.
2. True Christian character is produced by dealing with sin regularly. 1 John 1:5-10.
3. True Christian character is produced by feeding on God's Word and applying it in life in the power and filling of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 4:1-2.
4. It is in tune with the will of God for the life, by being responsive to the Holy Spirit in all the daily details of life. Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19.
5. Character is formed by the power of God working on an obedient, yielded life. Romans 12:1-2.
6. Character radiates God's power and presence through the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23, Colossians 1:11.

CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. God is pleased with believers
 - a) By asking for the right things. (1 Kings 3:9, 10)
 - b) By living a separated life. (2 Timothy 2:4)
 - c) By doing his will. (Hebrews 13:20, 21)
 - d) Walking in fellowship with him. (Hebrews 11:5, Genesis 5:24)
 - e) By praising God. (Psalm 69:30, 31)
 - f) By resting by faith in God's provision. (Hebrews 11:6)
2. The Christian life involves walking.
 - a) in the Truth (2 John 4)
 - b) by means of faith in wisdom. (2 Corinthians 5:7, Colossians 4:5)
 - c) in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25)
 - d) in Love. (Ephesians 5:2)
 - e) in newness of Life. (Romans 6:4)
 - f) worthy of our vocation. (Ephesians 4:1)
 - g) worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
 - h) honestly as in the day. (Romans 13:13)
 - i) in good works. (Ephesians 2:10)
 - j) in light. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7)
 - k) in Christ Jesus. (Colossians 2:6)
 - l) circumspectly. (Ephesians 5:15,16)

m) as ye ought. (1 Thessalonians 4:1)

3. The Christian life demands honourable conduct:

a) Believers have freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1), but our conduct must not

- i) harm the weak. (1 Corinthians 8:9);
- ii) be hypocritical (1 Peter 2:16);
- iii) does not edify (1 Corinthians 10:23);
- iv) lead to habits which enslave (1 Corinthians 6:12);
- v) lead to self-indulgence (Galatians 5:13);
- vi) offend personal conscience (Romans 14:5).

b) Our conduct towards God.

- i) Done in His Name. (1 Timothy 6:1)
- ii) As unto Him. (Colossians 3:23)
- iii) For His glory. (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- iv) To be worthy of Him. (1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5)

c) Our conduct towards others.

- i) Be a good example. (Romans 14:7; 1 Timothy 4:12)
- ii) Worthy of our calling. (Ephesians 4:1)
- iii) Honest. (2 Corinthians 8:21)
- iv) Free from the appearance of evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
- v) Helpful to a neighbour. (Romans 12:18; 15:2)
- vi) Not a cause of stumbling. (Romans 14:13)
- vii) Honouring one's parents. (Colossians 3:20)
- viii) Honouring to the government. (Titus 3:1)
- ix) Must not entail unequal yoking. (2 Corinthians 6:14)
- x) Not to judge others (Romans 14:10-13)
- xi) Not to cause others to stumble by our actions (Romans 14:15,21-23)

d) Our conduct towards self.

- i) Pure and not lustful. (1 Timothy 5:22; 1 Peter 2:11)
- ii) Must not defile. (1 Corinthians 3:17; Titus 1:15)
- iii) Must not condemn. (Romans 14:22)
- iv) Must do good works. (Titus 3:8)

e) This conduct is only obtainable under the filling of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 1:9).

4. The Christian life demands diligence:

a) Love towards others. (Galatians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 8:8). We should be eager to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves especially by giving them the gospel.

b) We should be keen to take care of the saints (other believers) (Hebrews 6:11, 2 Corinthians 7:12, 2 Corinthians 8:16,17, 2 Timothy 1:17)

c) We should be eager to rest in the promises and principles of God. Happiness comes from this. An example of not resting in the promises is the Exodus generation. (Hebrews 4:11)

d) Confirmation of our calling (2 Peter 1:5, 2 Peter 1:10) We should witness for Christ eagerly, zealously.

e) Unity of the body. (Ephesians 4:3) We should be zealous in maintaining the unity of the body.

f) For the commendation of God. (2 Timothy 2:15). Be eager to show yourself approved by God.

g) To have a life without spot or blemish. (2 Peter 3:14) We should walk close to the Lord and not expose ourselves to unnecessary areas of temptation.

CHRISTIAN LIFE – THE DAILY CHOICE – SPIRITUALITY OR CARNALITY?

1. All Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. When we allow Him to control our lives, we are said to be "filled with the Spirit" or "walking in the Spirit".

2. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be lost by

- a) Grieving the Spirit - by sin
- b) Quenching the Spirit - by not submitting to His leading
- c) This is called being carnal, or controlled by the flesh, the old sin nature.

3. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be regained by

- a) Confessing sin (1 John 1:9)
- b) Surrendering your life to God (Romans 12:1-2)
- c) This is called being spiritual, or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

4. Only the Holy Spirit in us can produce good works acceptable to God - anything in our own strength is unacceptable (Romans 8:8-9, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

5. The spiritual believer
- a) Imitates God (Ephesians 5:1, 1 John 3:9)
 - b) To glorify Christ (John 7:39, John 16:14)
 - c) Fulfills the Law (Romans 8:2-4, Romans 13:8).
6. In the Bible the human race is divided in three Categories:-
- [a] Natural Man - A person born physically alive, but not regenerated. He may be highly sophisticated, civilised, gentle and kind, but is completely ignorant of any spiritual phenomena. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Equivalent to the cold person in the church in Laodicea.
- [b] Carnal Man - A person regenerated or born again but living his life under the power of his old sin nature. Prolonged activity in this area produces a Christian who is still a baby. (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Equivalent to the lukewarm person in the church of Laodicea.
- [c] Spiritual Man - A person regenerated and living generally in the power of the Holy Spirit. He discerns the difference between the things of God and man. (1 Corinthians 2:11-13) He has fellowship with God in his daily life. (Ephesians 5:18-20) Equivalent to the hot person in the church of Laodicea.
7. Carnality
- [a] The believer possesses an Old Sin Nature after salvation (1John 1:8, Romans 7:14,15).
 - [b]. The Old Sin Nature is desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9).
 - [c]. The believer under the control of the Old Sin Nature is called carnal (1Corinthians 3:1-3, Romans 7:14).
 - [d]. The Old Sin Nature frustrates bona fide production in the life of the believer (Romans 7:15).
 - [e]. The Old Sin Nature is acquired at the point of physical birth (Psalm 51:5).
 - [f]. We are therefore considered spiritually dead at the point of physical birth (Romans 5:12).
 - [g]. The Old Sin Nature has several facets: areas of weakness produces sins, areas of strength produces human good. It has trends towards asceticism or lasciviousness. In many cases asceticism is considered to be spirituality.
 - [h] The Old Sin Nature is not found in the resurrection body.

Notes

4. WHAT ARE THE FALSE VIEWS (RELIGIONS/PHILOSOPHIES) ABOUT OUR LIFE HERE ON EARTH?**ATHEISM**

The Bible had said from very early that, “the fool has said in his heart that there is no God”. **Psalm 14:1, 53:1**. The viewpoint that the earth has evolved from nothing and will return to nothing has been present since earliest days. It was not Charles Darwin that began this viewpoint, for early on some of the satanic religions/philosophers of the Middle East had taught this as a belief or a philosophy of life. Atheism was however always looked upon as revolutionary and dangerous by most ancient societies and so such people were often considered mad or bad!

The popularity of atheism as a belief system has grown since the earliest days of the Epicureans of Greece and the Buddhists of the East. It has grown in popularity recently due to two developments; firstly to the growth of scientific theories that these people believe eliminate the need to speak of a creator, and then of course dismiss any judge. Secondly, their views form the reaction of many against the satanic evils of the Medieval period where all the great religions practised great evils upon each other and their own people.

Let us not be ignorant of history in this matter. Many good people hate what they will call “organized religion”, and their hatred is rooted in good causes with extensive evidence of great and terrible evils done by religious leaders through the centuries. We do well to agree with them, for they are right – religion has murdered more people than any other form of satanic evil throughout history. Remember – genuine Christianity is not “religious” it is a vital and living relationship with God through the person and work of Jesus.

The legacy of the witch trials in Europe and America, the Crusades in Southern France, Russia, Poland, and the Middle East, and the Inquisition in southern Europe are all historic events that created great evils and their legacy is with us today. These were all actions of religious unbelievers who are now in Hell, but are blamed on “Christians”. More genuine followers of Jesus were murdered by the official church in these evil events than by direct persecution by non Christian forces from the Roman Empire right through to the Communist States post World War 1. More Christians were murdered by the Crusaders than Moslems were murdered. We do well to agree with good Moslem people when they express offence at the crusaders evils, for they were evil indeed – these evil men murdered all who stood for truth. We must stand for truth and that means we stand against religious evil in all its forms and under all its labels.

All faiths share this legacy of evil however. The Moslem armies of Tamerlane murdered millions of fellow Moslems and others in their terrible evil rampage through their decades of conquest. Many people groups were murdered by conquering Moslem armies in Europe, Africa, and central Asia and India. Equally many suffered under Catholic and Protestant Armies in the Thirty Years War in the seventeenth century. Many suffered and died under Buddhist led armies in the Far East, and under Taoist or Confucian led armies in China, and Shinto dominated Japanese forces.

Religion, when centred round self-righteousness, will always lead to mass murder, and no religious faith has the monopoly on evil, for Satan has used them all at different times through recent history, and he will use them until the end when he replaces them all with worship of himself through the Anti-Christ. At other times the rulers of Moslem, Taoist, and Buddhist States were peace loving and they produced more wonderful tolerant societies than the so called “Christian” states around them. Spain under the Moslems was more tolerant and educated than later under the evil catholic monarchs.

Many good people see all this in history and have rejected the very thought of a God as a result – they are what we could call “moral atheists” – they hate religious evil. We agree with them in this – for we hate religious evil also but we do not cast away logic and reject the Creator. The “moral atheist” will recognize this when we agree with their hatred of evil and identify that this is the biblical position. These people will often hear the truth when we make the point clear about the satanic origin of religion – and the true “good news” of salvation.

The more difficult atheist is the one who rejects the very idea of accountability for mankind – for they don’t want a God who judges them. This viewpoint was first seen in the Epicurean philosophers of Greece and Rome. Paul met these people at Athens. **Acts 17:19-34**. Paul knew that the Stoics there would accept his words more easily, for they believed in a one true God over all, but the Epicureans just mocked his message. These people don’t want any God judging them, for they want to live for their own pleasure only, without reference to any other standard than their own. They are true relativists and so reject the very concept of a Creator – and abuse the thought of one. Paul ran the risk of abuse, but he never shrank back from telling all people the truth about this being now the “visited planet”. **Acts 14, 17**.

The modern Buddhist movement represents the biggest group of these “God-haters” – for they hate the very thought of God. At two recent religious conferences Buddhist monks invited to speak began by stating strongly – “There is no God”, and one went further stating, “Relax and enjoy yourselves – there is no God to tell you off – you are your own God”. This last statement has been made into a poster and was placed on many bus stop shelters in New Zealand by the Buddhist Federation.

The two main “groups” of organized atheists in today’s world are firstly the Buddhists, and secondly the so called Philosophers of Science and Religion, although, as we will see, they have made a religion of their view of “science”. Let us briefly examine their beliefs and attitudes.

Whole books have been written on the beliefs of each group that rejects Biblical Christianity and I will not duplicate these – simply point out the key spiritual points to understand about their viewpoints. Remember, we cannot argue people to faith – only present the truth and stand back to let the Holy Spirit work within the individual lives as they are touched by the truth of scripture and the reality of God's conviction.

Buddhism has four basic tenants which they call the “four noble truths” and the “four words” – these were the so called philosophical “breakthroughs” of Prince Gautama Sidhatha (The Buddha) and they reflect Epicurean philosophy and other forms of atheism that develop in the West around the same time. The Buddha lived 563-483 BC. It is interesting that he develops his thinking through the period following Judah's failure as the people of God and their Captivity.

The “Four Words” of Buddha are as follows.

1. Dukkha - Suffering - all human life involves suffering.
2. Anicca - Impermanence - all human life is transient, and subject to change and decay.
3. Anatta - No permanent soul - all human life is temporary and is re-absorbed into the universe.
4. Dhamma that which is self subsistent - all human beings must find their Dhamma/goal/reason/path.....

The “Four Noble Truths” of Buddhism may be expressed as follows.

1. All life is dukkha (suffering is at the centre of all human life).
2. The cause of dukkha (suffering) is desire (tanha).
3. To bring an end to desire is to bring an end to suffering.
4. There is a way to eliminate desire and that is Buddha's way – his Dhamma. So follow his way to nirvana.

Buddhists don't ask why suffering exists in the world – it just does – it is a part of the fabric of this world and man must simply adjust to the reality with poise and dignity. They reject all thought about and explanations of the “Angelic Conflict” – and do not see any other way than to reject all myths and stories that teach anything other than emptying the mind and heart of all desires and thoughts other than that of Dhamma.

Now if there is no creator, and this world has not been visited by the creator, then this viewpoint may have some “tough-love logic” to it. If there is no hope, just accept the awful truth, then find a way to eliminate all desires that gives you hope for change! Can you start to see where this will lead you however and how subtle this is? This is a belief system that will not develop anything scientific or mechanical, and it hasn't through the years. It produces monks who lock themselves away only – and they do not study – they focus on emptying their minds, seeking nirvana – the place where desire is gone and peace reigns in the soul for it is unattached to anything or anyone.

The great contradiction of this faith/system is that a Buddhist monk will get on a plane and fly with all the technology that comes from the Judeo-Christian-Moslem world and would not want the pilot to practise Buddhism as he controls the plane – for he will not then control the plane! With this philosophy you have no innovative science, innovative commerce, and no real explorative art, for all depend upon “desire” for knowledge, things, or beauty. The world of meditation and stilling the mind is centred round this viewpoint, and we argue it is false – for it begins by rejecting God and rejecting the thought that the Creator has visited the planet and given us clear instruction.

Buddhism rejects this and says that we follow the noble man –the Buddha – and empty the mind. All came from nothing, and all returns to nothing, and so become nothing now! We strongly reject this, stating that God made the world something in space and time, but has an eternal plan for mankind that goes beyond the present created universe. Mankind is not nothing, for by our choices we can have eternal purpose and meaning, and God did not give us a mind to empty, but to fill with the knowledge of his world and his declared future for us eternally. This world is not all there is – there is an eternal future and God has revealed it through his prophets, not by the enemy's mind emptying philosophers.

The “new” atheists – the Scientists/Philosophers who hate the very idea of a Creator-Saviour God.

The more aggressive atheistic viewpoint does not amplify meditation, although they may use it for relaxation, they magnify their viewpoint of science and deify their philosophical theories. Like the Buddhist they consider God an invention of man and superfluous to their needs, yet watch their language, as they will deify scientific processes speaking of them as if they have life within them.

Listen to nature programs by Sir David Attenborough and you will hear him almost sing of natural processes as you would sing of God. These people reject a God who would make them accountable – for in their arrogance, like the Buddhist, they believe they have replaced God with their theories, which they believe as “facts of science” – not the myths of religion. They unwittingly follow the logic of **Isaiah 14:12-20, Ezekiel 28:1-19**. These people will “respect” the

old paganism however, rejecting any demonic explanations, and join native peoples in their rituals as “primitive ways to express awe and respect for nature”.

I do not like to refer to these men and women as atheists, for they are more “Anti-Theists” – they hate the true One God and they soundly reject their accountability to the maker of the universe. They prefer a universe without a Maker, and they want no-one to whom to be accountable for their lives. They see themselves as “star dust” and like the Buddha have set themselves “free” of any desire to win points with any God – they have declared their independence from God, but will still join the nature worshippers of the old cultures without being disrespectful. Their choice of who they respect and who they despise shows their family membership!

Like the Buddhist they will mock those who believe in any Maker of the universe – believing that all things that exist just happened and are a great cosmic joke. They see theists as simply people who don’t get the joke and are a joke as far as they are concerned. Biblical revelation makes clear that we were “formed of the dust”, and dust we are, but through Jesus’ person and work we are lifted up to eternal life in Him. **Genesis 2:5-7, Psalm 103:8-17, John 3:16-36.**

They believe we are all here to enjoy the universe and then die and return to the star dust of which we are made. They agree with the Buddha in seeing consciousness as a temporary thing – but unlike him they believe it is to be enjoyed, but not clung to. They do have great courage, for they face nothingness in their philosophy, but it is often built upon anger towards what they see as “organized and controlling religions”. They get their power from attacking the truths of Christianity – for there is no strength, only despair in their own viewpoint. It is this point that Paul begins with when he speaks at Athens, and in our dealings with them, it is this point of weakness that we must begin with also.

Paul’s Strategy to Deal with Atheists (Epicurean Philosophers)

Acts 17:18-34. *“18. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.*

19. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?

20. For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.

21. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)

22. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

24. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25. Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

27. That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

33. So Paul departed from among them.

34. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.”

Paul begins with two concepts; firstly that there is a creator of the universe, and secondly that they are all so superstitious that they will set up and worship the “unknown god” just to cover themselves with the real one. He begins by humorously identifying the contradiction at the heart of the philosophy of many who stand before him. We see this in Buddhism, with people “worshipping” the Buddha, when he did not want that, and clearly instructed his followers about the foolishness of this. We also see many who “believe” in atheism practising “good luck” type operations with rituals in their life, even to reading their horoscopes. Genuine fear drives these things, and only the true faith in the Real One God drives out such deep existential fears. Nonsense is only released from the fear filled mind by TRUTH.

1 John 4:17-19. *“17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19. *We love him, because he first loved us.*"

Paul, as a graduate of Tarsus University, is careful to quote the philosophers of the Stoic School, as their words are closest to the scriptures that pre-date their philosopher's words. **Deuteronomy 32:8, Isaiah 66:1-2**, with hints of many others are quoted/alluded to by Paul. Refer to the EBCWA Commentary on **Acts 17** for a full discussion and follow up of this. Why does not Paul quote Epicurus? I suspect he has already seen that the satanic stronghold within the lives of the atheistic Epicureans is simply too strong to be overcome by him that day.

Amongst the Stoics he can see some are open through the work of the Holy Spirit, showing them the limits of their philosophy and their need for a personal Saviour. The Epicureans will still be witnessed to later; not by Paul, but by the lives of the converts from this day. Witnessing is about walking in the Holy Spirit's power and direction; with the right message in the right place, at the right time, to the Holy Spirit prepared people. Some times certain belief systems must be undermined for years by life witnessing, before the gospel message can be even heard by such people.

Paul is always sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing amongst people. Paul is not writing the atheists off however, for he knows that the converts from that very day will be able to witness to them in the years afterwards and maybe over time the Holy Spirit will shift them. While men are still alive there is hope and we will wisely target them for on-going prayer, even after their arrogant rejection of the truth the first time we speak to them. **John 16:7-11**.

The results of Paul's appeal to them appears in verse 32, and is at best described by many as "mixed", but some want to hear more and over the weeks following a church is established in Athens from this crowd, and amongst the church are some seriously important people in the city. What can we learn from Paul in his approach to the philosophical atheists in the crowd? It appears he ignores them and simply sticks to the logic of the concept of a Creator, and that if the Creator exists, then HE will speak at some time. He directly confronts their atheism and acts as if their belief is flawed and they need to confront the fact of a creator! Paul challenges them to compare the words of their founders with the work and words of Jesus. He challenges them with the "good news" that this is now the "visited planet" and we no longer need to speculate about our reason for being here, for God has stepped into time and told us what to do.

Paul challenges them with the real issue, which is the choice between arrogance and humility. Atheism often has a false humility at its core – like Buddha's attitude. Buddha appears to be very humble, and yet he is supremely arrogant in his conclusions – as we would expect from a prince who believed he did know it all and had walked away from so much. Prince Gautama Sidhatha (Buddha) was a great man and he knew it – but his beliefs are, we would argue wrong. Life is not all about suffering, and the answer to suffering when it occurs isn't to declare war on desire! There is an altogether different approach if there is a God with a plan behind mankind's existence.

Paul centres in the doctrine of the Incarnation and its significance for all philosophical systems of belief. If Jesus is who he claims to be then we must pay attention, for the one who made space and time has entered it once – and that is all he needs to do. Having entered his created universe of space and time he has given us the only path to eternity-infinity, and it is not the path Buddha discovered. It is a path that is far more glorious and hope filled – and it is a path that has eternal consequences if you ignore it.

It is this personal challenge that offends and angers most atheists for they do not want to sing "Amazing Grace"; they prefer Frank Sinatra's last song, "I Did It My Way". Paul trusts the ministries of the Holy Spirit, and realises that the results of his talk that day in Athens will work onwards in time in the lives of all who remember it later, and hear it repeated. His faith is that later these atheists may have had experiences that the Holy Spirit uses to prepare them to receive the truth later.

CHRIST – INCARNATION AND MEDIATORSHIP

1. Greek word for mediator is "*mesites*" which has as its root meaning, to have a neutral group/nation to stand between two warring nations to arbitrate and judge between them. The two concepts joined together in this world are judgement and peace making.
2. The mediator had to be equal to both parties and acceptable to each.
3. Old Testament usage of this concept is found in Job 9:9, 32, 33. Job calls for an "umpire" between man and God.
4. The Hypostatic Union of the Lord Jesus Christ qualifies the Lord to be the mediator between man and God as he alone is equal with both parties. 1Timothy 2:5.
5. The Lord's work on the cross forms the basis of his mediatorship as he removes the sin barrier between man and God. Hebrews 9:12 1-5.
6. The Mosaic Law pre-figured the Lord's mediatorship. Hebrews 8:6, 12:24, Galatians 3:19, 20.
7. Jesus was the perfect Mediator.
 - a) As a perfect person with no sinful nature, Jesus Christ was able to provide salvation.
 - b) Jesus Christ at all times worked in conformity with God's will (John 10:30).

- c) God had to forsake His Son on the cross when He judged the sins of the world in Christ.
 - d) In Christ we are seated in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6).
 - e) Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35).
 - f) There is only one way to God, through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).
 - g) We will be resurrected as believers to life eternal with Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).
 - h) Jesus will return again to reign from Jerusalem for 1000 years (Revelation 20:4).
 - i) Satan is a defeated foe (Colossians 2:15).
 - j) We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Romans 8:37).
8. Jesus was successful in what he did and must be responded to.
- a) He came as God's perfect sacrifice for sin. (John 1:29)
 - b) He came to be lifted up. (John 3:13-15)
 - c) He came as the Bread of Life. (John 6:50-51)
 - d) He came as the Good Shepherd. (John 10:10-11)
 - e) He came to die for the people. (John 10:49-52)
 - f) His cross came before His crown. (John 12:23-24)
 - g) On the Cross righteousness and justice met, only then was God free to love man in Christ. (John 15:12-14)
9. The challenge to man is "What think you of Christ?" Matthew 22:42. There simply is no other Saviour who is your Lord and it is the Holy Spirit empowered readiness to accept this truth that opens the door to the grace gift of salvation. Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:5-9. The atheist prefers not to receive the gift and they are free so to do – but they must answer for it later. John 10:9, Romans 10:13, Revelation 20:10-15.

Notes

POLYTHEISM/PANTHEISM

It is of interest to note that polytheism (the belief in many gods) was considered by the authors of scripture to be a dilution or corruption of the belief in the One True God. Biblical revelation is clear on this, noting that man worshipped God in purity for a short time and then religion entered at the altar of Abel who was slain by his brother Cain. The offering up of the fruits of his own hands was the sign of his rejection of blood bought faith, and his worship of the work of his own hands and of nature.

This historical story in Genesis 4 identifies the origins of nature worship and the making of idols – it all had its origins in the murder of Abel and that begins with the self centeredness of Cain. Polytheism has its roots in rejection of the path God selected for man to underline the seriousness of sin and the need for a Saviour. Be clear of this as the old paganism returns to the Western World, for the demonic has returned over recent years. The Bible is clear, that all worship of "gods" is worship of demons, and as such reflects a falling from true faith in God to satanic alternatives. **Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, 1 Corinthians 10:20-21.**

- Genesis 4: 1** *"1. And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.*
- 2. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*
- 3. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.*
- 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:*
- 5. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.*
- 6. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?*
- 7. If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*
- 8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*
- 9. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?*
- 10. And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*
- 11. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;*

12. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."

The revelation of the Holy Spirit to the author of this historical story, and later to Moses (who collected all the early stories and edited them into his five books as the Israelites left Egypt), makes the point strongly. The first "Nature Religion" was also a "blood bought" religion – but rather than a sacrifice that speaks of grace, the death of Abel is the murder of the true worshipper by the fake, who has rejected God's path to salvation. The "fruit" of nature worship is murder and other evils, and the people targeted by these polytheists/pantheists are the worshippers of the One True God.

Galatians 6:16-23. *"16. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
18. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.
19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23. Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."*

Polytheist paganism with its associated worship of nature begins in the rejection of the atonement path that God had explained to Adam was the only way at the gate of the Garden of Eden. It is of note that anthropologists and early missionaries contacting tribes untouched by the modern world often find they have the concept of the creator God over all but they don't normally worship Him; rather they worship, honour and fear a multitude of nature gods that lead the people to murder, magical rituals, fear, and immorality. Pantheism (nature worship of the divine in all things) may be gentler than worship of "gods" but still leads away from the Cross, and so will have fruit that flows from rejection of grace.

Polytheism certainly appears to be a degenerate form of true worship, and we can know it by its fruits. **Matthew 7:13-24.** Travel through India where polytheism still holds powerful sway is an education in the flow on effect of the evils worshipped. The main "angle" from which evangelism can be launched with polytheists is from a discussion with seekers of the "fruit analysis" of their faith – what is their faith characterized by in their life? What are the "fruits" of their faith – the results in their daily life? We have the true and only "good news" for the polytheist, trapped in fear of the demonic forces that dominate all their rituals.

Satan and his demons work hard to hold men in superstition, fear, and magical rituals that must be paid for to keep people safe from the very "gods" they worship. The stories of the gods in India are horror stories, exactly like those in the Greek world, but darker at times. The reason for the similarity is not that they "swapped stories", as the atheists argue, but that they all have the same origin – in Satan himself. It is he who wants men passive, fearful, or arrogant; only he wins by such evil things. God's good news of grace alone sets mankind free of fear and superstitions.

Few in polytheism have any hope of "holiness", for only the "holy men" attain that, and they can do this only if the hard working peasant class work twelve hours a day and feed themselves and the holy men and priests. Most of these "holy men" are totally filthy in their habits also – a tiny clue to their source of power. However all within polytheism have a real fear of evil, for they are, the bible tells them, surrounded by demons. **Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, 1 Corinthians 10:20-21.** The so called "gods" of paganism are actually demons, and behind every idol is a demonic force and those who worship them feel that reality and have their "rituals" to try to keep safe, but it is all a delusion.

The fruit of satanic religion is always superstition and fear for the demons delight in dominating mankind – whereas the fruit of genuine faith will always be freedom from superstition and fear. Perfect love casts out fear! His perfect love for us – when we in grace, by faith embrace it, casts out all fear of the demonic from us. The Holy Spirit is greater than any demon and he indwells the true believer. We cannot be better protected than we are. **1 John 4:4.**

1 John 4: 16-19. *"16. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.
17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.
18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.
19. We love him, because he first loved us."*

The problem with polytheism is that it lifts up the few; the priests, and the magicians, and the sages (holy men – ascetics), and condemns the majority to unbreakable servitude and inferiority. The caste system developed in India out of the degenerate polytheism that took over the continent in the millennium before Christ. By lifting up a few as "special" we have pride appealed to for those at the "top". By casting the majority down to serve the special ones we have "acceptance" of fate for all at the bottom of society. Satan holds both groups in his favoured "prison" – arrogance for the top people and passivity for those at the bottom. These are the "fruits" and evidence of satanic presence in any religious system. As we analyse these things in polytheism let us be aware that fake monotheism also has these satanic fruits!

- 1 John 3:7-17** “7. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.
 8. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.
 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.
 10. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.
 11. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.
 12. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.
 13. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.
 14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.
 15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.
 16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
 17. 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?”

The Bible teaches that the gods of polytheism are actually satanic demons, who are all part of his deliberate plan to deceive and destroy all who walk away from the gracious path of atonement that God has provided for mankind’s salvation. The people trapped need to be shown that entrapment, and be shown the doorway out of satanic bondage, and that doorway is Jesus person and work. Recognize that Satan doesn’t rejoice in the message of his defeat, and his people and demonic forces hate all who preach such truth aloud.

Remember, **we** don’t break the satanic strong-holds, for we simply don’t have that power, **but the Holy Spirit does.** **John 16:8-11.** We are called however to pray always for the lost, and then teach the truth and “open the door” of faith by pointing to Jesus and the freedom that people can find in Him. **Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 5:29-32, 16:25-34, 26:1-29.** See Pauls teaching about these things, and read carefully the interaction with the polytheistic crowd at Lystra in **Acts 14** below.

NEO PAGANISM – The Old God/Demons return

These passages above and those later in this section have become crucial for our own day with the growth of what some have called “**neo-paganism**” within most professional associations, which now require their membership to accept “safe practise guidelines” that involve recognition of paganism, especially “native people’s belief systems”. This is pushed way beyond acceptance of each person’s right to choose their own belief system, to positive acceptance of the paganism that our ancestors left behind centuries ago. The only faith that is not accepted is the Mono-theistic faith in the One True God, the Creator of all, for they reject all such exclusive claims.

Modern United Nations, and World Council of Churches driven “Safe Cultural Practise” demands of its followers that they actively accept paganism, and demands quiet submission from all who believe in biblical monotheism. It is an assault on Islam and historic Biblical Christianity, and we believe it is a serious start of the “one world religion” of the future Tribulation Period. We are open and clear of our claim here, and realise what it means, for it places us against most Western professional and religious bodies in their changing statements of belief and practise as at 2016.

For Example. As a professional counsellor in New Zealand for 2017 you are now required to keep records of your own reflections on learning that will be audited by those who are deemed experts, and you may be challenged as to your cultural and religious “safety”. While it is not set in concrete yet, the direction is sadly clear, and the writing is on the wall for those who reject paganism – you will be deemed to be “unsafe” in a few short years. We called this in recent years “political correctness”, but it is no longer just that!

We argue that the “unsafe” ones are the pagans, for their demonic beliefs will destroy all who are deceived by them. The Bible is clear – the pagan “gods” of all peoples have demons behind them; they are not quaint beliefs of primitive people, they are deceptive and destructive things from the enemy of truth himself. The pagan “gods” are all demons, and by the fruit of the lives of those deceived by them they are to be known! **Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17, 1 Corinthians 10:20-21.**

In the Armed Forces of New Zealand in 2016 all personnel must now stand to attention as the local Maori eldership open all official ceremonies with Maori Language prayers that many do not understand the significance of. Until a few years ago all Maori public prayers were in the name of Jesus Christ, but that has changed in many places in just the last couple of years. Maori have up until recent years always prayed powerfully in Jesus name for years in public ceremony, but there is a shift, and it is a fatal and tectonic shift for our nation if left unchallenged. The fruit of all paganism is evil and destructive of any culture, or people group that tolerates it!

Many Maori elders and kuia (older ladies who welcome people into traditional spaces) now openly call on the pagan gods of the past in prayers, and then the dead are called up to witness events, and then told to return to their rest after the event is over! The new protocols are tolerated by most as “taha Maori” (treasures of the past, the old ways of Maori)

– but this is the toleration of a destructive falsehood!) Most simply day dream while the prayers are said and don't pay attention to them, but remember, tranquilization has always been the satanic strategy.

The gods/demons referred to in these prayers are those behind all the great evils that the ancestors of these present Maori leaders rejected when they heard the Christian message in the 19th Century. These gods/demons are exactly like the old gods of the European paganism, the demons that led all our peoples into child abuse, drug taking, alcoholism and murder. This return to paganism under the guise of "culture" is the most dangerous of the satanic counter-thrusts of our day and it grows in power daily, and the fruits of it in society are to be seen in increasing drug, alcohol and child and sexual abuse statistics!

Read Paul's statements and the account of the events at Lystra, for we believe we are entering a time in the Western World where such confrontations will occur more regularly, as they always have in Africa and India. We must be ready to recognize these evils and stand against them. Dr Mwindula's paper in the Appendix refers to the African experiences.

Romans 1:18-25 *"18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;
19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.
20. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
21. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.
22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
23. And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
24. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:
25. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."*

1 Corinthians 10:19-21 *"19. What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?
20. But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.
21. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."*

Acts 14:8-18 *"8. And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:
9. The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,
10. Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.
11. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.
12. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.
13. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.
14. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,
15. And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:
16. Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.
17. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.
18. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them."*

Paul walks in the filling of the Holy Spirit. He understands the myths of the Greek world and would have known of the work of Ovid (who tells the story of the mythical visit of Zeus and Hermes to Lystra), but he walks in the Spirit, and so he heals the man under the Holy Spirit's direction, and this lets loose the polytheistic fervour of the people. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit there will be a real "power confrontation" this day, in God's timing and in God's way, and some will be saved as a result. Such confrontations are only to be under the Holy Spirit's power and direction; they are never to be sought out by our human plans and schemes.

The pagans of the town think Paul and Barnabas are the gods returned after a thousand years, but Paul quietens the crowd and uses the fervour present to in the Holy Spirit's power strongly preach the truth about polytheism and challenge them to believe in the one true God, not the false gods who are holding them in bondage. The crowd that rejects this truth many days later stone him to death, but his witness has led to the salvation of many, and they form the new church, and over the next three hundred years polytheism is removed from the Roman Province of Asia.

Not all polytheists will give up their nature worship, nor will they break free from the satanic hold of superstition and fear of demonic attack, but if we walk in the filling of the Holy Spirit and do what we are led to do the chains will fall off from

some, and they will be saved by the truth. Paul felt a holy drive to provide all with “no excuses” before the Great White Throne. He was a “debtor” to all that the truth might be heard, even if rejected, so that “some might be saved”.

Romans 1:13-17. “13. Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.
 14. I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.
 15. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.
 16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
 17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

The truth always sets men free from superstition and fear. **John 8:36, 10:10.** Our job is to send out the truth any way we can knowing that the Word of God will never return empty to the Lord – it will always accomplish what the Holy Spirit intends. **Isaiah 55:11.** We must walk in the filling of the Holy Spirit and do what the Lord calls us to do, in his way and in his timing, and there will be results.

John 8:30-36. “30. As he spake these words, many believed on him.
 31. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
 32. And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
 33. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?
 34. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.
 35. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
 36. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

Let us be clear about the “fruit” of all demonic religions. It is challenging people to “audit” their own fruit that is the central point in all confrontations with paganism – only a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ sets mankind free from evil.

Galatians 5:19-21. “19. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
 20. Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
 21. Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

Romans 1:16-32. “26. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:
 27. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
 28. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
 29. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
 30. Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
 31. Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
 32. Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

Notes

LEGALISM - THE DANGERS OF ORTHODOX BELIEF BUT FALSE LIFE

Fake monotheism is as dangerous as any other satanic counterfeit nature religion – and it may be more dangerous because it is so close to the truth that those caught within it believe they are safe and secure in the truth. James follows up the words of Jesus from **Matthew 7:13-23** that we have seen above. By the fruit of the life of an individual we can see the source of their belief system and identify the eternal destiny of that system.

True living faith in the one true God will always produce good fruit in the life of a person, but any false viewpoint will reveal itself in the fruit of the follower's life. True faith in God will always "work out" in the follower's life with good fruit/works.

James 2:17-20. *"17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.
20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"*

Verse nineteen is a very serious verse. It reminds us that orthodoxy of words is not enough to save a person, for what we say must be backed by what we do, or our words are simple hypocrisy; we are fakes not faith filled people. What we say must be backed by Holy Spirit empowered living in the truth. James goes on to speak of the faith of Abraham and Rahab, and identifies that both showed the reality of their faith in God by godly and courageous actions to that all could see their faith working out in life. Real grace and faith **will always work out in life** if they are present in a person!

James reminds us that the devils believe in the real existence of the one true God, they know fully He exists and they tremble in fear at the thought – his point in this is to remind us that we ought to do more than tremble. Simply saying we believe in the one true God is not enough to save anyone – for the devils believe in the one true God and fear and hate him! What do we do towards God? What do we do towards our fellow man? As followers of Jesus and worshippers of God we ought to do the opposite to the devils – not show fear, but worship God and do good works to men.

The "Fruit of the Holy Spirit" demonstrates the presence of the Holy Spirit in a life. Works of worship and godliness show genuine faith in the one true God – works of evil show fake beliefs, like the devils. Let us explore the full list of "spiritual fruits" from the key Bible passages. This is such an important principle I repeat the biblical text of Galatians here, and add the others that are relevant to our study.

Galatians 6:16-23 *"16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.
19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,
20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,
21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,
23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."*

Matthew 12:33, 13:23 *"33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

John 15:1-17 *"1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.
6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.
9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.
10 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.
11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.
12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."*

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another."

Romans 6:21-23, 7:4-6, 9:16-23 "6:21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

7:4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

9:16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,"

Philippians 1:9-11 "9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

10 That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.

11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

James 3:17-18, 5:1-6 "17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you."

Jesus' words, "By their fruits you will know them", echo down the centuries. These texts above give us a full "Fruit Inspectors" tool kit and we must use it as we discuss all religions.

THE TWO FORMS OF LEGALISM – BOTH CHURCH AND MOSQUE BASED

I want to reflect upon the two dominant forms of legalism in today's world; the form found in some churches and the form found in some mosques. From the texts above it is clear that formal religion is no guarantee of heavenly rewards, indeed those who cry aloud "Lord, Lord" most often are warned that unless their "fruit" is better than the Scribes and Pharisees they will not inherit eternal life!

It is genuine righteousness in the life that indicates genuine relationship with God – all else is pretence – and pretence is fatal eternally. **Revelation 20:10-15** reminds us that if men select their works as sufficient for salvation, and reject Jesus work for them on the Cross, then they will be judged on the basis of their works and condemned.

Matthew 7:21-23, 5:20 "21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

5:20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

CHRISTIAN LEGALISM

Very early on in the history of the early Church the enemy attacked the truth of grace with legalistic additions, which if left to grow would have destroyed the truth at that time, and they still do today where-ever they are allowed to stand. The first documented attack was upon the Galatian Churches that had been established by Paul and Barnabas. Very quickly some of the Jewish believers of Jerusalem tried to get the Gentile believers to become “Jewish” by circumcision and the keeping of Kosher Laws of the Mosaic Law. **Acts 14:19-15:2.**

They had one good reason for this, as Judaism was a recognized “Licensed religion” under the Romans, and if the new Church differed too much from Judaism then the Romans would demand its persecution/elimination as an “unauthorized faith”. Even though the licensed nature of the Jewish faith meant that the Church could grow under its protection, the addition of circumcision and the laws of kosher were unwarranted and wrong. They no longer applied to the newly emerging faith. It had begun in Judaism but was growing well beyond it. The persecution feared would come, but it would not halt the Church’s growth, nor hinder its power.

The truth was that the Church was becoming a new thing, rooted and grounded in Judaism, but altogether new. This truth would emerge slowly and be revealed to the Apostles gradually. James initially sees this and speaks up at the Jerusalem Conference. **Acts 15:13-21.** James point was a Holy Spirit guided one. The Jewish believers would continue to be Jewish, and practise all they wished of their Judaism, but with the recognition that all the sacrifices were completed in the person and work of Jesus. All the feasts would still be kept, but with additional meaning and significance because Messiah had come and dealt with the problem of sin and death.

Habakkuk 2:4 – “*The just shall live by his faith*”. This would be fulfilled by the person and work of Jesus. The three phases of the answer to legalism would expand upon this verse, and would come in the books of Galatians, Romans, and then Hebrews. Works would be seen to be the result of saving faith, not the cause of saving faith. Grace and Faith would be the themes of the new revelations that would come through the Apostles. The path to acceptance with God was the blood soaked of faith, through the grace that was provided by the Father in the sacrifice of the Son.

Legalists in the church come in all shapes and sizes/viewpoints. There are some who are dress code based, others are alcohol free and preach only booze sermons, condemning all who drink to hell, others labour on one or other point of doctrine. All share one common theme – they reject grace as the path to God’s acceptance. They believe that the rules they value, God requires kept, and those who fail their standard fail God’s standard. The fruit of their lives is a harsh judgmental attitude that condemns all who vary from their position a millimetre.

What possible answer is there to the person who considers themselves a “Christian” and yet has all the fruit of evil in their life and who hold a legalistic framework as their standard? The only solution is to preach the truth carefully and systematically from the three key books that correct legalism and by and through the scriptures allow the Holy Spirit to convict them of their evil. I have seen legalists storm out of churches when grace was preached – they hate the sound of the word. All we can do is preach the truth and allow the Holy Spirit to convict of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

MOSLEM LEGALISM

The Moslem faith (Islam) grew up in Arabia in the 600s of our era. It centred then and now around four basic tenants.

1. The affirmation that “There is one God and Muhammad is his prophet”.
2. Followers of the true prophet will give gifts to support the work to spread the message of Islam.
3. All true followers of the prophet will pray the prescribed number of times a day, using the words he gave.
4. That all who would be good Moslems will make pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their life time.

Islam quickly split into warring factions and has remained split through the centuries to today. The dominant group, with present control of the Moslem holy sites, is the Sunni, who hold sway over the Arabic Middle East, with the Shiite faction holding sway over Iran and some of the northern and eastern areas.

Within each group there are those who hold to a formal religion that allows for worldliness to be enjoyed as long as the four basic tenants are fulfilled, and a more fanatical group (they argue they are pure believers) who believe that people need to be passionate about their faith and go to war against all falsehood and all other religions. This fanatical wing of both groups war against each other and are presently responsible for most so called “terrorist” attacks upon both Moslem and Christian targets. Of the 24000 clear “terrorist” attacks since 1972, 99% are by those calling themselves Moslems.

The vast majority of Moslems believe in God, and seek a life of peace and obedience to what they believe God calls them to do – live at peace and be good people to their families and neighbours. They are monotheists, but lack the hope, joy and peace that Jesus gives in grace to those who discover the fullness of his person and work.

Islam means “obedience” and they seek to obey the commands that God has given through all the prophets. While Muhammad is accepted as the last and greatest, they accept all the Old Testament prophets and Jesus (Isa) also and are commanded to obey the words of all. This is the present slightly “open door” to Moslems and the Bible teaches that it will open wide in the last days. Refer to our EBCWA book 121, “Rediscovering the Faith of their Father Abraham”.

Legalism is at the heart of Islamic faith – and a formal acceptance of the basic tenants and the nominal obedience to them will to the minds of many secure salvation. Such a viewpoint is at odds with the scriptures, and is the heart of the evangelistic approach to Moslems. They want to serve God, but may be influenced by fanatics within their faith to murder in the name of their faith. All intelligent and sensitive Moslems see the contradiction in this.

The “fruit” of the extremist’s belief systems is revolting many within Islam presently (2013-2016) as I write this, and is producing an open door for Moslems to examine the words of Jesus (Isa to them). They are looking for light and peace, and all they see from too many fellow Moslems is murder, corruption, and carnage. They are rightly revolted, for these acts are the fruit of evil. People are looking for light, love and life and in the words of Jesus there is LIFE.

The main angle to come from to approach Moslems remains this one – speak of the fruit of faith – and challenge them to hear the words of Jesus(Isa) and ask which way is the path of love and life, and which way is the path of hatred and death. Challenge them with the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your own life – and ask about such fruit in their own. Moslems are presently being taught of the evils of “Christians” in the past (the crusades) and in the present (Gulf Wars and Invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq), and the only answer to this is pointing out that these wars are not “Christian”. (The Crusaders were evil indeed, and America is not a Christian Country at all now – remember - you are charged in court if you read or refer to a bible in any public school in the USA!). Get them away from false views of history into real study of the scriptures – for they are ordered to study them – refer below.

My letter to Moslems is below – please feel free to cut and paste this for personal use – sign your own name to it. Use this to introduce any message you give, or book you share with them. This letter was designed to be used with the book “Biblical Leadership” as revised to 12 August 2012. Certainly use this book as a way of showing Moslems what the “people of the Book” really believe about biblical leadership. Change this letter in any way to meet the requirements of the material you are giving to the Moslem.

“My Dear Moslem Friend,

I am a person of the Book. Like yourself I worship One God, the Creator, Sustainer of all life, the rewarder of the pious righteous ones and the Judge of all mankind. If you are reading these words I rejoice in your desire to know what the people of the book have discovered from God through the Injeel regarding the concept of Biblical Leadership and Biblical godly behaviours. I pray for peace upon you and blessing for you, your family and your community as you heed these important concepts that I will share with you and apply them into your own life.

I know you accept the words of the Prophet Muhammad regarding the importance of reading all the Books the Great One God has given, as is recorded in the Noble Quran.
(Quotes below are from the translation of the Noble Qur’an from the King Fahd Complex for the printing of the Qur’an Madinah KSA.)

SURAH 5 AL – MA’IDAH 46

“We sent Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), confirming the Taurant (Torah) that had come before him, and we gave him the Injeel (Gospel), in which was guidance and light and conformation of the Taurant that had come before it, a guidance and an admonition for Al – Muttaqun (the pious).”

SURAH 12 YUSUF 111

“Indeed, in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (The Qur’an) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of (Allah’s existing Books) which were before it (ie the Taurant and the Injeel and other scriptures of Allah) and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a Mercy for the people who believe.”

SURAH 42 ASH – SHURA 15

“I believe in whatsoever Allah has sent down of the Book (all the Holy Books, - this Qur’an and the Books of the old from the Taurant (Torah), or the Injeel (Gospel) or the pages of Ibrahim (Abraham) and I am commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us our deeds and for you your deeds. There is no dispute between us and you. Allah will assemble us (all), and to Him is the final return.”

SURAH 43 AZ – ZUKHRUF 61/63

“And he (Isa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) shall be a known sign for (the coming of) the Hour (Day of Resurrection) (ie, Isa’s descent on the earth).

“And when Isa came with (Our) clear proofs, he said, ‘I have come to you with Al-Hikmah (Prophethood), and in order to make clear to you some of the (Points) in which you differ. Therefore fear Allah and obey me!’”

It is mainly the words of Jesus (Isa) and his followers that I pass on to you in this book on Biblical leadership, although many passages of the Torat are also quoted, for all the holy prophets of God are united in their teaching on true Leadership. I pray again for your peace and blessing as you read these words.

Please remember that I am a man of the book, and so I will write/say some things in a way I am used to, but may seem strange, or even wrongful to you; please forgive me and be gracious to me as you read if you feel any surprise in what you read. Check all references out in the scriptures, as they are all listed for your study. I also quote many biblical commentators, and these men are worth searching the internet for and studying their good books also.

Your friend from amongst the people of the Scriptures.”

To confront Moslem legalism you must be a testimony of grace yourself – do not speak to a person who has been taught to hate you without the fruit of the Holy Spirit within your life and the peace of God in your heart. We speak with love, joy and peace in our heart, and the Holy Spirit convicts of the truths of the Sin of not recognizing Jesus as Saviour, of Righteousness, for the unbeliever has no righteousness that would make them acceptable to God, and of Judgment, for Satan and those who reject the truth are all to be certainly judged eternally. **John 16:7-11.**

RELEVANT DOCTRINES

LEAVEN

1. Leaven in Principle: Denotes any substance used to induce fermentation as in a dough or liquid. It is a powerful symbol of the influence of satanic evil ideas upon a body of belief – slowly but steadily permeating every corner of the group/belief system and destroying any spiritual reality it had to start with.
2. First mention in Scripture: Genesis 19:3 in connection with the angelic visitors to Lot's house prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot served them "unleavened bread".
3. First mention in Scripture relative to the Observation of a Feast: Exodus 12:8, 15-20 - Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
 - a) Leaven was undesirable and became a symbol of evil.
 - b) Unleavened bread is a type of Christ and refers to His impeccability.
4. Leaven in Matthew 13:33 represents the infiltration of religious apostasy during the Tribulation.
5. The Leaven of the Sadducees is rationalism, the sin of human viewpoint, resulting in gospel rejection. (Matthew 16:6). This form of Leaven is found today in the polytheism-Atheism of the nature worshippers and intellectual rejecters of historic Christianity.
6. The Leaven of the Pharisees is the Satanic counterattack against sound doctrine by religion, legalism and ritualism. (Mark 8:15, Luke 12:1). This form of religious expression is also still prominent in today's world in the legalistic forms of all the great religions.
7. The Leaven of Herod is the sin of worldliness (Romans 12:2) and power lust within a local congregation. (Mark 8:15). This pride based political and religious sin remains with us also.
8. The Leaven of the Corinthians is the sin of licentiousness and perversion. (1 Corinthians 5:6, 7, 1 Corinthians 5:1,2). This is Satan's alternative to a false religion – open sexual sin.
9. The Leaven of the Galatians is the sin of legalism, specifically their insistence upon circumcision for salvation. (Galatians 5:9). This is the form of religious activity that adds cultural elements into faith and makes them the dogmas of spirituality. It slowly destroys any reality that was there before.

DOCTRINE OF LEGALISM

Introduction There are “Laws” of God regarding this creation – based principles that God has given for mankind's guidance so that we are not destroyed by the consequences of any foolish, evil, or sinful actions. These “Laws” relate to morality and centre round the Four Divine Institutions. Mankind must not violate the principles of other people's Free Will, their and our own Marriage, the Family, and the independent Nation. To violate these things is to destroy yourself and your people group over time.

The first challenge to all mankind is the question as to whether there is a “Maker's Manual” for mankind. If there is, what does it require of us? Obedience to real “Laws of God” is not legalism, it is intelligent self concern! Mankind keeps these God given principles because they make sense and give us life, health, and peace – and all people can keep them, and all are blessed in space and time if they do. Smart nations make their laws around these deeper laws, but they are spiritually “saved” by faith in Jesus person and work, not by obeying God's Principles for living in his created world.

1. There are some areas of God's Holy Law which the believer or unbeliever would never violate without calling themselves “evil” because they are in his/her Old Sin Nature area of strength. We are hard wired to see the sense of these – they are in our inherited “area of strength”, but they are opposed by our area of weakness and we can fall into temptations and violate our own conscience. Logic tells us of their value and importance for life and health and stability, and they are instinctively obeyed by some, or deliberately legislated by others. Keeping these “Laws” does not save us or make us spiritual – obedience to these things makes us prosperous and happy upon the earth. **Legalism** enters when God's Laws are expanded to form a tight system of belief, that mental assent to, and open obedience to them qualifies the individual to consider themselves “saved” or “spiritual”.

2. No two people have the same area of strength, no two people have the same area of weakness in their human nature. We have all inherited different weakness and strengths from our genetic ancestors – so some sins are easier to be tempted towards, and some sins are an “affront” to us. Our hard wiring from Adam is both to see God’s Laws as right and as a result of the Fall to reject them as too controlling of our lusts. We battle against this daily. This is the battle for the mind that we all fight – but all of us have a different battle within, with different strengths and weaknesses. Legalistic religion offers us a “system” that promises an easier road through the paths of temptation to what that religion defines as spirituality.
3. Violation of one part of the law makes a person a sinner just as surely as violation of another part of the law – “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”. (Romans 3:23)
4. Legalism and its consequence, self righteousness, is prone to forget that all sin comes from the sinful nature we have inherited from Adam. Legalistic religion offers alternate “solutions” to the sin problem, so that the individual does not have to establish a relationship with the only Saviour. It is therefore a subtle deception – offering spirituality and yet leading people away from the only genuine path to spiritual life in Christ Jesus.
5. Everyone has a sinful nature. Violation of law within the mind and in the body demonstrates its existence.
6. The legalist emphasises the commandments he keeps. The honest person recognises the commandments he breaks. Legalistic religion provides ways and means to ignore the conviction of sin and to relax in the comfort of their beliefs and/or practises.
7. Bible Doctrine removes legalism and self righteousness on the basis of grace.
8. Legalism minimises the weakness or besetting sin of the sinful nature while emphasising the weakness or besetting sin of someone else. Like all satanic counterfeits legalism focuses upon your superiority to others and ignores your standing before God. God wants us to honestly bow before Him, recognizing God’s grace alone, but legalism wants man to only face each other and feel superior to most.
9. Legalism condemns those who fail in their own area of strength but legalism does not recognise that all have sinned. Legalistic religions have alternative ways of feeling “forgiveness”, or feeling no need for forgiveness.
10. Sometimes legalism is so strong that it fulfils both categories of 1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10.
11. To be guilty one only has to sin once not the thousands of times one does (James 2:10)
12. Legalism hinders eternal rewards for any genuine believer.
 - [a] Every believer has exactly the same position in Christ, the same assets and responsibilities except for spiritual gifts.
 - [b] Faithfulness or the utilisation of more grace is the basis of rewards.
 - [c] This means that legalism which is the enemy of grace will keep many prominent believers from rewards in eternity.
 - [d] Legalism keeps the believer from depending on the filling of the Spirit which is the basis of divine production.
 - [e] Faithfulness not prominence is the basis of reward. Matthew 25:21.

JUDGEMENT – GREAT WHITE THRONE

1. The judgement of the Great White Throne is the last judgement. (Revelation 20:11, 15) Satanic religion focuses upon eliminating fear of this reality for its followers, who will be taught to “feel” safe from such a judgment – for they have done all the things they needed to do to be admitted to heaven. Satanic religion either speaks of heaven as a “certainty” for those following the rules, or may simply eliminate judgment and heaven itself, speaking only of the state of “nirvana/enlightenment” where all personal consciousness disappears into the “world soul”. They alter the viewpoint of heaven/eternity to eliminate the Last Judgment and so deceive their followers into thinking there are no eternal consequences for their rejection of Jesus.
2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgement, as there is no condemnation for all who have truly accepted Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. (Romans 8:1). Those who have believed and acted in such a way to live “their way” rather
3. The last judgement occurs at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:7-15, 21:1ff). History for man has run its course by this point, and space and time, and the universe they are bound up in, is to end, and eternity begins.
4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works (Revelation 20:12). They are so judged because they have rejected the work of Jesus upon the Cross for them, and chosen to depend upon their own works for salvation (either in their own strength or that of their chosen religious system).
5. The judgement is to show that the human “good works” of man cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that He is only satisfied by “The Good Work” – the death of Christ on the Cross.

Mankind stands before the throne of grace – but they have rejected God’s grace gift – and so they stand in their own religious nonsense – and it is seen as nonsense in that day and they all know they have been deceived, but they are without excuse for they were wilful in their opinions.

6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God, the condemned accept the consequences of their evil decision making and are cast into the Lake of Fire to join the one who deceived them, but who they deliberately followed. (Revelation 20:15)
7. In some form the “lake of fire” exists forever – even into the age beyond the present space-time universe. Revelation 21:8, 27. There is no distress for the saved in the presence of the punished being in this place. There is a recognition by all beyond space and time that God has been absolutely fair and just – that each person and angel created has found their “place” – chosen by them within time. Religion without spiritual reality has eternal consequences.

Notes

5. WHAT DOES GOD'S PLAN CALL FOR THAT INDIVIDUALS MIGHT BE SAVED?

“Christianity starts out by being touched by God,
in direct contrast to other religions
where they start out by trying to touch God”

God calls upon all people to face the truth about themselves and about the Lord Jesus – do they need a Saviour, or are they trapped in their own self righteous human viewpoint? Those who reject the Saviour reject their only hope of eternity with God and in his plan. The Bible teaches clearly that all people are convicted of this truth by the Holy Spirit. All that God's Plan calls for is man's free will response to the truth about themselves as sinners and Jesus as their Saviour.

For all followers of all religions the challenge is to get them to accept the truth about this creation. It is not arguing them into faith – it is two activities on the believer's part. It is first prayerfulness, casting our desire for the souls of unsaved mankind before the Lord. We are praying the provisions of **John 16:7-11** below upon those we are about to speak to. We are then tasked to tell the truth about Jesus to all we meet who will hear us. We give facts, at the right time in the right place under the Spirit's guidance, and the Holy Spirit convicts, and then the person faces their choice of a life time in their free will.

John 16:7-11 *“7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”*

“Soul winning work, like all Christian service, depends upon the imparted power and direction of the Holy Spirit.”
“All of mankind is born depraved, and they remain so, being incapable of accepting Christ apart from the enlightening, drawing, calling work of the Holy Spirit..... **John 6:44, 65, 1 Corinthians 2:14, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Ephesians 2:8.** In truth, were it not for the enlightening work of the Holy Spirit, by which he convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (**John 16:7-11**), no unregenerate person would ever turn to Christ for salvation.” L S Chafer – Systematic Theology, Volume 7, pages 144-145.

HEATHENISM AND GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

1. There are three systems of human understanding:
 - a) Empiricism - understanding through experimentation and observation.
 - b) Rationalism - understanding through logic and reason
 - c) Faith - believes an established fact as the basis of reality.

2. Faith is the only means of understanding which does not rely on our own abilities - there is no earned merit in faith. Therefore, everybody, even a young child, is able to believe and act upon their beliefs, indeed this is how children learn, stepping out in faith in the love and care of parents.

3. Faith is compatible with God and grace - God provides, we trust Him, and accept. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

4. God-consciousness: The existence of God:
 - a) Spiritual
 - i) God must exist because man universally believes in his existence.
 - ii) In this case the human mind establishes faith as the criteria for reality.
 - iii) Men do seek after God. (Psalm 42:1-2, Acts 17:27)

 - b) Moral
 - i) Man possesses a conscience with the urge to choose right over wrong.
 - ii) Human recognition of virtue and truth. The ultimate virtue - God.

 - c) Rational
 - i) The human mind possesses the idea of a Perfect and Absolute Being, therefore such a being must exist.
 - ii) In this case, the mind uses rationalism for reality.

 - d) Design
 - i) Structure of the universe demands a designer (Romans 1:19,20)
 - ii) In this case empiricism is the criteria for reality.

 - e) Cause and Effect
 - i) The law of cause and effect demands the existence of a creator God.
 - ii) This is process of rationalism plus logic.

5. The reaction to God-consciousness:
- a) When man becomes conscious of God he then exercises his freewill.
 - b) Acceptance - desire to know God and have fellowship with God.
 - c) Rebellion - no interest in fellowship with God.
 - d) Once a person reaches God-consciousness and has no desire for fellowship with God, God has no further obligation to that individual.
 - e) In the case of acceptance, God is responsible to provide gospel information on which to be saved. (Jeremiah 29:13, John 7:17, Acts 17:27, Luke 11:9)
6. Heathenism: What about the people who have apparently never heard the Gospel?
- a) Application of Divine Character
 - i) Since God is perfect justice it is impossible for Him to be unfair to any member of the human race.
 - ii) God promises that every generation will be evangelised. (Isaiah 51:8b)
 - b) Application of Unlimited Atonement
 - i) Christ died for all members of the human race. (2 Corinthians 5:14,15,19, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:2)
 - ii) Therefore obviously God desires salvation for everyone. (2 Peter 3:9)
 - c) Application of Divine Sovereignty
 - d) It is God's will that all members of the human race be saved. (2 Peter 3:9)
 - i) If people are not saved, it is because of their own rejection of Christ as Saviour, not because of God.
 - e) Application of the Principle of God-consciousness
 - i) Human free will is tested in the two areas in which a decision must be made.
At the point of God-consciousness – Do I want a relationship with God?
At the point of gospel hearing – Do I want to be saved?
 - ii) If anyone desires relationship with God, God will reveal Himself to them (Jeremiah 29:13, John 7:17, John 4:9,10, Acts 17:27).

Man has the God given ability to arrive at God-consciousness through observing creation as the Holy Spirit works upon his heart and mind. (Romans 1:20, 21)

When a person reaches the point of God-consciousness, he becomes accountable to God. This age varies with cultures, languages and circumstances.
7. From the above it is obvious that any person can come to a saving knowledge of God through the testimony of the creation and through the work of the Holy Spirit within each soul.

HOLY SPIRIT – MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. TO THE UNBELIEVER

- a) **RESTRAINING** (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
If unbelievers were unrestrained in the Church Age the one world system which Satan is trying to establish would come. After the rapture of the Church it will come, but even then the Spirit moves upon men and women and many are saved.
- b) **CONVICTING** (John 16:7-11)
 - i) Sin - the barrier which remains in unbelief.
 - ii) Righteousness - God is totally righteous, man is only relatively righteous and needs God's righteousness for salvation.
 - iii) Judgement - Satan and all unbelievers are judged.
- c) **REGENERATION** (John 3:5)
Man without the spirit cannot understand spiritual things. The Gospel is spiritual, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel a reality to the unbeliever when one believes and is "born again" or regenerated. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

2. TO THE BELIEVER AT SALVATION

- a) **Regeneration** (John 3:1-16, Titus 3:5)
- b) **Baptism** (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:5) We are baptized into union with Jesus Christ and become part of the body of Christ. This is not to be confused with the Filling of the Holy Spirit.
- c) **Indwelling** (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) From salvation on the believer is indwelt by the Spirit.
- d) **Sealing** (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). This ministry relates to your future with God, the guarantee of eternal security.

e) Distribution of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11) Each believer receives a spiritual gift at the point of salvation in order to function in the body of Christ.

3. TO THE BELIEVER AFTER SALVATION (Spirituality)

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit after salvation is the means by which we live the Christian life ordained by God (Ephesians 2:10, 5:18)

a) The Filling of the Holy Spirit (spirituality through confession of sin and surrender of the life). (1 John 1:9 Ephesians 5:18)

b) The character of Jesus Christ is produced by the believer when he is filled with the Spirit. (Galatians 4:19, 5:22, 23)

c) Glorification of Christ (John 7:39, 16:14, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

d) Fulfilment of the Law. (Romans 8:2-4)

Notes

6. WHAT MUST OUR PLAN FOR EVANGELISM LOOK LIKE, IF IT IS TO REFLECT GOD'S PLAN?

GRACE

1. For our evangelistic plan to be biblical it must be rooted and grounded in the principles of Grace. Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the Cross. Therefore Grace is defined as the unmerited favour from God towards mankind on the basis of the person and work of Jesus upon the Cross and when he rose from the dead, defeating both sin and death, and their author, Satan himself. Indeed, the whole incarnation of the Lord is a testimony to God's graciousness towards mankind – the creator steps into history as a creature and dies for his creation – you cannot have more grace than this.
2. Grace depends on the character of God, therefore Grace depends on who and what God is. Grace is what God can do for man and still be true to his own character. His plan has been proven successful by the dramatic victory of the Lord over sin, death and Satan himself.
3. The believer must recognise the difference between legalism and grace. Legalism is man's work intruding upon the plan of God. Legalism is saying that we do not need the Lord's work, or that we can assist the Lord in his work. Grace demands that the Lord's work alone is accepted for salvation. Man can add nothing except nonsense!
4. The greatest thing God can do for the saved person is to make him exactly like His Son Jesus Christ. This is accomplished in the three stages of sanctification.
 - a. Positional Sanctification: At Salvation every believer enters into union with Christ. (Hebrews 1:2) Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and is therefore superior to all angels in his humanity. At the point of salvation we are entered into union with Christ thus we are positionally higher than angels. We are positionally seated with Christ at God's right hand.
 - b. Experiential Sanctification: During the Christian's life on the earth the time spent under the power of the Holy Spirit. During this time we produce the character of God in our lives - gold, silver, precious stones. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
 - c. Ultimate Sanctification: When the believer receives a resurrection body he loses the sin nature and all human good. At this point the believer is physically superior to all angels. He remains in this perfect state eternally.
5. All believers have tasted of Grace at least once (1 Peter 2:3). This refers to the point of Salvation at which the believer receives at least 34 things which he/she did not earn or deserve. (Ephesians 2:8, 9). Disorientation to grace is the believer's greatest occupational hazard in his Christian life. (Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 12:15).
6. The divine attitude to grace is expressed in Isaiah 30:18, 19. God is constantly waiting to pour out his blessing on all believers in the Christian life.
7. Grace in salvation is expressed in many ways, but it is always the same – it is the expression of believing in Jesus Christ; his person, his work, his plan and his purpose for your life. (Psalm 103:8-12, Romans 3:23-4, Romans 4:4, 5:20, Ephesians 2:8, 9).
8. There are many ways in which the Christian life expresses GRACE:
 - a) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
 - b) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10)
 - c) Growth (2 Peter 3:18)
 - d) Stability (1 Peter 5:12)
 - e) Lifestyle (Hebrews 12:28, 2 Corinthians 1:12)
 - f) Production of Divine Good (1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 6:1)
9. Grace is the correct attitude in relation to giving. (2 Corinthians 8 & 9)
10. Grace is the only means of coping with suffering in the Christian life. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) Through Grace God is able to bless the believer in the midst of the pressures and adversities of life. (1 Peter 1:6,7)
11. The Implications of grace:
 - a) God is perfect, his plan is perfect.
 - b) A perfect plan can only originate from a perfect God.
 - c) If man could do anything in the plan of God the plan would no longer be perfect.
 - d) A plan is no stronger than its weakest link. Grace therefore excludes all human merit, all human ability.

- e) Legalism, human works is the enemy of Grace.
- f) The works of human righteousness have therefore no place in the plan of God. (Isaiah 64:6)

GRACE – FALLING FROM GRACE

1. At salvation, God’s grace gives us a position and place of standing before God, Romans 5:2, Ephesians 1:6.
2. The goal of the spiritual life is to make our position in Christ and our practice one and the same.
3. We cannot fall from that which we cling to. In Hebrews 10:23 we are told to “hold fast” to grace thinking.
4. When we cast off our Christian commitment (1 Timothy 5:12), we let go of God’s grace.
5. This is not loss of salvation, it is loss of spiritual living. It means that religion/legalism has replaced relationship.
6. The Galatians illustrate this condition.
 - [a] Turning from Spirit to flesh, Galatians 3:3.
 - [b] Turning from grace (faith) to law, Galatians 3:2
 - [c] Falling from grace, Galatians 5:4 c/f. verses 1-7.
7. The same error is seen in the church of Ephesus, Revelation 2:5. The danger for all believers is to fall back into satanic religious deception – and so be robbed of eternal rewards and earthly opportunities for joyful service.

GOSPEL OF SALVATION

1. Gospel means "good news" - there are four “gospels” found in the New Testament.
2. Gospel of the Kingdom.
 - a) Preached by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 2) the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:23) and his disciples (Matthew 10:7) Thy Kingdom come (Matthew 6:10).
 - b) It consists of the setting up on earth of Christ's 1,000 year Kingdom thus fulfilling the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:16)
 - c) There will be another preaching of the gospel by the Jewish remnant in the days of the Great Tribulation before the 2nd Advent. (Matthew 24:14, Revelation 7) After the 2nd Advent the 1,000 year reign commences. (Revelation 20:1-6)
3. Gospel of Grace - the gospel of personal salvation by grace through faith. This gospel appears under many names and is the means of salvation throughout the history of mankind.
 - a) Gospel of God (Romans 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:2)
 - b) Gospel of Christ - (Mark 1:1, Romans 1:16)
 - c) Gospel of the Grace of God - (Acts 20:24)
 - d) Gospel of Peace - (Ephesians 6:15)
 - e) Gospel of your salvation - (Ephesians 1:13)
 - f) Glorious Gospel - (2 Corinthians 4:4)
4. The Everlasting Gospel - (Revelation 14:6) -the good news is everlasting. This gospel will be preached on earth just before Christ's return in glory. (Matthew 25:31, 32). This gospel is the means of salvation to countless thousands both Jews and Gentiles. (Revelation 7:9-14)
5. Paul's "My Gospel" - (Romans 2:16) This is the same gospel of salvation by grace through faith but includes the mystery doctrines of the church age not previously revealed. The gospel in the Old Testament was revealed by the Tabernacle, Feasts, Levitical Offerings etc.
6. "Another Gospel" which is not another (Galatians 1:6, 7, 2 Corinthians 11:4) This is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:8, 9) and is the satanic counterfeit of religion without the reality of relationship with Jesus through the Cross. The curse is proclaimed on any who preach it. There have been many perversions - legalism in Galatia, angel worship in Colossae (Colossians 2:18) among others.

CHRISTIAN LIFE – EVANGELISM

1. All believers are ambassadors for Christ, and are obliged to give the give the gospel to unbelievers. (Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 4:5)
2. There are two forms of witnessing - with the lips (2 Corinthians 5:18-21 and by the life (2 Corinthians 3:3)
3. The gospel is "good news".
4. Sin is not an issue. Jesus died for all sin on the cross. The penalty has been paid. The issue now is "Do you trust that Jesus Christ has died for your sins, and was raised from the dead to give life to all who believe on Him?" People choose to either rely upon Jesus Christ, or upon their own good works, to be saved. (Romans 8:1, 9:30-33).
5. What about the heathen who haven't heard?
 - a) God is totally fair, and everyone has the chance to be saved
 - b) Unlimited Atonement (Colossians 2:14,15)
 - c) God's will - none should perish (2 Peter 3:9)
 - d) Man's negative will – God-consciousness – Gospel hearing.
6. Witnessing is impossible except through the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 16:8-13) The Holy Spirit convicts of
 - a) Sin because of unbelief.
 - b) Righteousness.
 - c) Judgement because of Satan being judged (Matthew 25:41)
7. The natural man needs the Holy Spirit to understand the gospel (1 Corinthians 2:14)
8. The Bible is the weapon of witnessing. (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4)
9. Biblical Pattern of Witnessing. (1 Thessalonians 2:1-12)
 - a) Effective contact (v.1)
 - b) The gospel must be given even under opposition. (v.2)
 - c) The gospel must never be compromised or watered down - (v.3)
 - d) The believer in whom the gospel is deposited is tested by God and should not be for the praise of man. (v.4)
 - e) Flattery should never be part of the gospel. (v.5-6)
 - f) Whilst the gospel should not be given to get praise from men it should be given in love without cost (v9)
 - g) The gospel must be followed up (v 10) with discipleship and teaching (v11) so that the new believer can become spiritually self reliant. (v.10-12)
10. Your obligation to witness (Romans 1:14-16): you are a debtor (v14), you are ready (v15), you are not ashamed (v16)
11. Win souls, not arguments. Stay on the gospel, don't get side-tracked – for that is the satanic plan – once you get into religious argument you have crossed the line from grace to legalism and will dilute the truth of the Gospel message.

CHRISTIAN LIFE – EVANGELISM – FISHERS OF MEN

We are to be "fishers of men". Matthew 4:19

1. A fisherman needs to be prepared and equipped to do the task. You need to be walking in the Spirit and you need to know the gospel. We need to be prepared in knowledge and power. Quite often you need to be trained.
2. The fishermen go to where the fish are. As a believer you must be in contact with unbelievers so that you can individually target them. This is why monasticism is wrong.
3. Fishermen are patient. They wait. They know the fish are there but they wait until the right time to cast the bait. You do not waste your bait but walk under the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that when you recognise that someone is under the conviction of the Holy Spirit you can fish successfully. You work with unbelievers and look for an opportunity provided by the Holy Spirit to give the gospel.

You do not give them the gospel when they are five kilometres away. Ignorant Christians are blurting out the gospel to unbelievers who have not been prepared and consequently are disturbing the fish. They are not sensitive, they are not waiting seeing what the Spirit is doing. In Acts the people who were being added to the church were those who were being saved by the work of the Holy Spirit.

4. Fishermen know what bait to use and the different approaches to catch all sorts of fish. You do not have the same bait for all fish. Paul for instance gave a different message in Athens compared to what he gave in Phillipi. This is the danger of having just one tract in your pocket as it constrains you in your approach. You have to be flexible and know where the people are so that it will be meaningful to them and meet them where they are. Paul in Acts 16 is talking to philosophers so he comes in at a different level than in other cases.
5. Fishermen concentrate on fish and not the fishpond. You are to fish for fish and not try and clean the fishpond. We should be concerned with the souls of men and not cleaning up the environment. 1 Peter 1:17, Ephesians 5:16, Colossians 4:5, 1 Corinthians 9:22

CHRISTIAN LIFE – EVANGELISM – NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN

1. The pastor of the local church must practice a Bible saturated, spirit controlled life. By his systematic teaching of the Word he must encourage people to apply it in their life. The vessels that the Lord uses must be clean.
2. You must have a co-ordinated prayer life in the Church. This consists of the mid week prayer meetings (plural here – for the men may meet weekly before work, the women may meet over lunch, the youth may meet after school/university) and in addition to formal meetings you must have an elder organising your prayer warriors with specific topics to target for the week to come. You need specific weekly prayer sheets so specific targets are known and prayed for.
3. You need to have weekly meetings with your deacons and elders to plan strategies for the church as the Holy Spirit directs you. You need to have that for a prayer plan for the week. It is good to have this on Sunday morning over breakfast so that the prayer points can be noted down and duplicated by the pastor for the morning service. This gives current material. You plan your visitations, your speakers, your topics, and how all can be co-ordinated in with the overall preaching plan. There also needs to be a home fellowship strategy and a strategy for the Bible class and Sunday School.
4. In the preaching everything must tie into the evangelistic, witness function of the church. We must always emphasise that we are all ambassadors and evangelists.
5. The minister encourages the people to find the fish. Every week they should be reminded of their work in this area.
6. Every believer should have his own list of people who he is praying constantly for. He should have a list of ten unbelievers and as one is converted a new name should be emplaced on the list.
7. The church contacts should be followed up as part of the strategy. This is the importance of a Sunday School. The Sunday School should be well known in the area. The unbelieving parents who send their children to Sunday School should be followed up by the minister to show friendliness towards them. You may be their only Christian contact, other than those who follow after false religious systems. We witness to the truth of grace, and we rebuke, by this witness, the lies that are associated with the religions people that they have been exposed to before.
8. There needs to be a church service follow up. Every visitor should be made to feel welcome but not embarrassed. Never ask a visitor to stand up. After the service have a coffee/tea time and a special room/table set aside for visitors. It is an advantage to have a service which finishes early enough for this fellowship to happen. The minister or special “greeters” follow up the visitors and either the pastor or the elders go on the door so all can be welcomed.
9. Organise visitation and be visible with walking through districts and greeting those you meet. This is far better than driving and parking. The morning should be in the study. Have a meal at home to have time with your wife or family, after lunch visitation. With walking you get exercise and are away from the phone. Plan to visit three or four locations only. Drive to a central location and walk. If you are seen on the street people get to know. You have raised the profile of the church. You are swimming in the sea with the fish. Sit down with street kids, help an old person, and speak with the traveller. The church needs to draw on the local area. You need to be decently dressed for your culture, as we do not want to get in the way of the message by how we appear.

CHRISTIAN LIFE – FAITH

1. The Christian life can be divided into three sections or stages.
 - a) Stage 1 - Salvation.
 - b) Stage 2 - The Christian Walk
 - c) Stage 3 - The Christian in Heaven.
2. Man has three means of obtaining knowledge:
 - a) Faith - to believe or trust that something is true
 - b) Reasoning - using human logic to deduce that something is true

c) Experimentation - to test and prove something to satisfy yourself that it is true

3. The only acceptable method of gaining grace is by faith, since this means depending upon God without our human merit.

a) Stage 1 - Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved - salvation (Acts 16:31).

b) Stage 2 - Trusting in the promises and principles of the Word of God - the Christian walk.

c) Stage 3 - Trusting in God's provision - Heaven.

4. To illustrate belief and unbelief we follow the Jews from the plagues in Egypt to crossing the Jordan:

Incident	God's Promise	Scripture	Response	Result
Last plague	Passover Lamb	Exodus 12:21-30	Trust	Jews spared last plague.
Egyptian Army	Red Sea Crossing	Exodus 14:1-31	Trust	Moses leads Jews over Red Sea.
No Water	Water	Exodus 17:1-7	Trust	By striking rock (Christ) water obtained.
Gold Calf	God's Doctrine	Exodus 32:15-28	Distrust	Sons of Levi (Priests) slaughtered for leading
Quails	Manna	Num 11:10-33	Distrust	Many deaths due to quails
Giants	Enter Canaan	Num 13:1-14:38	Distrust	Death of fearful spies. Wandering in desert
No water	Water	Num 20:2-13	Distrust	Moses strikes rock in disobedience. Will not enter Promised Land.
Wanderings	Cross Jordan	Joshua 3:1-17	Trust	Israel crosses Jordan on dry ground

5. Salvation faith is the complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for your sins and rose from the dead to give you eternal life. (Acts 16:31, Romans 4:20-25)

6. Anything added to becomes works, and therefore nullifies faith (Romans 4:4)

7. Faith is shown outwardly by confession with the mouth. (Romans 10:9-10)

8. Since faith does not depend on our own abilities, anybody can believe. Even little children (Matthew 18:2-4)

9. Assurance is by faith (Hebrews 10:22)

10. Faith is trust which does not ask to know all about God but believe all that God has said.

11. Salvation faith receives Christ as Saviour and Lord. (John 1:12, 3:16, 3:36)

12. Faith of salvation is the complete trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as having been delivered from our transgressions and raised again for our justification. (Romans 4:20-25)

13. By Faith God gives the soul assurance of the reality of things never yet seen by the natural man. (Hebrews 11:1-3)

14. The triumphs of faith in daily life are illustrated for the believer in Hebrews 11:1-39. Abel, Noah, Moses etc.

15. Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)

16. Faith is the only non meritorious means of understanding things the other being rationalism and empiricism.

17. To become like a little child is an analogy to faith as a young child only has faith. (Matthew 18:2-4)

7. OUR "ACTION PLAN"

LAST DAYS – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAYS

Just as world conditions just before the flood indicated judgement was overdue so conditions now show that we are at the end of the time referred to in the Bible as "the last days". We need to be particularly alert in our difficult days because we face increasing hatred towards genuine believers, and increasing respect being given to satanic counterfeits. Do not be distressed at this, rather rejoice – for it shows us that the days are short before the Lord's return. 2 Timothy 3:1-4, 4:1-4.

1. Preoccupation with physical appetites - Luke 17:27
2. Rapid advances in technology - Genesis 4:22, Daniel 12:4.
3. Grossly materialistic attitudes and interests - Luke 17:28
4. Uniformitarian attitudes and interests - Hebrews 11:7
5. Inordinate devotion to pleasure and comfort - Genesis 4:21, Revelation 6:6
6. No concern for God in either belief or conduct - 2 Peter 2:5, Jude 15
7. Disregard for the sacredness of the marriage relationship. - Matthew 24:38
8. Rejection of the inspired Word of God - 1 Peter 3:19
9. Population explosion - Genesis 6:1, 11
10. Widespread violence - Genesis 6:11, 13
11. Corruption throughout society - Genesis 6:12
12. Preoccupation with illicit sexual activity - Genesis 4:19; 6:2
13. Widespread words and thoughts of blasphemy - Jude 15
14. Organised satanic activity - Genesis 6:1-4
15. Promotion of systems and movements of abnormal depravity - Genesis 6:5, 12.

LAST DAYS – DENIALS THAT CHARACTERISE THE END TIME CHURCH/SOCIETY

1. Denial of God. (Luke 17:26; 2 Timothy. 3:4-5)
2. Denial of Christ. (1 John. 2:18, 4:3; 2 Peter. 2:1)
3. Denial of Christ's return. (2 Peter 3:3-4)
4. Denial of the Faith. (1 Timothy. 4:1-2; Jude 3)
5. Denial of Sound Doctrine. (2 Timothy. 4:3-4)
6. Denial of Separated Life (Practical Sanctification. 2 Timothy 3:1-7)
7. Denial of Christian Liberty. (1 Timothy 4:3-4)
8. Denial of Spirituality. (2 Timothy 3:1-8; Jude 18)
9. Denial of Authority. (2 Timothy 3:4)

CONCLUSION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY RESTATED

- 1 The richest man in the cemetery is still a corpse – and all men know death mocks their wealth, their power and their status in time. Man hungers for fellowship with God, or at least understanding of the meaning of their very brief existence here on earth in space and time. Religion answers from man’s perspective – reaching up towards God or philosophy, but Christianity gives the good news that God has reached down to meet man’s true needs and open the door to genuine fellowship with their Maker and their Saviour from sin and death.
2. There is an essential mystery at the heart of man’s existence in this space-time bound universe. We understand the concept of eternity but are unable to reach it. The “good news” is, that in the incarnation, Jesus Christ has entered space and time and opened the door to enable us to enter eternity with him.
3. Man selects his path through this life and his destiny in eternity by this choice in time and space. One path is characterized by revelation, absolutes, accountability and righteousness, the other by relativism, and an arrogant rejection of all that Christ preaches and stands for.
4. Religion is the satanic counterfeit of the truth of relationship through grace by faith in Christ Jesus. Religion seeks God’s approval by works and ritual, whereas Christianity delivers the truth that relationship is only available through the completed work of Jesus on our behalf, and our full acceptance of God’s terms for relationship.
5. Four great faiths have stood the test of time and are examined in this book, but all fall short of the revelation that is in Christ Jesus – in his person and his work for mankind. Religion in all its forms falls short of the righteous standards of Almighty God. Only grace meets the standards, for it is God’s gift to us.
6. The challenge the creator gives us is that Sin and Death must be eliminated in this present universe, for there is no place for them in eternity. Only the person and work of Jesus Christ achieves the aim of eliminating sin and death, and so there is blessed entry into eternity only of those in living relationship with Him.
7. Living faith is embracing the truth about the fact that this is the “visited planet” and that in grace the maker has spoken fully and finally to his creation, and acted fully and finally to deliver mankind salvation. The journey we are all on in this life has only one end point and that is the end of this space and time universe in fire. We are either with Jesus or we are bound up forever with this doomed universe – for this universe implodes and becomes the “Lake of Fire”. **2 Peter 3:10-13, Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8, 27.**
8. Man is either “with Jesus”, or with the enemy in the Lake of Fire – for that is where the evils of the old creation are forever to be locked away, without any distress to those fellowshiping with the Lord forever – for all have made their choices freely. The choice bluntly put to mankind is – will it be your works that you depend upon to save you, or will you accept Christ’s work to save you? The Bible makes it clear that mankind has only two options; religion or relationship. Do you believe you are fit and ready for the eternal state without God’s provision for you? We must either accept Christ’s work for us, or depend upon our works, as Cain did all those years ago. What will it be? Let us proclaim the stark choice and its eternal consequences.

Let us make the truth known and give none excuse before their Maker and Saviour.

Dr John Cameron McEwan
Dean
EBCWA

Auckland New Zealand

Feast of Tabernacles 13 October 2014

Revised 25 August 2016

APPENDIX A – SPIRITISM IN AFRICA (By the Rev Dr Howard Mwindula)

DEMONS

Demons are real and the Bible is very clear about this subject. The devil has tried to blind a lot of people by making them believe that he and his angels do not exist.

It is therefore imperative that we examine this subject in detail. Let us examine the following;

1. Where did they come from?
2. What are their titles?
3. How do they function?
4. How can we identify those who are possessed?
5. How do people get possessed?
6. Who can be possessed?

1.WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?

Revelation 12:7 - And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels

KEY WORDS	GREEK	ENGLISH
And there was	kai ginomai	and it came to be
War	polemos	battle, fight, war
Heaven	ouranos	air, sky ,heaven
Michael	Michael	an archangel
Angels	aggelos	messenger
Fought	polemoe	engaged in battle, make war
Against	katah	opposition
Dragon	drakon	look like serpent
And the dragon	kai hoheto drakonand one	looking like serpent
Fought	katah	opposition
And his angels	kai hautou aggelos	and his angels

It started in heaven when the devil rebelled against God and the angels of God led by Michael the archangel fought in opposition to what the devil did. The devil and his fellow rebellious angels fought back.

Revelation 12:8 “And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.”

KEY WORDS	GREEK	ENGLISH
And	kai	and
Prevailed not	ischou ou	prevailed not
Neither	oute	neither
Was their	hautou	their own
Place	topos	place, room
Found	heurisko	find, perceive, see
Anymore	eti	anymore, any longer, still
In	en	in, throughout
Heaven	ouranos	air, heaven

The devil and his fellow rebellious angels were defeated and their room that they could occupy in heaven was no longer available for them to live there. So they became homeless and now started to move about looking for a place to stay (Luke 11:24 – 26). Therefore, they can stay anywhere where it is empty on earth. That is why they can stay in animals or human beings. Some times even in trees and at times in water.

In verses 9 and 10 of the same chapter 12 of the book of the Revelation the devil and his angels were cast down on earth from heaven because there is no place for them to stay. At the present time the devil from time to time can go into heaven and accuse the children of God. Revelation 21:10.

Demons are fallen angels who were deceived by Lucifer (Satan) who is still their master and leader in their fight against the children of God. Every Christian is in the battle with these spiritual beings.

WHAT ARE THEIR TITLES

Demons are known by many names depending on what one is describing in accordance with their work. The following are some of the names.

1. Devils
2. Unclean spirits
3. Evil spirits
4. Strange spirits
5. Princes and Kings

1. DEVILS daimonion devils, gods (Behind every ancient “god” is a demon)
 Leviticus 17:7, Deuteronomy 32:17.

They are called devils because they are followers of the Satan who is called the devil. Satan plans their missions and their actions are a replica of what Satan does. The demons just fulfill the desires and goals of the devil himself. They do only things that please him. All what they do is designed by Satan.

2. UNCLEAN SPIRITS

Demons are called unclean because their works are dirt and abominations before the righteous God. Whatever dirty works you can think of are influenced by demons.

3. EVIL SPIRITS

Demons are called evil spirits because they perform no good work at all. All what they do is to harm and injure the children and the work of God. Satan their master is the source of evil. Even when some works may seem to be good, their aim is to accomplish evil.

4. STRANGE SPIRITS OR GODS

Demons perform only strange things that are contrary to the good life of mankind and Godliness. Their work sometimes may appear to be normal but when you examine that work properly, you may see the evil behind that work. They are strange gods and those who worship any god apart from the Triune God worship demons.

The Bible is very clear when it states that JESUS is the only way to the FATHER and that those who worship Him must do so in the SPIRIT and TRUTH. (John 4:24, 14:6)

John 4:24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

5. PRINCES AND KINGS

They are referred to as princes because they are rulers of darkness. Satan knows organizing things. All demons work according to the areas they have been assigned in.

Each continent, country or city has a demon that rules and commands other demons to influence the situations .
Daniel 10:12 – 13.”Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

Daniel 10:13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

KEY WORD	HEBREW	MEANING
Prince	s`ar	Keeper, Ruler ,lord
Kingdom	malku^th, malku^th	Realm, Kingdom, Empire,
Persia	paras	Persia, Persians
Withstood	amad	Cause to stand still, tarry
One	echad	One
Twenty	`es`riym	Score, Twenty
Days	yom	Days
Lo	hinneh	Behold, lo, see
Michael	miyka`el	Who is like God
One	`echad	One

Chief	ri'shon ri'shon	Eldest, first
Prince	s'ar	Keeper, Ruler ,lord Princes
Came	bo'	Come, pull in
Help	'azar	To surround, aid , protect
And I	'ahiy	Me, myself
Remained	yathar	Remained, Left
There	sham	There
Kings	melek	King, Royal

There are demons that are entrusted by Satan to govern or rule different areas and they do fight to prevent God's work progress and the children of God from receiving their answers and blessings from God. They fight any one who does God's work. So whenever we encounter obstacles in our personal lives or Ministry, we must know that the evil one is at work.

The moment we repent from our sins and accept Jesus Christ as our Personal Saviour and Lord of our Life then we are engaged in the war with Satan and his Angels. He will oppose any thing that we are going do to help us grow in our Christian life or any thing that will take the Kingdom of God forward. That is why it is important that whatever we do, we pray about it and put God first.

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**

We should therefore be aware that there are Demons ruling in every area we go to and that as believers we are at war with these spiritual rulers.

HOW DO THEY FUNCTION

The functioning of Demons is very wide and they do work according to different areas, cultures and customs of the land. One thing we must understand is that associating and agreeing with demons in any way is worshiping Satan.

Some people worship Satan openly. Others do that unknowingly. Demons work according to the customs and manners of the land they live in. The way they work in Africa may differ from the way they may function in Europe, America or Asia. Some of the activities may be similar but most of them differ even though the goal is to kill and destroy the purpose of God.

Some works of Satan through his angels the demons might appear to be good but the purpose for any demonic work is to oppose God. The Bible says the devil sometimes appears like the angel of light. **2 Corinthians 11:13-14.**

SOME SPECIFIC DEMON WORKS

1. ANGER
2. DEPRESSION
3. ADULTERY
4. WITCHCRAFT
5. SICKNESS

1. ANGER

Anger is something that the devil likes to use. When a person is possessed with a demon of anger gets annoyed even when there is nothing to get annoyed about. It is therefore important to guard against this kind of demon by always keeping quiet and pray before answering.

Anger is very destructive. It is described in Galatians 5:19-21 as the work of the flesh. And in the book of Romans the Bible says carnality is enmity with God. If we allow anger to overtake us then we are giving way to the devil to control our lives. When the devil has taken control of the life of a person, it is very difficult to be set free unless he or she goes through prayer of deliverance.

Galatians 5:19-21 – "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envy, murders, drunkenness, retellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things

Looking at this words listed above, one is able to tell they are contrary to the work of the spirit of God. To perform all these works in your life, one has to be influenced by outside forces, which are demons. It is therefore important that we start to see things with spiritual eyes. When we see a person so much living unclean life we need to know that he or she needs a spiritual mending rather than physical.

In 1982 we had a fellowship of very zealous young men and women. One day we were invited to pray for a lady who had been sick for more than one year and she was all bones. When we were talking to her she was speaking with a very feeble voice. When we started to pray for her, there was a very big roaring sound like a Lion which sent a number of the people on the group scampering. She rose from the bed and suddenly she was strong and went on to scare everyone in the house.

We realized this were demons. We started to cast them out and after the demons were cast out, the lady was completely healed and rose from the bed and walked instantly. It was the demons that had brought the sickness on her. Soon after she was delivered from demons, she was well again. It did not take time before she even gained the weight again.

HOW CAN WE IDENTIFY THOSE WHO ARE POSSESSED

People who are possessed act strangely from time to time. It is not always the case that if one is possessed he or she will be falling to the ground. Some will look very normal but when the demons manifest then they will do things that the demons want to do. The demons take over the spirit of that person and the person is not himself.

DREAMS

People who are possessed usually have dreams that are most times frightening. They may be having dreams where animals are most times chasing them; someone is threatening to throw them in water or deep pits.

Testimonies from those who were once possessed with demons of adultery and prostitution have indicated that before they were delivered they were having dreams of dogs chasing them and dog bites. Other common dreams from women who have been possessed is that they dream having sex with men they cannot identify. Many times these women find it very difficult to get married. Every time there is a man who proposes marriage to them the demons reject these men and pose as their husbands.

A certain woman who is a very strong Christian and now married narrated of how every time a man approached her for marriage the demons in the dreams would threaten to kill her if she accepted because the demons claimed they were married to her.

A friend of mine who is now a Pastor was involved in witchcraft before he was saved. In his many testimonies he narrates of how they would enter into houses and have sex with women without their husbands knowing while the women themselves were having dreams.

MOODS

Bad moods are usually signs of demon possession. Demons would change the mood of the person in very short time. One can be smiling and in a moment he gets annoyed without anybody annoying him or her. This is very common among African women. Many times women ask for prayer because they don't understand why they get annoyed even when no one has angered them. Sometimes they would wake up and something they don't know would tell them not to talk to anyone.

Some married women have testified that before they became Christians, they would hear someone telling them to hate their husbands or just have a feeling not to talk to their husbands and would decide to leave the home to go and stay with other people.

We have sometimes encountered problems from some women who would stay in the bedroom for two or three days without coming out just because they don't feel like seeing any person.

HOW DO PEOPLE GET POSSESSED?

People get possessed in many ways. They get possessed through

1. Inheriting from parents
2. Consulting mediums
3. Associating with certain traditions
4. Playing and listening to music dedicated to demons
5. Opening oneself to sin

It important to note that all demon possession comes because of engaging in things that is contrary to God's ways. Any one who has not got Jesus in his or her life is a candidate of demon possession. As I have pointed earlier on that demons are spirits and can only perform their evil work when they enter a physical body.

Luke 11:24 states that a demon can leave one place and go to look somewhere else to go and leave. The bible says the demon passes in dry places to look for a physical place to live in. If the demon finds no suitable place, decides to go back to its former place and if the place is empty then invites other seven to go strengthen its possession.

Luke 11:24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

KEY WORDS	GREEK	ENGLISH
When	hotan	Whenever, as soon as
Unclean Spirit	akathartos	Impure, unclean
Gone out	pneuma	Spirit. Ghost or Demon
Man	exerchomai	Depart, escape, get out or go away
Walketh	anthropos	Human being
Through	dierchomai	Go about
Dry	dia	Among, after, through
Places	anudros	Dry, Without water
Seeking	topos	Locations
Rest	zeteo	Seek, desire
Finding	anapausis	Rest
None	heurisko	Find, Get or obtain
Return	me	None, Nothing
House	huposrepho	Back again, Turn back, Return
Came from	oikos	House, Home
	exerchomai	Escape, Get out, Depart

Luke 11:24-26 “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. 25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. 26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

Demons do not stay where the Holy Spirit is. They choose dirty places because they are dirty. The meaning here of the unclean spirit finding the house empty and swept is that the unclean spirit is no longer there, and the Lord Jesus is also not there.

It is therefore very important that when one is delivered from demon possession he lets Jesus into his life as Lord of his life. If the demon comes back and finds Jesus, the demon cannot go in because the house is occupied. If the heart, which is the house, is not occupied, then the demon seeks other powers to assist him to consolidate its stay.

The Bible says the state of that person will be worse than the beginning. The state of the person becomes eight times worse than the former state.

In Africa whenever demons are cast out from the person, he or she is told about this passage and the consequences of rejecting Jesus Christ at that stage. The person must clearly be told what may befall him if he or she does not become a Christian at that time.

Even when we are disciplining Christians and teaching them to deal with demons, we do not leave out this part. If this part is left out then the job has not been done.

1. INHERITING FROM PARENTS

Many people inherit demons through the rituals or traditions that are performed in the tribes and families. In most African tribes when Children are born, they perform certain traditions on the baby, which are usually perceived to be protection from bad luck or from harm by evil people. Africans believe that as the people come to see the new baby, some come with evil intentions to harm the baby.

Some Parents cast spells upon their babies so that they can possess the same characteristics as their parents when they grow up. In this way some babies are initiated into witchcraft just from birth. Except they accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour in most cases the character of the people who pass in this rituals are very evil.

2. CONSULTING MEDIUMS

People can get possessed when they consult witchdoctors. There are more witchdoctors than conventional Medical Doctors in Africa. Because of the traditions, many people trust the traditional healers more than they trust the Hospitals. Today, televisions are flooded with adverts of Traditional Healers who claim to have remedies for a number of diseases and claim to end bad luck for those who cannot get married, can't find employment or cannot pass well in school.

Sometimes these things seem to be working but it is all the devils work. A friend of mine who was a witch but now is a Pastor narrates how they would bewitch someone and prevent that person from getting married. If that person finds someone to marry they would prevent the person by making the person hate his or her lover for no apparent reason.

If the person does not get delivered through prayer, he or she is forced to go and see a witch Doctor to give him or her charms to attract men or women. In most cases the Witch Doctor because he possesses some higher power may send a possessed man to marry that person. The marriage will be full of problems and the person ends up also highly possessed.

The Bible is against consultation of mediums or witch Doctors, as they are popularly known in Africa. In the western world they are called fortune tellers or palm readers.

When the children of Israel were getting into the Promised Land, God warned them not to have anything to do with mediums or familiar spirits because the practice was a pagan tradition and doing so was worshiping a foreign God. He told them that the reason God was driving out the natives of that land was because they were practicing such kind of things.

BIBLE PASSAGES

Leviticus 19:31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 20:27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

Deuteronomy 18:9 -12 "When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. 10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, 11 Or a charmer, or a consulter of familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

If a person leaves his dependence on Jehovah God and goes to consult a familiar spirit or witch Doctor will get possessed because he or she has turned to worship Satan. And from that time whatever the person does will be controlled by demons. The life of the person changes and his mind becomes evil and miserable. The act of involvement in the practice of any demon activity was punishable by death in the Old Testament.

We need to depend on God to solve all our problems. Consulting familiar Spirits is denying God and putting Satan first instead of God. God is our creator who has power to solve any problem we may face and we are to depend on him. **Proverbs 3:5-8.** "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. 7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. 8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

3. ASSOCIATING WITH CERTAIN TRADITIONS

In Africa, there are traditions that are performed by tribes basing on their historic background. There were a lot of wars before the people before they settled down in the areas where they are now. If they won the war, they would celebrate and sacrifice to their gods. They did still sacrifice even if they lost the war.

Because of that, they have continued to celebrate and make sacrifices each year and during this time idol worshiping is highly practiced. All those who participate in them end up possessed. It may not be known or seen immediately but as time goes on strange things start to happen to these people. Almost all the tribes in Africa practice some annual event where they worship ancestors.

When casting out demons, in most cases they would talk and tell you that they are troubling the victim because he has not been observing certain traditions they started to do at a particular time. The rule is that when you once participate in these traditions, then you should continue to do so every year.

If you miss one year then you have committed an offence against the spirits and you must be punished. To correct the situation, you have to perform some rituals prescribed by the keepers of these ancestral spirits, which is a further worship of demons and makes the person to be more enslaved.

These traditions go with eating and abstaining from some foods. If you participate in these customs then at a certain stage you must eat or stop eating certain foods. If you go contrary to the required rules you have to be punished by the gods.

In Zambia we have a traditional ceremony in Eastern Province where it is required that to be a leader of that tribe you must be ready to drink the blood of bulls. And it is a requirement among many tribes in Africa that to be a leader of a clan

you must protect yourself and your family from your enemies by acquiring strong charms. This makes the entire family members get possessed and all their offspring inherit the same demons.

Unless they become Christians, the spirits of those charms will control their lives. These demons are very difficult which only go away with the person renouncing the act that they performed as members of the family and by intensive prayer.

These should not be allowed among believers because the traditions enslave people. The Bible is against these kinds of things. We have in Africa some cults who have these traditions in the name of church. They teach their followers not to eat some foods like pork and goat meat. They drink blood from animals and would not eat flesh of black chickens or certain types of fish.

BIBLE PASSAGE

1Timothy 4:1-5. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

As Christians we must be very careful and give ourselves to prayer and studying of the word of God so that we will be able to judge every doctrine and discern when something is being done under the influence of the evil spirits. Many cults in Africa will pretend to be Christians but acting under the manifestation of Demons.

We have some so called Christian groups who when they are speaking and demons manifest will start to roar like Lions and prophesy while some will claim a name of one of the Apostles 's spirit has come upon them and start to speak like that Apostle. They cannot pray or preach if they are not dressed like an old Apostle. These type churches are common in Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa. We have some in West Africa who practice Satanism in the name of Church. The people who attend these churches end up all possessed as they lay their hands on them whenever they pray for them.

4. PLAYING MUSIC DEDICATED TO DEMONS.

A certain Pastor from the Democratic Republic of Congo who was initiated into witchcraft at the age of three years by his father has been going around many countries testifying the of the things God has delivered him from.

In his one of the Testimonies he narrates of how the many musicians who are popular in Africa get their songs from the demons under the water in the Indian and Atlantic Ocean. He narrates that all their music is given when by power of demons they go under the water and stay there for a week or more days and receive and write the music whilst there.

When the music is finally recorded, it is dedicated to the demons that inspired them. This makes those who constantly listen and dance to this type of music to get possessed. This sounds extreme but this kind of things in Africa is very common and is real.

There are certain traditional music in Africa which those who dance to them do so only when they are under the influence of demons. If the demons have not manifested then they cannot dance. Some Witch finders have some people who play some drums and singing as they dance. During the time they are dancing he would be sprinkling some traditional medicines and all those who are sprinkled will get possessed and start to mention names of all witches and wizards present or not present but are in the area. Equally those who may dance to that music or stay there long may also get possessed.

If a Christian attends such kind of meetings he or she will be identified by all those under the influence of the demons and will be chased away because the Holy Spirit in him or her will defeat any demon around. When a Christian comes to that place. Everything that they are doing comes to a stand still and they would not like anything disturbing their work.

They usually would physically remove the Christian from their midst if he or she cannot leave on his or her own. The Bible says the demons at the mention or the presence of Jesus Christ they tremble. Demons are the enemies of God and at the presence of God they cannot stand.

BIBLE PASSAGES

Isaiah 64:2 As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!

James 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

It is therefore important that as Christians we do not remain ignorant of what the devil may do.

Demons also cannot stand gospel music that is sung under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The experience in many African churches where the true Gospel is preached and righteousness prevails, if demon possessed person comes there, the demons will manifest and leave as they pray or as they sing. Even in the Old Testament whenever David played the music, the demon would leave Saul. Because Saul did not repent, the demon returned back to him and troubled him again.

Demons also do not stand the mention of name of Jesus. There are testimonies by those who were once possessed that whenever any person mentioned the name of Jesus, they felt like some fire was going through them. They screamed or ran away from the place where the name was being mentioned.

Whenever demons are cast out from the person, asking them to mention the name of Jesus as Lord tests them. If the person is still under the influence of demons, they cannot mention the name of Jesus. Instead they would be just looking at you.

There are also religious demons that pretend to be Christians. But prayerful Christians can easily know the people who are under this kind of demonic power. They can mention the name of Jesus but cannot pray when they are in the presence of righteous Children of God. You can also know them by the life that they live. The fruits they bear are works of the flesh. Jesus spoke about these type of people who call him as Lord but do not do his will. They are pretenders. They can deceive some Christians but not for long.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 7:15-23. “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

OPENING ONESELF TO SIN

Sin is the cause of any problem we can think of. Demons influence people to sin. Therefore anyone who commits sin opens himself to demon possession or oppression.

Most of those who have once practiced witchcraft have narrated how they identified Christians living a righteous life and those living in sin. They say those who are living in righteousness have a ring of light surrounding them wherever they go. If a witch wants to hurt them, he cannot pass through it.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Job 1:10 Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

MY EXPERIENCE [Rev Howard N Mwindula]

In 1983, I was looking for a house to rent. A white friend of mine who was not a Christian but one who respected Christianity offered me to live in a house he had paid for, for three months. He had paid for that house because he wanted his daughter to stay there. His daughter declined to stay in the house because she did not like the location. When he learnt that I was looking for house to rent, he offered me to stay there with my three cousins for the period he had paid for so that I can continue to pay for myself after three months.

When we moved in the house, we started a house fellowship. We were also having prayers from 18:00hrs to 20:00hrs (6:00 pm to 8:00pm) every day. At the end of three months I went to pay for another three months. To my surprise, the landlord who was also staying just next to the house, refused to get the money and gave us only one week to stay in the house while we were looking for a house somewhere else. We asked him for the reason he did not want us too stay there. He did not tell us any concrete reason but just said he did not like the noise we made when we sang Christian music.

Later on after we had moved from there, we learnt that the man practiced witchcraft. He was going into people's houses and had sex with women in their sleep or took men by magic and used them to work in the way he wanted them to.

It happened that every time he wanted to enter in our house to make fun of us, he failed because our house was sealed. He told our white friend that whenever he wanted to come in the house, he saw no window or door of the house. He was

upset with us because we were under the power that he failed to understand whenever he used his magic. We were covered with the power of the Holy Spirit and God had belt an edge around us. When he came in the morning he saw the door. But whenever he came with the intention to harm us, then God would not allow him. He hid us under his power.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Psalm 91:1-7 "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. :2 I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. :5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; 6 Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

Satan and his angels can only touch Christians if God permits them like he did to Job. Even if they are touched it cannot be beyond their ability to take the test. At the end of the test there is always a blessing and it is for the Christian's good.

BIBLE PASSAGES

1 Corinthians 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Romans 8:28 "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."

CAN CHRISTIANS BE POSSESSED?

There is a controversy surrounding this subject. Some believe that, it is possible for a Christian to be possessed while another group say that it is not possible for one with the Spirit of God getting possessed.

In my own understanding, I will put it in two words. The two words are; **Possession** and **Oppression**. These two words are the words in which the demons dominate the either the Non Christians or Christians. Possession is for unbelievers and oppression is for Christians.

Possession is when the demons have the entire control of the whole personality of the person and can control is mind and spirit. The person in this case cannot do anything to free him or herself. He or she will need deliverance by casting out of the demons in him or her. These are people who have not repented from their sins and have not got Jesus in their lives.

They are enslaved by the demons and cannot do anything except what the demons want them to do. If they try to pray, they cannot because the demons manifest and disturb them. The devils use them to perform bad things. Demons are spirits who need Physical bodies to work, so they use human beings to communicate with people.

Oppression is when the demons are not in total control of the person but are able to inflict pain on the person. They can cause problems in the life of the person but they have no ability to possess his mind and spirit. When a Person is born again, the Spirit of God takes control of his spirit and cannot be taken over by any other spirit. The house is not empty because there is someone in it, who is the Lord of lords Jesus Christ.

A Christian cannot be possessed but can be oppressed. If a Christian lives in sin, he opens himself to the devil to oppress him by bringing in his life problems like sicknesses and other psychological problems.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF DEMONS AS EXPERIENCED IN AFRICA

These are some of the activities of demons in Africa. A man who has been practicing demonism for some years narrated these and he is still in it. He noticed that he was possessed when he was a quiet young man. He says one day while traveling from one village to the other some thing got hold of his mind and started to see things that were strange.

REGIONS

Demons are grouped according to regions. Every region has a ruler who every demon obeys. No demon of equal power can go into that area without the permission of the Spirit that rules the area. If a demon goes into the area without permission, then it can be punished or imprisoned.

Demons cause those who believe in them to worship them. They also provide food and luck for their worshipers so that they are blinded further.

In the Northern part of Zambia there is a place where demons have been providing fish once every year. What has been happening is that between June and September water would come into a plain like land and the place would be flooded mysteriously and the fish would come in this shallow water. The people would then go in and catch the fish without problems.

They would go on catching the fish for two or three weeks and suddenly the water with the fish would go into the big caves of the mountains where the water came from. If anyone tries to follow the water or catch the fish from these holes or caves they end up meeting snakes and if they insist would meet their deaths.

This area is very well known and there is someone who is the keeper of the gods in the area. The same person is the priest and prophet of the spirits of the area. A week or two before the flooding, the demons inform him of what is going to happen and the rules for that year although the rules are almost the same every year. He is told about the rules at the time he is sacrificing to the gods. The same person announces the day the water will come and the day the water will disappear.

Sometimes he may announce the coming of different types of birds and the people would be catching these birds without any problem. Anyone participating in this catch may end up possessed. Some people who have gone there and have not followed the rules that are set by the demons in order to participate in the catch have gone mad or got lost in the bush and died.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

One of the evil things that happen in this area is that they would pick a baby girl and take it to the shrine and give the baby to a very big snake which is always in a small hut or the cave and the snake could play with the baby for one or two hours. That is called marriage of the god to that child. From that moment the child could be taken to that snake until the age of fourteen or fifteen.

The rule is that the child cannot stop visiting the snake unless another ritual is performed and replaced by another baby girl. If the girl is not replaced, she can go up to twenty years of age but the strange thing is that this girl or this woman cannot menstruate as long as she is still visiting the snake. At that particular time she is considered to be a wife of that god. No man can propose to her. In most cases they would perform the ritual to allow her get married at fourteen years of age. If the ritual is not performed to free her then she cannot get married or menstruate for the rest of her life.

During the period of the catch, the girl would be kept with the snake until the end of the catch ends. They would only be taking the food to cave where the child and the snake are.

He also confesses that some of the things that happen there are very evil but he does not go into details. He admitted that the Bible is truly the word of God. He says if among those who go there, there is one carrying a Bible then things would not work unless that person goes back. This time very few people go there to participate in this annual catch because the area has been reached with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. A lot of people now have realized that the whole event is very demonic and evil.

THE ISLAND

On one of the lakes in the same region in Kaputa District of Northern Zambia, there is an Island about two Kilometers from the shore. On this Island it was believed that there was a god (demon) and only those authorized by the demons of the area would reach that Island. If anyone not possessed tried to get there, he would meet a very bad storm before he got there. No one was able to photograph the Island. The pictures would only come out blank. This was happening just as recent as 1960. These things stopped happening when the Roman Catholic Priests went and prayed there.

FIRES AND ACCIDENTS

There is a lot of witchcraft in Africa that the demons of witchcraft cause fire and accidents to destroy property and lives of innocent people. They do that in order to shed human blood for sacrifice to their gods. The more they shed human blood the more they become stronger and are promoted to higher ranks in the demon world.

WATER FALLS

Waterfalls in Africa are considered to be sacred by demon worshippers and a lot of demon activities go on around them. There is a waterfall on the river that divides Luapula Province and Northern Province called Kundabwika Falls. It is a tourist attraction. Before it became a tourist activity, it was considered a sacred place and anyone wishing to visit the place had to perform some kind of rituals before getting there.

It is believed that the place was place for a god of that area and he controlled all the lives of people living in the area. Whenever people wanted to visit the waterfalls they were required to carry something to go and sacrifice before they saw anything there.

The person who narrates this says if anyone went there without something to sacrifice would not see anything there. He or she became blind or to him or her, the water stopped falling and could only see the river flowing normally as if there were not any waterfalls. If he or she is not lucky depending on the day may not come back but would fall in the water and drown even if he or she is an expert in swimming.

Those who managed to fulfill the requirements to visit the falls saw a lot funny things going on there. They saw sometimes snakes of different colours playing around, doves, or just people of different races swimming there.

On certain days they found a wedding going on in the midst of the water. No camera could pick any of what was seen there. The first pictures were photographed in 1950 when some missionaries from Europe visited the place and conducted prayers on the site. From that time until now people are able to take pictures of the Water Falls. The people in the area believe the coming of Christianity has reduced the powers of the spirits

Even though the things that were happening there, no longer happen, many people who are demon worshippers still visit the place and make sacrifices. People travel from very far places within Zambia to come and worship the spirits at the Water Falls. The keeper of the gods still lives there and he is the one who tells the visitors the rules to be followed while they are there. In all these it is clearly known to Demon worshippers that the God of the Christians is above any other god on the face of the earth and is extremely feared.

FALLING OF WITCHES

The flying of witches is a common thing in Zambia. From the time Zambia was declared a Christian Nation, we have had incidences where witches have crash landed because they have encountered the power of God as they have been flying and have been forced down. The power that they use for flying is cannot work where there is the power of God, In most cases if they are flying over a place where Christians are praying then they will crush. When they fall down then every one can see them and can even physically be hurt.

Most of those who fall down do remember whatever happened to them and will tell you where they have come from and where they were going. They can even tell you what their mission was and who they wanted to kill. A few get confused and would look like they are lost.

CHRISTIANITY IS THE ANSWER.

Many remedies are tried to deliver people from demon possession but these methods are just moving from one form of demon worship to the other. The only true deliverance will come to the person through Jesus Christ. Jesus is the answer. He defeated Satan when he went to the cross for us.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Colossians 1:9-14 "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; 12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

When a person is born again, he or she is rescued from the power of darkness or the kingdom of demons and translated or changed into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is a citizenship change. Jesus fought the battle to rescue us.

BIBLE PASSAGES

Colossians 2:13-15 "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

It does not matter at what level one has gone in demon worship or how many demons are in him; anyone who comes with a willing heart to Jesus Christ can be set free.

There is no God like our God. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Jesus said whoever comes to Him; He will not cast away. His arms are open waiting to receive who so ever will come to Him with a heart of repentance. You can be set free, today if you confess your sins and invite Jesus into your heart.

HE CAME TO SET THE CAPTIVES FREE.

BIBLE PASSAGES

Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Romans 10:8-13 “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; :9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

APPENDIX B - WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY AND RELIGION?

The chart below indicates in outline form the way in which various religions around the world use in the search for a relationship with God. Biblical Christianity is unique relying totally on faith in Christ **John 14:6**.

BELIEF SYSTEM	GOD	FIGURE HEAD	SALVATION	AFTERLIFE	MAIN RITUALS	WORLD VIEW	BOOKS
Biblical Christianity	Trinity	Jesus Christ	By faith alone in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection	Heaven for the saved or Hell for the unsaved	Baptism, Communion	Monotheistic	Bible
Christendom	God	Various	Salvation through the Church and Ritual	Purgatory, Heaven Hell	Mass, Confirmation, Baptism	Monotheistic	Bible
Bahai	Creator God	None	After death your soul gets closer to god	Heaven and Hell are spiritual conditions	Fasting	Monotheistic	Baha u llah
Buddhism	None	Various including Dalai Lama	None required as sin does not exist	Reincarnation or Nirvana No heaven or hell	Meditation, Mantra, Incense, Koan	Atheistic	Sutras
Confucianism	None	Confucius	Improvement through knowledge	Life focussed on the life on earth	Temple worship and family shrines	Atheistic	Wu Jing
Hare Krishna	Krishna is chief God	Various	Reincarnation until worthy to serve Krishna	Breaking the cycle to get to serve Krishna	Chanting, living a good life Vegetarianism	Monotheistic and Polytheism	Bhagavad Gita
Hinduism	Many gods	None specific	Reincarnation until Enlightened	Reincarnation or Nirvana	Prayer and offering three times a day	Polytheistic	Vedas,[BG] Upanisads
Islam	Allah	Muhammad	Allah prefers power over mercy, judgement over grace	Paradise for good people , Hell for bad people	Pray five times a day Fasting, Tithing Pilgrimage	Monotheistic	Koran
Jainism	None	Mahavira	Reincarnation until final liberation	Liberation after reincarnations	Meditation, Prayer and Confession	Atheistic	45 Agmas
Judaism	God	Moses, Rabbis	Strict Observance of the Law	Heaven after resurrection	Sabbath and Feasts	Monotheistic	Talmud, Mishna O T
Shinto	None	None	Improvement in life on the earth	Life focussed on the life on earth	Shrine worship	Polytheistic	Kojiki, Nihongi
Sikhism	Naam	Ranjit Singh	None, continual reincarnation	Reincarnation	Prayers and Baptism	Monotheistic	Granth Sahib, Adi Granth
Taoism	None	Lao and Chang Tzu	Yin and Yang	Focus on achieving immortality and Tao	Passivism and rituals at funerals	Atheistic	Tao te King
Vedanta	God in you	Hindu Monks	Reincarnation until final liberation	Heaven not permanent	Yoga in four formats need to be balanced	Theism	The Vedas
Zoroastrianism	Ahura Mazda	Zoroaster	Type of life on earth Series of saviours	Eventually all get to heaven	Good Thoughts, Works and Deeds	Monotheistic	The Avesta

Note:-The difference between Biblical Christianity and Christendom is that Biblical Christianity relies on a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ while Christendom relies on works and ritual. This does not imply that there are no people with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ in the "Christendom type" of church however.