

# Introduction to Christian Belief

## Lecture Topic 1 : Introduction to Theology

1. What is “Theology”?
  1. “Teaching” (John 7:17)
  2. O.T.: teaching revealed and received (torah)
  3. N.T.: Christian instruction (Acts 2:42; Rom 6:17 etc.)
  4. Used here as a synonym for “systematic theology”
    - a. Summarisation of biblical teaching (EDWJ)
    - b. How the different parts of what Christians believe fit together in a coherent whole (Jig-saw puzzle).
2. Why study theology?
  1. theos = God logos = word  
Understanding God by means of His Word.
  2. God speaks to all people by His Word. E.g. Psalm 19:1-4.
  3. All people are theologians, either good or bad ones.
  4. Good theology is the result of a love for God that comes from our hearts and disciplines our minds in the truth (Matt 22:37; 2 Cor 10:5; 1 Peter 3:15)
  5. Bad theology is the result of a heart closed to God (“hard”, “stubborn ‘”, Mark 6:51-52; 7:21). Its hidden intention is to promote idolatry and personal satisfaction (Romans 1:18-32).
  6. Theological reflection is a central part of Christian spirituality. It deepens our relationship with God as the Holy Spirit frees us from false images of God and reveals the truth to us (John 8:28-32). Good theology leads to spiritual growth (Matt 28:18 ff; Eph 4:11-14; 1 Tim 1:10; 6:3; Titus 1:2).
3. Who teaches theology?
  1. Only God can teach us about God (Jeremiah 31:33-34; John 6:45).
  2. For this reason, theology requires faith and is not like any other “science.”
  3. Since Jesus is both God and human (Son of God and Son of Man), he is qualified to be not only the perfect but sole teacher of theology (Matt 23:10); this he does by his Holy Spirit (John 14:26; Acts 1:1; 1 John 2:27).
  4. This is part of what it means to call Jesus the Word of God (John 1:1; Rev 19:13). 1.3
  5. Good theology will be biblical. This is because Jesus own teaching was based on the Old Testament, and the New Testament witnesses to him. The Bible shows us the way to and the way of life. The Bible is our guide to Christ.
4. What is good theology?
  1. Good theology must be centred on Christ who is the Teacher of our faith. It must be open to the Holy Spirit whose task it is to reveal to us the things of Christ (Matt 23:10; John 14:26; I John 2:20, 27).  
  
‘no one will make you a doctor or a teacher of the Scriptures except the Holy Spirit’.  
(Luther)

2. Good theology will be personal and devotional, not simply intellectual. That is, it is not something one ‘does’ or learns, but a matter of life.

Theology is : ‘the doctrine of living to God’ (J. Arndt).

A theologian : ‘is one whose heart is true’ (Evagrius Ponticus).

‘It is the heart that makes the theologian’

5. Becoming good theologians involves issues of character:

1. Teachability (Hebrews 5:11-14;2 Tim 4:3-4)

2. Humility (Isaiah 66:2)

3. Focus on Jesus (Col 2:2-3)

4. Recognition that a willingness to suffer with Christ is a prerequisite for inward reception of the Word of God (Luke 8:11-15)

If being a theologian means being conformed to Christ in his relationship to the Father by the power of the Spirit, then this will involve a pattern of death and resurrection.

‘By living, yes, by dying and being damned is the theologian made - not by thinking, reading or speculating’. (Luther)

5. Good theology is done in the context of the church. It will be neither individualistic nor revolutionary but seek to reflect on how the community of God has expressed its faith in God.

It is essentially the church’s word about God in responsive transmission of the Word of God to the church (K. Barth).

6. The dangers of theology

1. Substitution: theology replaces faith (idolatry, theologism). The science of the knowledge of God is not knowledge of God. (Mark 7:1 – 13)

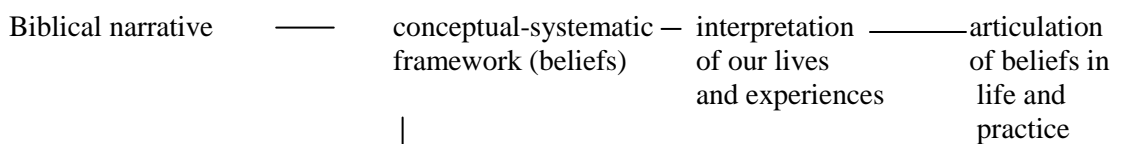
2. Dogmatism: our systems are only models and not God himself.

3. Intellectualism: temptation to stop short of personal transformation.

7. The process of theology

1. Exercised under the Lordship of Jesus in his prophetic office.

2.



context of: Church

Prayer

Praise

Fear of God

Humility

## Lecture Topic 2 : Revelation

### 2.1 The idea of revelation

1. Major theme in traditional dogmatics - Catholic, Reformed, Liberal
2. Denial of the importance of the subject of revelation by some modern liberals, e.g. F.G Downing, James Barr. They argue that the Bible is concerned with the “what” of salvation rather than the “how” of revelation.
3. Variety of biblical terms
  - a. phaneroo: to make manifest what is already available
  - b. apokalypto: uncovering or unveiling that which is hidden
  - c. always, ‘outside’ to ‘inside’
  - d. includes phenomena like: ‘word’, ‘teaching’, ‘counsel’, ‘prophecy’, ‘light’, ‘name’, ‘open’, ‘shine’ etc.
4. Not an exhaustive disclosure of God but still genuine
  - a. Greek Orthodoxy: mystery, apophatic theology
  - b. Luther: ‘hidden revelation of God’

### 2.2 A definition of revelation

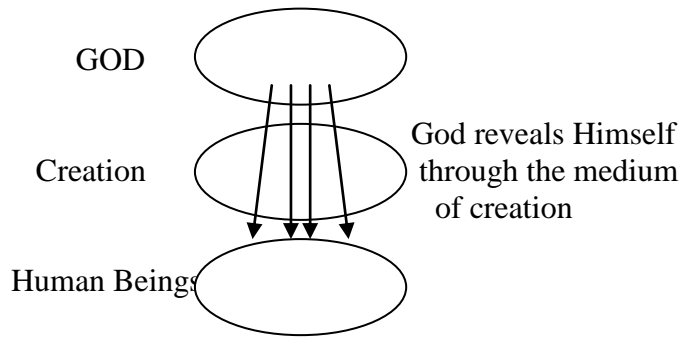
‘The disclosure of the knowledge of God’

- a. disclosure - not discovery, God comes to us from without
- b. knowledge of God
  - objective genitive: knowledge about God and his relation to us (information)
  - subjective genitive: God’s self -disclosure or self-communication, God’s own self-knowledge

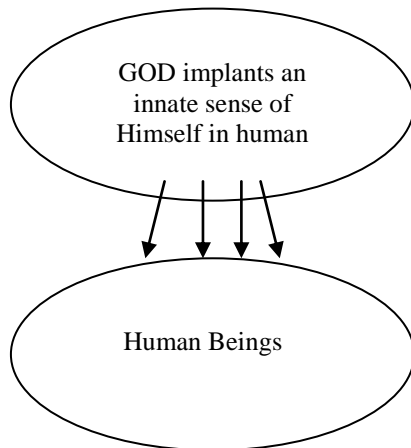
### 2.3 General and special revelation

#### 1. General Revelation (GR)

- a. The revelation of truths about God through nature and history, eg. Psalm 19:1ff, Romans 1:16-25.  
Calvin: 5 aspects  
beauty            wisdom            mankind            government            providence  
aesthetic            intellectual            human            structural            providential
- b. General revelation is ‘general’ because it is open to all persons. GR corresponds to common grace, viz. God’s action through created structures eg. government (Rom 13:17), conscience (Rom 2:15), religion (?) for mankind’s good.



Mediate General Revelation



Immediate General Revelation

## 2. Special revelation (SR)

- a. Is centred around the work and person of Jesus Christ. Scripture is the site of special revelation as the Holy Spirit witnesses to Christ through it.
- b. SR is open only to those who hear the gospel.
- c. SR presupposes the inadequacy of GR.

## 3. General revelation limits

- a. By its inherent form, eg. impersonal world and personal God, trinity, omnipotence etc. Adam needed a Word of God to tell him what to do and what not to do.
- b. Sin: Rom 1:16ff, 2:14, Acts 17:24ff - people transmute GR into idolatry, no true knowledge of God results. All moral and spiritual knowledge apart from SR is impure. The result is a diversity of religious, political, philosophical and moral systems. GR leaves humans under the wrath of God.

#### 4. General revelation function

- a. Humanity is unable to free itself from the presence of God. A contact with God in creation remains. Humans are still the work of God's hands (yet not seen as Father's hands).
- b. Common grace preserves the human race from total anarchy, something of God's commands and ordinances remain.
- c. GR subserves SR i.e. providence is for salvation.

#### 5. Special revelation function

- a. As humanity is fallen and indicted by its failure to respond to GR it needs another revelation.
- b. In Jesus God makes himself known to sinful people so that a relationship is re-established ie. redemption.
- c. The recipients of SR are the elect of God given the gift of faith to see God in Christ. God's purposes for mankind is achieved in them.

#### 6. Special revelation sufficiency

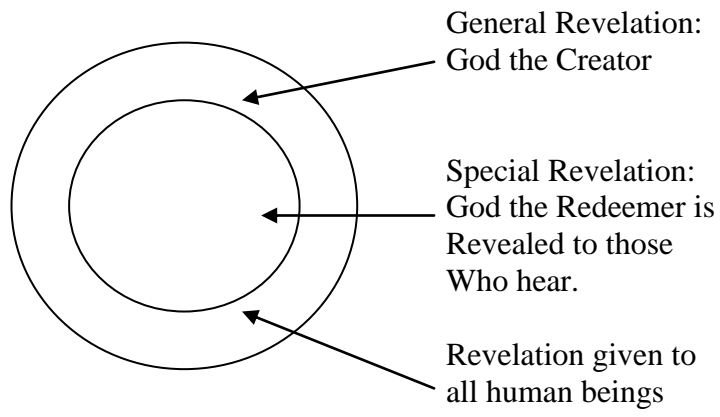
- a. Jesus is a better mediator than nature. As God he can reveal God, not only as Creator but Redeemer and Father. Jesus is the fullness of creation (Col. 1:19).
- b. Scripture has a propositional and cognitive content not available in nature eg. heaven, hell, Satan, second coming

#### 7. General and Special revelation

- a. Harmonise in the overall plan of God.
- b. Not just in parallel. SR opens our eyes to GR. A glass by which the book of GR is read (Calvin). The world is like a book whose meaning only the Book can expound. Our eyes are opened to this world only as they are opened to Jesus.
- c. The same Spirit who gave scripture opens our eyes to the world and leads us in both cases to God.
- d. GR reminds us of the guilt of our eyes in the past and highlights for us the absoluteness of the revelation of God in Jesus.

#### 8. Conclusion

- a. Not 2 revelations but a two-fold revelation (2 aspects of the same God's revealing of himself).
- b. Both serve to effect God's purposes:
  - (i) GR - preserves and indicts
  - (ii) SR - saves and brings us into fellowship with God.
- c. When God dwells with humanity there will be no distinction.  
'And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love'.



## Lecture Topic 3 : The Trinity

### 1 The Doctrine of the Trinity and Scripture

#### 1. Scripture does not directly teach the doctrine of the Trinity

- the word 'trinity', which means three in unity, is not found in Scripture
- doctrine is the Church's exegesis of what God has said in Scripture
- the writers of Scripture did not have to combat the errors of later times which led to the formulation of the Church doctrine of the Trinity
- the language of doctrine is not the language of the witness of Scripture.

#### 2. The root of the doctrine of the Trinity is found in Scripture

- in Scripture God speaks of himself
- the doctrine of the Trinity has no other basis than God's revelation in Scripture e.g. culture, history, philosophy
- doctrinal statements about the Trinity claim to be indirectly identical with what is contained in revelation
- the doctrine of the Trinity is an exposition of Christian experience mediated through scripture e.g. Jesus in the Gospels

### 2. Biblical foundations

#### 1. There is one God

- against polytheism (Exod.20:2-3)
- oneness of God (Deut.6:4-7, unique (class of his own and a unity)
- N.T.: 'one God' ( 1 Cor.8:4, 6; 1 Tim.2:5-6, James 2:19.)

#### 2. Suggestions of the doctrine of the trinity in the Old Testament

##### a. O.T. 'personifications':

- not distinct persons, but more than mere titles or activities
  - indicate that the divine unity is not bare, plain, distant, inactive but dynamic, transcendence and immanence.
- (i) Name
- Exod.32, Deut.12, God's name to be revealed, 'name' dwells with his people
- (ii) Glory
- Exod.40; Ezek.10, glory dwells in tabernacle
  - Temple as well as in heaven (but can depart) without compromising oneness.
- (iii) Angel
- terms 'Lord', 'angel of the Lord' used interchangeably e.g. Gen.16:7-13; 18:1-2; 19:1ff; Judges 6:11ff; 13:2ff; Mal.3:1.

- (iv) Wisdom
  - treated as if a person, separate yet dependent on God  
e.g. Proverbs 8 - creation. cf. Prov.1:20-23; 9:1-6; Job 28; Eccl.7:24
- (v) Word of God
  - God himself under the metaphor of speech
  - going forth of God actively in guidance, judgement, redemption  
e.g. Ps.29; 119:89; 147:15-20; Isa.55:10-11.
- (vi) Spirit
  - God's presence and power in creation (Gen 1:2; Ps. 104:30)
  - strength of Messiah (Isa.42:1-3)
  - agent of new creation (Ezek.36:26, 37:1-14).

b. indications that God is not a solitary person

- Gen.1:26; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8; plural subject 'us' used with a singular verb 'God', 'I', points to an inner plurality
- use of Elohim for God, quantitative diversity in unity cf. 'heaven', 'water'.

3. Each of the persons of the trinity is God in Scripture

- Father, assumed throughout (Gen 1:1 etc.)
- Son, confessed in N.T. (John 1:1 – 4; 20:28; Heb. 1:3,8 etc.)
- Spirit, intimated in N.T. (Matt. 28:19; 1Cor.2: 10 – 11 etc.)

4. Persons inseparably linked yet distinct

- three Persons linked in unity and equality; Matt 28:19 - 'name' is singular; 2 Cor.13:14 - dynamic attributes in salvation; Eph.4: 4-6 - 'one Spirit ... one Lord ... one God' cf. 1 Cor.12:4-6, 2 Cor.1:21-22; Gal.4:6; Eph.2:20-22; 2 Thess.2:13-14; Tit.3:4-6, 1 Pet.1:2.
- unity in saving work (the work of God presupposes the being of God.) Whole pattern of life of Christ - put forward by God the Father in the power of the Spirit e.g. baptism (Matt.3:16-17)
- distinct from one another i.e. Father is not Son is not Spirit e.g. Matt. 3:16 – 17; John 1:1 – 2; 14:26

5. Conclusions.

1. There is one God
2. God is three persons
3. Each of the persons is God

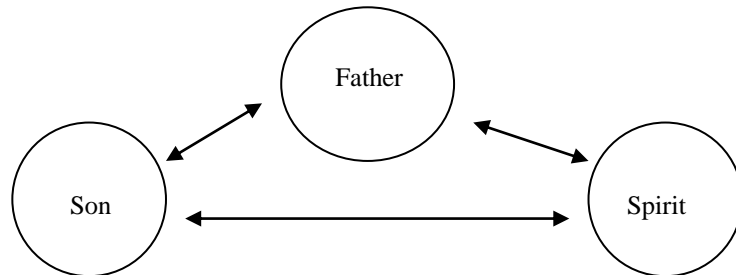
3. Erroneous views of the Godhead

1. God is three gods not one God.
  - a. this is tritheism
  - b. it is an example of polytheism



- c. it denies the complete unity of the Trinity.
- d. it is unbiblical (Deut 6:4etc.)
- e. it leads to moral disintegration, divisive competition, loss of a unified world view

God



2. God is not inwardly Father, Son and Spirit.

- a. adoptionism or dynamic monarchianism; (*mon-archon* = sole principle/rule) (Theodotus in second century, Paul of Samosata in third century)
- b. the Spirit or Christ came upon Jesus at his baptism so that he was dynamised to become Son of God and do his works. Jesus remained ‘mere man’, he is the supremely inspired man, not God in the flesh.

Father

Spirit power of Father through Spirit rests on:

Jesus

e.g. baptism

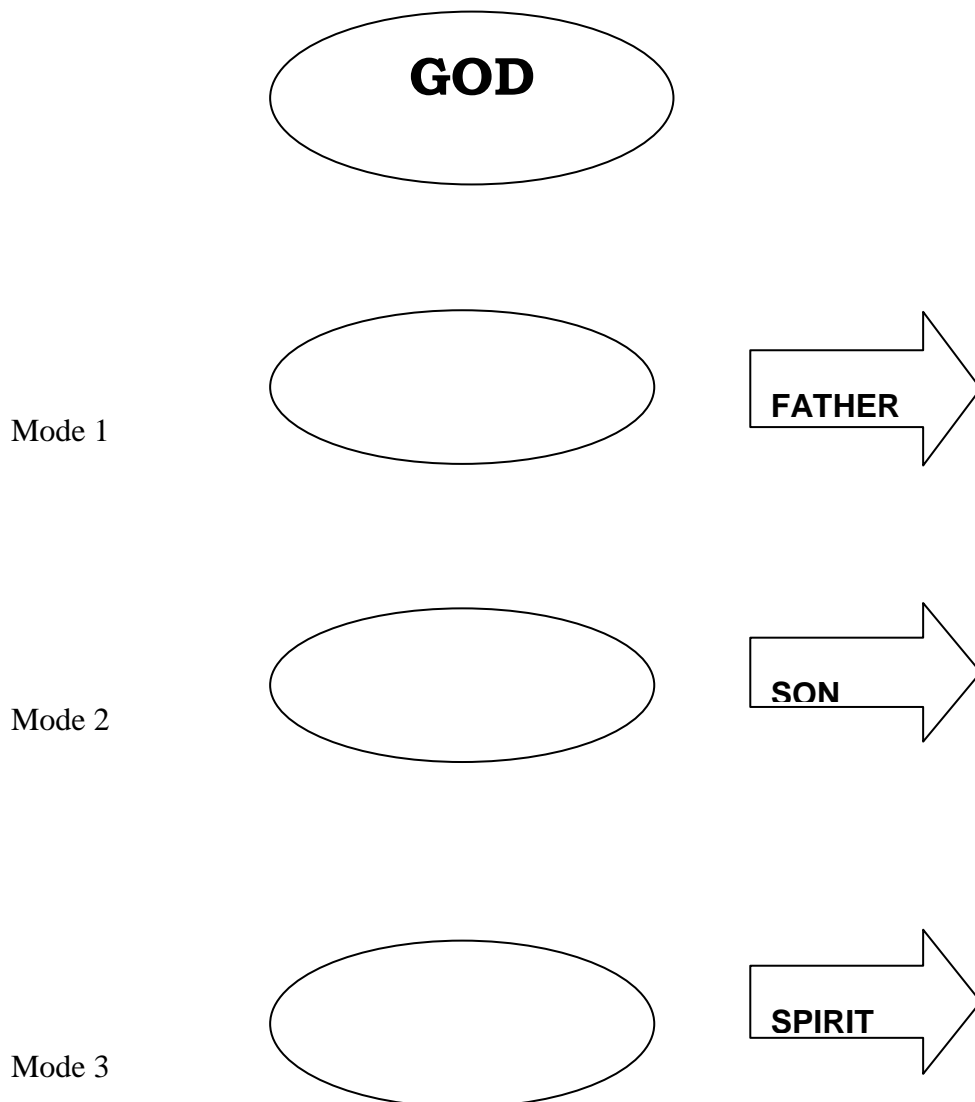
N.B. no genuine share in the rule.

- c. Jesus is not truly God; at most he is the best of men
- d. this denies the scriptural identity of Jesus (see before) and leaves us without any direct contact with God
- e. modalistic monarchianism (Noetus, Praxeas in second century, Sabellius in third century.)
- f. Father, Son, Spirit are not distinct entities but successive revelations of aspects or modes of the one God.
  - (i) the one God revealed in the manner of creator and law-giver: ‘Father’ (O.T.)
  - (ii) the one God revealed in the manner of Saviour, Jesus Christ: ‘Son’ (N.T.)

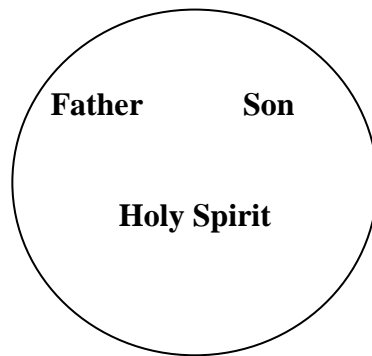
(iii) the one God revealed in the manner of the sanctifier and giver of eternal life: (post Pentecost) 'Spirit'

- g. appeals to the testimony of the oneness of God in Scripture (John 10:30;14:29)
- h. this position is not biblical (see before)
- i. implies that the solitary God needed to create the world for fellowship
- k. implies that the devotional life of Jesus (prayer etc.) is a charade
- l. implies that God completely died on the cross
- m. we do not know who it is that we pray to, worship etc.
- n. we are left on the "outside" of God because his 'inside' is a mystery

One rule of 'GOD' expressed in 3 ways (modes).



Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three different ways of looking at God.



3. God is the Father.

- a. the Father is unknowable (this is a property of God)
- b. the Spirit and the Son are knowable, therefore less than the Father.
- c. the Son is begotten in time by the Father (John 1:14; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9) as the first of his creatures (Col 1:15)
- d. Father and Son create the Spirit.
- e. there is a graded hierarchy: Son is essentially subordinated to Father and Spirit to Son.
- f. only the Father is truly God (Arianism and Jehovah's Witnesses)
- g. if Jesus is not 'one being' (*homoousios*) with the Father (Athanasius)
  - (i) he cannot reveal God.
  - (ii) God does not reconcile us to himself.
  - (iii) Christ (and the Holy Spirit) is not the fit object of Christian worship.
- h. this position is not scriptural
  - (i) begetting is an eternal act in God cf. John 1:1
  - (ii) 'firstborn' means privilege (Col.1:15)

4. Conclusion

What all false views of the trinity have in common is a denial that the life of God is an interpersonal sharing, communion and fellowship. This is God's inner glory.

4 Balancing it out: Orthodoxy

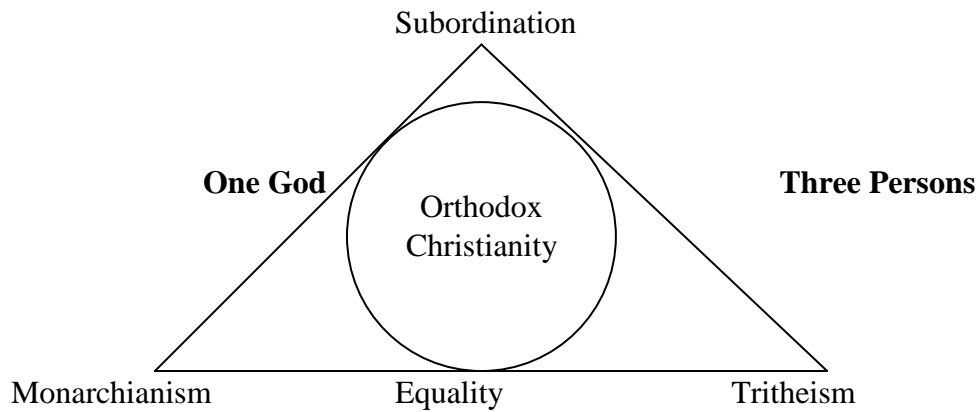
1. Orthodox Christianity affirms:

- a. there is one God.
- b. there are 3 Persons in God.
- c. the 3 Persons are equally God.

2. Heresies deny one of these truths, or affirm the opposite.

- a. there are 3 Gods (tritheism)
- b. there is only 1 Person in God (monarchianism)
- c. there is a hierarchy of deity (subordinationism)

4.



(Sherlock 1991:192)

5. The Doctrine of the Trinity: Terms and Concepts

1. God is God in his acting in creation: 'economic Trinity'

- a. the acts of God recorded in the Bible are the revelation of God's character.
- b. if God acts as Father, Son and Spirit, then he must be so.
- c. these are acts towards the world
- d. this is known as the 'economic trinity'
- e. from the Greek *oikonomia*  
*nomos* = law, *oikos* = house  
: the administration of a household, plan of action.
- f. the 'economy' of God is the whole shape of his work (Eph 1:10), the plan of salvation.

2. God is prior to his acting in creation: 'essential Trinity'.

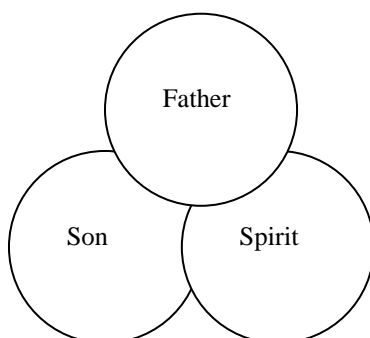
- a. from the Latin *essentia* = being  
(equivalent expressions are 'immanent' or 'ontological Trinity')
- b. the nature of God is eternal.
- c. this exists apart from God's relationship with his creation.
- d. the eternal realm of God-as-he-is-in himself is known as the 'eternal trinity'

3. God is what God shares in himself : 'one in being'

- a. 'being' (equivalent expressions are 'substance' or 'essence') is what makes a thing to be what it is.
- b. the essential nature or formative principle which makes God to be God ('Godness') is shared being.
- c. the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one in being (Greek = *homoousios*; Latin – *una substantia*)
- d. God is being-in-communion.

4. God is as God shares in himself: ‘three Persons’
  - a. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are relational terms.
  - b. in theology ‘person’ (Latin = *persona*; Greek = *hypostasis*) means that which makes something itself in relation to others.
  - c. there are 3 relational terms used to describe God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, these are the 3 Persons of the Godhead.
  - d. ‘Person’ does not mean an individual separate from other individuals.

### GOD



- e. the 3 Persons of the Godhead are distinct: Father is not Son is not Holy Spirit.
  - f. this can be expressed in terms of ‘relations of origin’ and ‘personal properties’.
5. God is in each of the Persons: ‘interpenetration’
  - a. Father, Son and Spirit are not separate.
  - b. each of the Persons fully shares with the others all of the divine nature and attributes e.g. they are one in will.
  - c. the Persons ‘interpenetrate’ each other  
(Greek = *perichoresis*, *peri* = ‘around’; *choreo* = ‘dance’, Latin = *circumincessio*)
  - d. each Person is intercontained by and in the properties of the other Persons.  
(they ‘in-exist’)
  - e. the Persons are equal in wisdom, power, eternity etc.
  - f. the life of the Father, Son and Spirit is a life of mutually embracing love.
6. God is in all his acting: appropriation.
  - a. God’s essence is indivisible.
  - b. the whole Godhead is present in all of God’s acts.
  - c. the operations of the trinity are inseparable
  - d. the Bible and Christian tradition ascribe actions belonging to the whole Godhead primarily to one Person.
  - e. this is known as ‘appropriation’.

- f. scripture emphases:
- (i) creation : Gen.1:1ff ; John 1: 3; 1 Cor.8:6; Heb. 1:2 (Father)
  - (ii) redemption : John 3:16;Gal. 4:4; Eph.1:9 – 10 (Son)
  - (iii) sanctification : John14:26; 15:26;16:7 (Spirit)

g. models of appropriation:

	Bible	Patristic	Aquinas	Calvin
Father	Creation	‘from’	power	beginning
Son	Redemption	‘through’	wisdom	arrangement
Spirit	Sanctification	‘in’	goodness	efficacy

## 7. Order in the Trinity

- a. the order of the Persons in the trinity varies throughout the New Testament
- b. in various places God/Father is first e.g. Matt 28:19; Eph 3:14- 17; Col 1:6- 8; 1 Pet 1:2); the Son/Jesus/Lord is first e.g. Rom 8:1- 3; 15:16; 1 Cor 2:2- 4; Gal 3:1- 5; Col 3:16; 1 Pet 4:14; the Spirit is listed first e.g. Rom 8:9- 11; 1 Cor 12:4- 6; Jude 19:21 etc.
- c. this indicates that the order is economic i.e. in relation to the works of the Godhead
- d. the three divine Persons are not hierarchically but internally ordered

## 6. Trinitarian Spirituality

### 1. Church Types

- a. the *Church of the Father* with its specific focus on creation, the work/s of the heavenly Father.
  - (i) a focus lends itself to neglect the salvation “effected by Christ” e.g. liberalism.
 

“Its positive emphasis upon the value of man is not matched by the complementary truth of his deep need of forgiveness by the death of Christ.” (Adam 1986:8)
  - (ii) civil religion falls into this category. In the American case God is the source of life and of inalienable rights, as well as being the guide of national history. Cf. the alliance between church and state in South Africa (Afrikaans), and in Serbia.
- b. the *Church of the Son*, which concentrates on the Son who is the Saviour, and neglects the Father and the Spirit. Such theology of a saving God is reflected,
 

“in open admission of sin and guilt, and acceptance of God’s judgement and His highest standards, in the sure knowledge of forgiveness in Christ. Just as the Church of the Father’s neglect of salvation leads to the forgetting of judgement and grace, so also the Church of the Son may go to the other extreme and enforce a strict moral code on its members, and treat people as sinners rather than as people in God’s image.” (Adam 1986:9). Viz. conservatism. This functional emphasis on the Redeemer (Jesusolatry) tends to neglect nature and history.

- c. the *Church of the Spirit*, which concentrates on the empowerment to minister. The emphasis is on the power and gifts of the Spirit. While the Church of the Father looks at creation, and the Church of the Son looks at the church since Christ's birth, the Church of the Spirit however is concerned with the work of God today, with little or no emphasis on the tension involved in waiting for the return of the Son i.e. triumphalism.

“Whereas the Church of the Father tends to forget that God’s promises of salvation have been fulfilled in Christ, the Church of the Spirit is in danger of expecting too much fulfilment in this present age.” (Adam 1986:11)

Emphasis on the Spirit tends to neglect the testing of spirits, and community formation.

(Adam. P. 1986. *Living the Trinity*. Bramcote: Grove.)

## 2. Worship Types

- a. Biblical pattern – to Father, through Son (Matt. 6: 9; John 16: 23; Eph. 2: 18; 5: 20) by Spirit (Rom. 8: 15, 26ff., Eph. 2:18).
- b. praise and worship should respect this order i.e. focus on Jesus as leading us to Father by Spirit (Acts 7:60; Rev. 5:11 – 14). E.g. ‘There is a Redeemer ...’

## 3. Prayer

- a. only because God communicates in himself can we communicate with him. cf. Pantheism (meditation not prayer); strict monotheism (Jehovah’s Witnesses etc.)
- b. the 3 Persons are involved in all prayer e.g. ‘Our Father’; to Jesus (Matt. 28: 17-18; Acts 11: 5-8; Rev. 1: 12-20); in Spirit (Acts 20: 23; Rom. 8: 15 f, 26f; 1 Cor. 2: 13 etc.); prayer to any Person will be to the Godhead.
- c. pray to the Father exclusively → patriarchal monotheism → hierarchy in church, family, politics, nature.( Control, authoritarianism.) denial (practical) of glorification of Christ.
- d. pray to Jesus only → friend, ‘ buddy’, Elder Brother, suffering companion. E.g. Zinzendorf – Christ as ‘Brother Lambkin’.  
God as Father only through faith in Christ (Christomonism).
- e. pray to Spirit only → ‘Christian spiritism’, loss of boundaries set by the word(logos), emotionalism.  
N.B. ‘We pray to the Spirit through the intercession of Christ and by the grace given to us by the Father’. (Bloesch).

## 4. General

- a. Christian spirituality is centred on Jesus (Christocentric), it is to have the spirituality of the humanity of Jesus by being “in Christ” (union, participation). It is to be taken within the circle of the inner life of the Godhead.
- b. “Christian spirituality is life in the Trinity. The Christian lives in the acceptance of sonship knowing God as Father. He realises this in the Sonship of Jesus Christ, his saving work of forgiveness and his gift of eternal life. He

actualises this by the gift of the Holy Spirit who enables the believer to cry 'Abba Father' (Rom. 8: 15; Gal. 4:6)." (J.M. Houston).

Life goes out from the Father who supplies; in, to, and through the Son who receives; and returns to the Father in and through the supply of the Spirit given by the Son.

- c. All deviations in Christian spirituality (rationalism, mysticism, Mariolatry) are distortions of the trinitarian life.

## 7. Usefulness of the Doctrine of the Trinity

### 1. The priority of communion

- a. reality neither individual ('being') or general ('Being') but 'shared being' (*homoousios*)
  - both polytheism and pantheism, utter difference and identity, are avoided.
- b. God is the sort of God who shares his own Being - therefore it is possible for him to share himself with us through Jesus and the Spirit.
- c. all real knowledge of God is a sharing in God (participation). Cf. Matt 11:27; John 14:10; 15:15; 17:22.

### 2. Centrality of relationships

- a. God exists in relationship
  - God is not 'a' person, nor can a person be reduced to a relationship
  - God exists as persons-in-relationship (*hypostasis*)
- b. 'made in the image of God' means living in relationship. Human life, mirroring God's life, can only be authentic in community.

### 3. Relationships are about other-centred love

- a. Father gives of his substance to Son and Spirit etc. and they respond in love.
- b. Love is the ideal and standard of human living. The doctrine of the trinity expounds the love of God.
- c. other-person centredness is the true glory of human life.

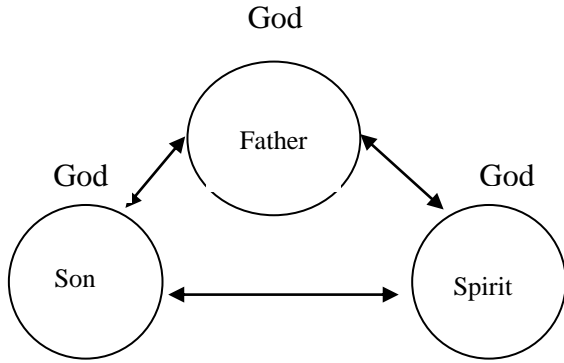
### 4. Others are not competitors but partners

- a. God not three individuals competing, nor a plain oneness unable to relate to that which is not God. Distinctiveness of 'persons' means that 'otherness' is already present in God.
- b. God is free to be God-in-relation ie. creator, revealer, redeemer.
- c. fear of the other (gender, race, age, culture, nation) reveals a non-trinitarian spirituality
- d. the 'other' in creation can be created without God ceasing to be God
- e. creation can be recognised and respected without being confused with God
- f. authority exists for communion, not exclusion nor absorption.



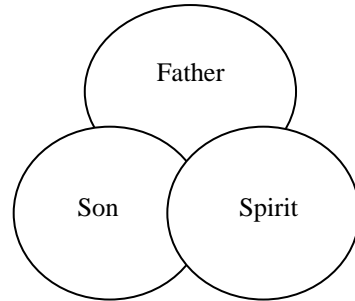
8. Some Applications of Doctrine of the Trinity  
 1. Trinity and community

NOT Exclusive Personhood



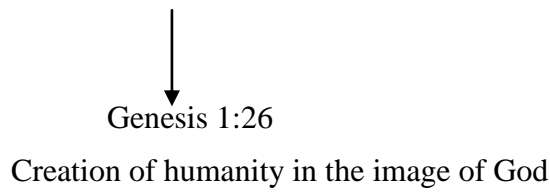
(Existence, then relationship)

BUT inclusive Personhood

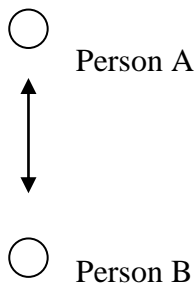


(Existence - in - relationship)  
 (John 14:10,11; 17:21,2)

(ii) the human community

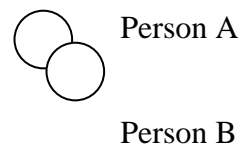


NOT



Natural isolation with optional connection

BUT

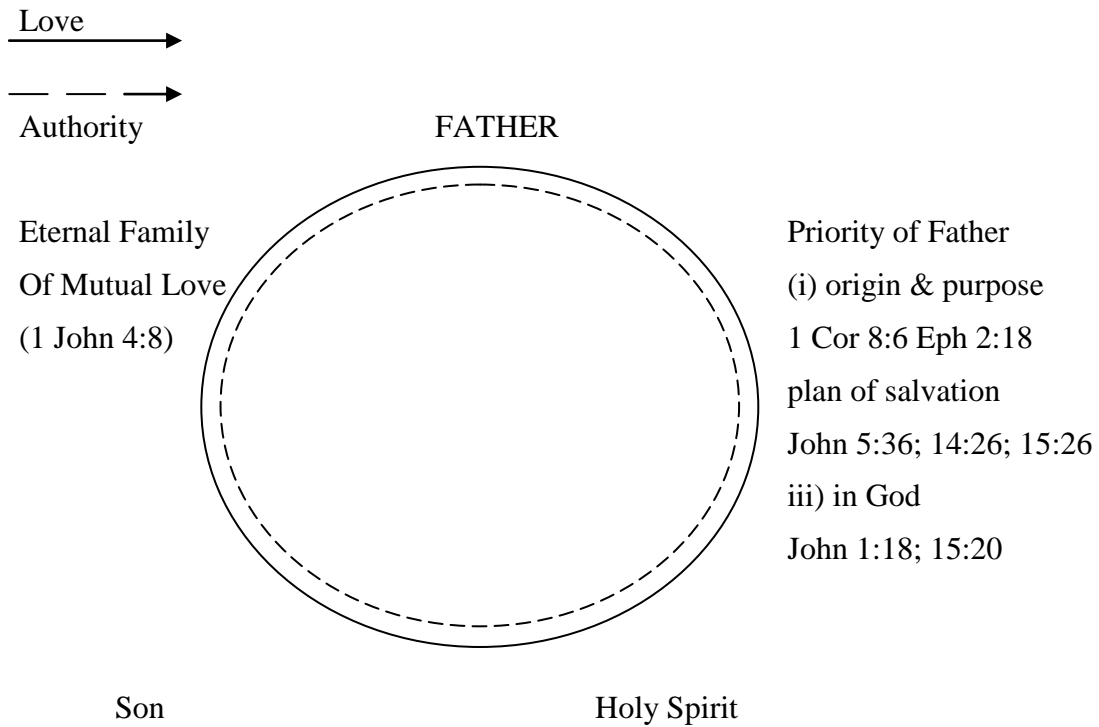


Grow as persons-in-relationship

: 2. Trinity and Family.

**Trinity and Family.**

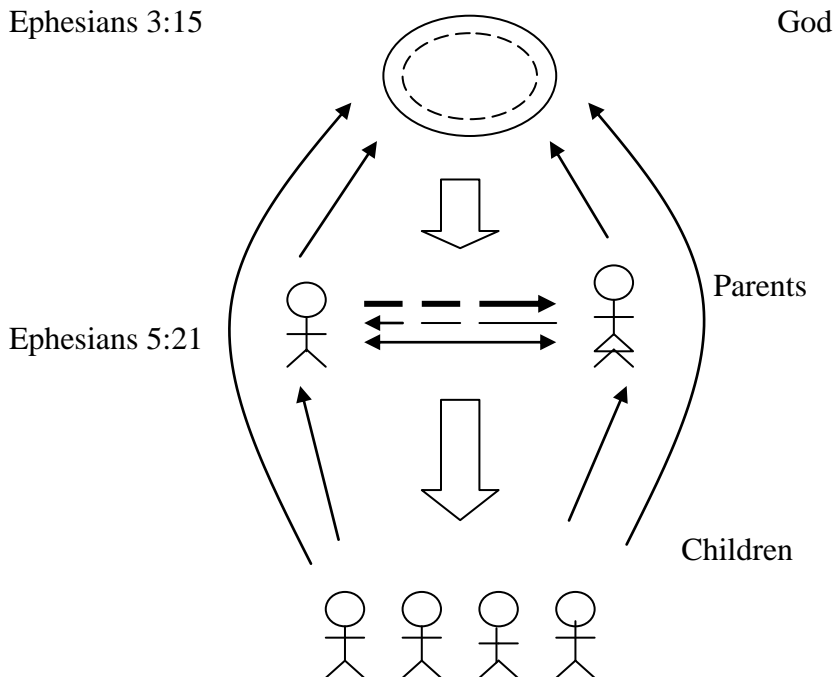
1. THE ETERNAL TRINITY AS FAMILY



2. THE CREATED FAMILY

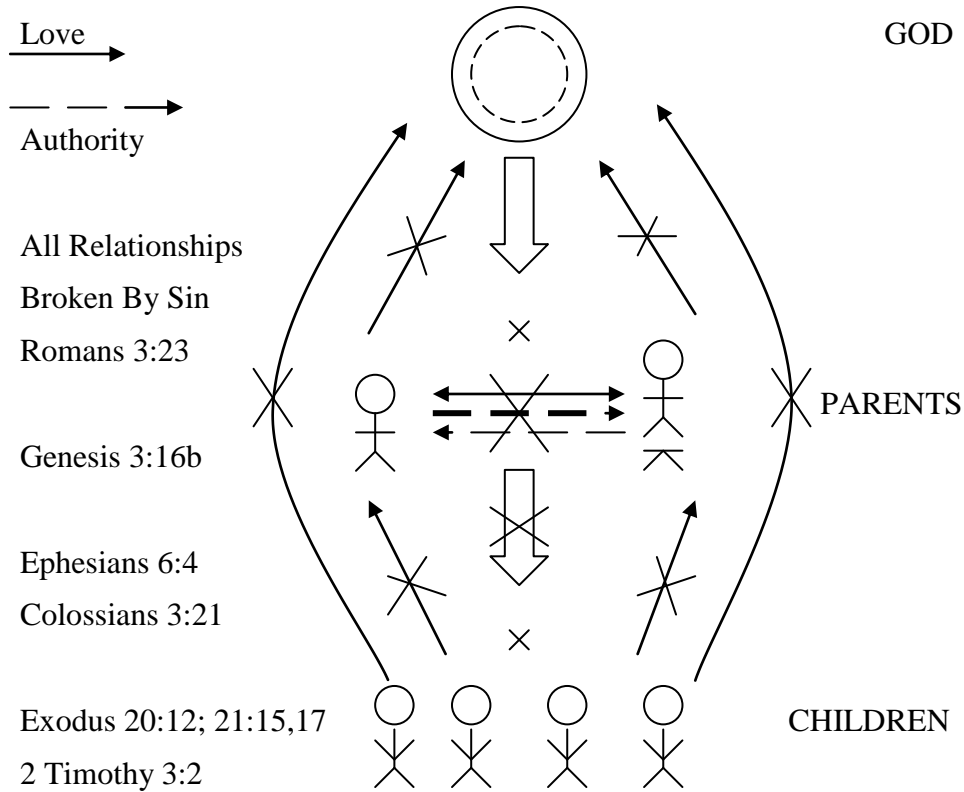
Creation of Humanity in the Image of This God (Genesis 1:26-28)

Ephesians 3:15



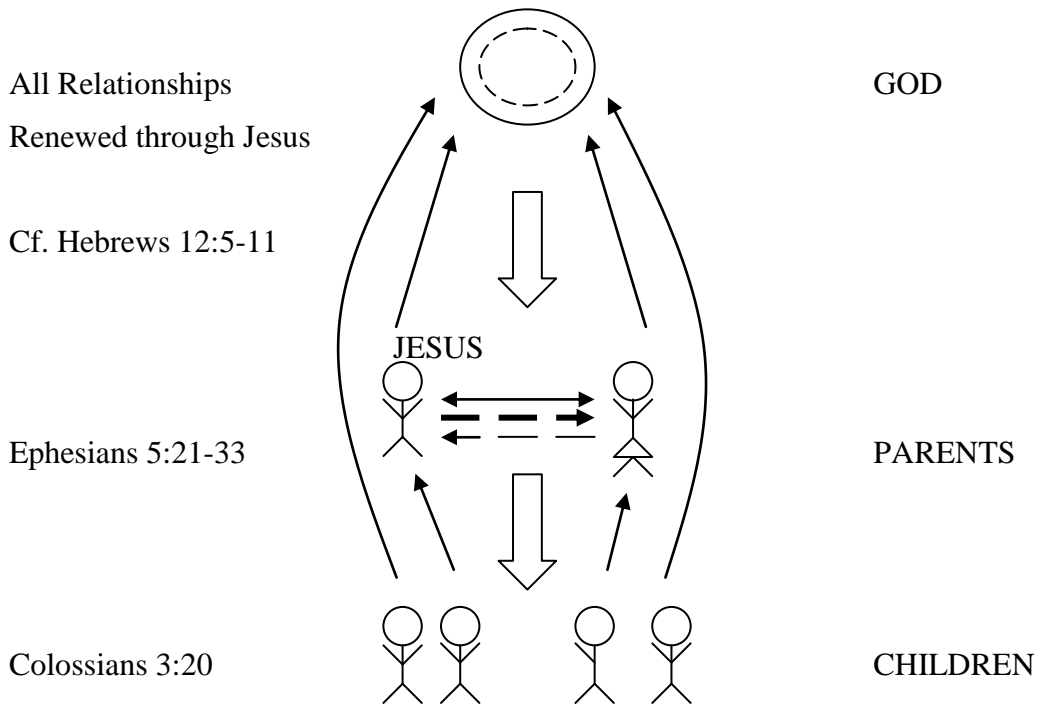
### 3. THE FALLEN FAMILY

Rejection of the Father (Jer 2:27)



### 4. THE RENEWED FAMILY

Acceptance of the Father (Romans 8:15)



SEE ALSO: Deut 6:6-7, Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 3:14-15.

## Lecture Topic 4: The Being and Attributes of God

1. The Question of the Being of God
  - a. It is impossible to avoid asking this question, whoever believes *that* God is, will necessarily wonder *what* or *who* God is.
  - c. This does not assume that we can define or comprehend God. It does assume however that he has taken the initiative to reveal himself. The starting point for the Christian doctrine of the being of God is therefore his self – revelation in Christ, recorded in the whole of the Bible.
  - d. This needs to be strongly emphasised, as the history of this doctrine has been constantly influenced by thought forms deriving from secular culture (especially Greek).
2. Approaches to the Attributes of God
  - a. Different theologians have distinct methods of dividing up the characteristics of God.
  - b. The most common of these is to distinguish between attributes in which we may share, such as love, wisdom, goodness, righteousness and so on, and those which creatures cannot possess, such as self – existence, unity, eternity and infinity.
  - c. A major difficulty with this approach is that it can tend to be abstract and divorced from the concrete relationships into which God enters with his creation. It is to be doubted if the biblical writers ever speculated on the properties of God outside of their experience of him in saving history.
3. A Sketch of Some of the Eternal Attributes of God
  - a. Omnipresence (all – present): the Bible teaches that God is everywhere present at once (Jer 23:23 – 24; Ps 139: 7 – 10; Acts 17:28; Col 1:27). The significance of this fact is that God is unavoidably near either to bless (Ps 16: 11; 2 Cor 3:17; Rev 21:3) or to punish (Amos 9:1 – 4; Rev 6:16).

The Bible emphasises God’s presence to bless, as this is how he is completely present to himself as Father , Son and Holy Spirit.
  - b. Omniscience (all – knowing): that God knows all things (Matt 10: 29 – 30; 1 John 3:20) including the deepest inner truths of creatures (Ps 139: 1 – 2, 4, 16; Heb 4:13) as well as the future (Isa 42: 8 – 9; 46: 9- 10) is abundantly taught in Scripture. In addition many texts say that God knows not only all actual events but all possible ones (1 Sam 23:10 – 13; 2 Ki 13:19; Ps 81: 14-15; Matt 11:21 – 23).
  - c. The ultimate ground for God’s omniscience lies in his perfect knowledge of himself (1 Cor 2: 10 –11; John 5: 20). As this is a relational knowledge it has the same practical implications as omnipresence.
  - d. Omnipotence (all – powerful): God has the name ‘Almighty’ and all things are possible for him ( Gen 17:1; Job 9:12; Ps 115:3; Jer 32:17; Matt 19:26; Luke 1:37; Rom 1: 20; Eph 1:19).
  - e. The omnipotence of God is a confession of faith, often in the context of existential struggle. This reaches its climax in the prayer of the Son to the Father “*Abba* Father, all things are possible for you” (Mark 14:36). The measure of the omnipotence of God *for us* is the death and resurrection of Christ.

#### 4. The Divine Name

- a. The key text here is Exodus 3:14. God declares his name to Moses in a hitherto unprecedented way. God declares “ This is my name forever, this is my title for all generations.” (v.16).
- b. As **the** divine name it was especially sacred (Lev. 24:16). Pious Jews substituted the name *Adonai* in reading the scriptures, and scribes used the vowels of this word in place of the originals. (This is part of the explanation for the development of the English *Jehovah*).
- c. As God’s special or proper name (Ex 15:3; Ps 83:9; Isa 42:8; Hos 12:6) it is confined to the Hebrew Scriptures, it is never used in the plural or with a suffix or other gods.
- d. The name seems to be derived from the Hebrew verb “ to be” (*hayah*), and is to be pronounced YAHWEH.
- e. This does not refer to a static state of existence but to dynamic action. Where the verb “is “ occurs something happens. As in “ The word of the Lord came to (literally : “is”)...” E.g. Gen 15:1; 1 Sam 15:16; 2 Sam 7:4; 1 Ki 18:1,31; 2 Ki 20:4; Isa 38:4; Jer 36:1;37 :6.
- f. In the context of God’s conversation with Moses, the promise “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12), and the repeated reference to the patriarchs “ the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” (vv. 6,15,16), the divine name conveys “I will be (do) what I was (did) “. The stress is not on God’s self – existence (aseity) but on his faithfulness. Hence his unchangeableness or immutability (Ps 102:26 – 28, Isa 41:4; 48:12; Mal 3:6; Rom 1:23; Heb 1:11 – 12; James 1:17).

#### 5. The Love of God

##### 1. The Biblical Material

- a. The Old Testament picture of the love of God is rich but incomplete . God has chosen to be in covenant relationship with Israel (Deut 7:7f; 9:4 – 6; 10:15.etc.). This is a commitment which he sustains despite the unworthiness and rebellion of the people (Ezek 16:1 – 14). The special word for this is *hesed* which can be variously translated as “loving kindness” or “steadfast love” or “ covenant mercy”. See for example Deuteronomy 7:9,12; 1Ki 8: 23; Isaiah 54:8. The impossibility of God abandoning his people, despite their harlotry, is the theme of the whole of Hosea, see, for example, 6:4; 11:8.
- b. The coming of Christ brings the revelation of the love of God to completion. It is now stated not only that God loves, but that “ God is love” (1John 4:8,16 cf. 2 Cor 13:11).
- c. As an absolute statement this makes sense only in terms of the love relationship between the Father and the Son
- d. The Father loves the Son (John3:35) and the Son loves the Father (John 14:31). As such he is able to bring the Father pleasure (Matt 3:17).
- e. This explains how it is that God does not need the world, but can love it freely. The love of God in himself is an eternal reality (John 17:24).
- f. It also reveals why God can take joy in his creatures as they love him (Isa 62:5; Zeph 3:17 – 18). In the image of God they are participating in the Father – Son relationship.
- g. The focus of the Bible is on the love of God revealed in the death of Christ (John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Gal 2:20; 1John 3:1;4:10).

## 2. Theological Considerations

- a. The love of God is not really one of the attributes of God but the very dynamic of his essence which underlies and penetrates all the other moral attributes. Because God is love he is good, gracious, merciful, patient etc.
- b. If love constitutes the being of God, it can only be thought of as the total self – giving of each of the persons of the trinity for one another. This makes it clear why the statement “ love is God” would be idolatrous.
- c. If God **is** love then his love cannot be identified with any particular action to the exclusion of others. All that can be said is that certain actions reveal the love of God to us more clearly than others.
- d. If God **is** love then his love cannot be identified with any particular action to the exclusion of others. All that can be said is that certain actions reveal the love of God to us more clearly than others.
- e. Our very purpose and destiny is to be shaped in the image of the God of love. In particular this means the command not only to love others in the family of God (John 13:35; 1John 4:11)but those who are enemies (Matt 5:43 – 48).

## 6. The Glory of God

### 1. God is a God of glory

- a. The Bible makes frequent reference to the glory of God. It is something which belongs only to God and he refuses to share with those who are unlike him (Isa 42:8 cf. Rom 1:23).
- b. The glory of God, even if it involves physical manifestations (Luke 2:9 etc.) is not a created thing (1 Tim 6:16). It is something which is “above heaven and earth” (Ps 148:13).

### 2. Glory exists in God

- a. Stephen refers to “the God of glory” (Acts 7:2). Moses prays to see the glory of God (Ex 33:18). Paul speaks of “ the Father of glory: (Eph 1:17). All of these suggest that glory is a relational property in God’s own nature.
- b. Jesus says that he has shared the glory of the Father in eternity (John 17:5). The Holy Spirit can be called “ the Spirit of glory” (1 Peter 4:4).
- c. In terms of our previous discussion, it can be seen that the glory of the Father is to love the Son, the glory of the Son is to love the Father and the glory of the Spirit is to communicate the Father – Son love.

### 3. Glory is God’s Gift to Humanity

- a. To be created is to be made for the glory of God (Isa 43:7). To sin is to lack this glory (Rom 3:23).
- b. This glory has been restored to humanity in the person of Jesus (John1:14; Heb 1:3).
- c. Christians are expected to grow in this glory (2 Cor 3:18).
- d. In the light of the life of Christ, it becomes apparent that the command to put God and his glory before all other priorities is not a selfish act but the only way in which a creature can receive a share in the glory of God which is our eternal satisfaction (2 Peter 1:4; Rev 21:23).

## 7. The Holiness of God

### 1. Terminology

- a. The key Hebrew word is *qadosh*, this is derived from a verb *qad* which means “to cut off” or “separate”. It is one of the most common religious words of the Old Testament and is applied primarily to God.
- b. The same idea is conveyed by the New Testament words *hagiazō* and *hagios*.
- c. The fundamental idea is of a relationship existing between God and some person or thing.

### 2. God is Holy

- a. This is a repeated refrain in the Bible  
(Lev 19:2; Pss 71:22; 78:41; Isa 1:4; 5:19;6:3; 1Peter 1:16; Rev 3:7; 4:8 etc.).
- b. This is most helpfully thought of in trinitarian terms.
- c. The Father is holy. This is not only based on the references to the holiness of “God”, but on the prayer language of Jesus (John17:11).
- d. Jesus is repeatedly called the “holy one of God” (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34;John 6:69; Acts 3:14).
- e. The Holy Spirit is by his very name and nature totally holy.
- f. The best way of thinking of the eternal relationships within the trinity as holy is to note their total, permanent and exclusive communion. The Father has forever set apart the Son as the exclusive object of his love (John 10:36), the full source of his pleasure (cf. Mark 1:11; Matt 12:18). The Son is always devoted and obedient to the Father (John8:29). The Holy Spirit is the one who passionately unites Father and Son.

### 3. God’s Holiness in Relation to Creatures.

- a. The first property of God’s holiness in relation to creation is his majesty. This is his otherness or transcendence; God is far greater than anything he has made. He is lofty, exalted and awesome (Ex 15:11; 1 Sam 2:2; Isa 57:15; Hos 11:9). The majesty of God causes his creatures to be aware of their finite nature and frailty.
- b. The second dominant feature of holiness is moral purity. This means that God cannot abide sin, it is the very opposite of his nature (Job 34:10; Hab 1:13). The revelation of the purity of God convicts men and women of the terrible nature of their sin, they cannot stand in the presence of a holy God (Isa 6:5; Luke 5:8; Rev 15:4).
- c. The holiness of God often comes out in contexts to do with redemption (Ex 15:11; Ps 77:13; Isa 42:14;etc) If holiness induces a sense of separation and confrontation, it also singles out to bless, help and restore.

It is “opposition to the opposition in which man exists over against him (God).” (Barth). Holiness is “hot love“, that in God which refuses to allow sin to be an undisturbed obstacle to his fellowship with his created sons.

“It is the love for sinners of a God above all things *holy*, whose holiness makes sin damnable as sin and love active as grace.” (P.T. Forsyth)

- d. God repeatedly commands “you must be holy for I am holy” (68 times in the Old Testament (cf. 1 Peter 1:16). Such an imperative, conveyed by law and gospel, reflects God’s absolute desire that humans share in the total, permanent and exclusive relations of the trinity. (This topic will be dealt with more fully in the section on sanctification.)
8. The Wrath of God
1. The Strangeness of the Wrath of God
    - a. Unlike the other attributes of God, wrath is not something which pertains to God’s eternal nature. God *is* love, righteous, wise, good etc. He however needs to *become* angry (Num 11:10; Judges 10:7; 1Ki 8:46;11:9 etc.) The Bible never says that “God is wrath”.
    - b. There was never an eternal cause in the Godhead itself which would move God to become angry.
    - c. The Old Testament expresses this by saying that God does not “afflict or grieve anyone from his heart” (Lam3:33). The work of judgement is a “strange” or “alien” work (Isa 28:21).
  2. The Cause of the Wrath of God
    - a. The only cause of the wrath of God is sin (Ex 32:9 – 10; Deut 9:7 – 8; 2 Ki 22:13) etc.).
    - b. God intensely hates all sin. He has furious indignation against all injustice.
    - c. This means that the doctrine of the wrath of God belongs as much to the New Testament as it does to the Old (John 3:36; Rom 1:18; 2:5,8; 5:9; Col 3:6;1 Thess1:10; 2:16;5:9;Heb 3:11; Rev 6:16 – 17;19:15).
    - d. The wrath of God is not to be equated with any sort of emotional instability or irritability, these are always condemned in the Bible (Genesis 49:7; Ps 37:8; Prov 30:33; Amos 1:11).
    - e. Wrath is not the opposite of love, indifference is. God’s wrath may be thought of in terms of injured love (Jer 13:12- 14; Hos 5:12, 14).
  3. The Purpose of the Wrath of God
    - a. The purpose of the wrath of God is to destroy sin.
    - b. This is revealed in the cross, where Christ bears the wrath of God (Rom 3:25 – 26).
    - c. If God was not a God of wrath he would either be sinful or indifferent to sin. In either case he could not be worshipped.
    - d. This means that the wrath of God is to be an object of praise, like all the other attributes of God (Rev 6:9;11:16 – 18; 15:3 – 4; 16: 4 –7;18:20; 19: 1 – 2).
    - e. This is especially so when we realise that Christ has delivered us from the wrath to come (Rom 5:10; Eph 2:3; 1 Thess 1:10).



## 9. Transcendence and Immanence

### 1. The Nature of the Properties

- a. They are not distinct attributes as such, but the way in which God exists in all his attributes in relation to the world.
- b. Transcendence refers to the fact that God has existence in himself and does not need the world ( Ps 94:8ff; Isa 40: 18ff; Acts 7:25; Rom 11:33 – 34). He is transcendent “over” the world.
- c. Immanence describes the presence of God in the world, he is active in and upholds all things (Job 27:34; 33:4;Ps 104: 29 – 30; Matt 5:45; 6: 25 – 30; 10:29 – 30; Acts 17:27 – 28).

### 2. The Balance of the Properties

- a. Imbalance or overdue stress on one or other of the properties leads to a non – biblical view of God.
- b. In Islam,for example, God is almost completely transcendent. His relations with the world tend to be viewed as sub – personal. Since he is so far away, personal petition is useless.
- c. In the typical Eastern religions (Hinduism, Buddhism), the supreme reality is one with all things, transcendence is denied. Revelation and intercession are impossible.
- d. Only in the Christian doctrine of God is the deity fully transcendent (incomprehensible) and fully immanent (knowable). The Incarnation of Christ reveals the unity of transcendence and immanence in God.

### 3. The Basis of the Properties

- a. This can be found in the nature of God as trinity.
- b. In considering the relations within the trinity it is the Father who can simply be called “God” (John 3:16; Acts 2:32; 1 Cor 1:3; 8:6). Jesus eternally acknowledges the first place of the Father (John 14:28; 1 Cor 15:28). The Father therefore is the ultimate source of transcendence.
- c. The Son shares in the transcendence of the Father by being one with the Father in his eternal glory, he too is Alpha and Omega, Lord of Lords (John 10:30; 17:5; Rev 1:17; 22:13; 19:16). At the same time all things consist in the Son, who will fill all things with himself (Heb 1:3; Eph 1:23; 4:10). He therefore is both transcendent and immanent.
- d. The Holy Spirit is most identified with immanence in the scriptures. He is the pervading presence of God in the world and the one who indwells God’s people (Ps 104: 29 – 30; 139: 7; Eph2:21 – 22).
- e. For God to interact with the world therefore is not a denial or contradiction of his true nature, but its expression.

## Lecture Topic 5: The Doctrine of Creation and Preservation (Sovereignty and Providence)

1. Introduction
  - a. The doctrine of creation deals with the beginning of God's relation with creation, how creation came into being as a reality distinct from God.
  - b. The doctrine of preservation covers God's ongoing relationship with what he has brought into existence.
2. The Biblical doctrine of creation
  - a. The O.T. vocabulary - bara', asah, yatsar
    - none of the terms of themselves mean primary or absolute creation i.e. creation out of nothing e.g. Gen. 1:21, 27; Isaiah 45:7, 12.
    - bara is used of God's action alone, in places points to unique action of God e.g. Gen. 1:1.
  - b. The N.T. vocabulary - kitdzein, poiein
    - 'to make', 'manipulate' e.g. 1 Cor. 11:9; 1 Tim. 4:4;
    - i.e. no special vocabulary
  - c. Hebrews 11:3 : 'what is seen was made out of the things which do not appear'
    - invisibility does not imply non existence.
  - d. Although the doctrine of creation 'out of nothing' (ex nihilo) does not appear in the Bible as such it seems to be taught in 2 Maccabees 7:28 (c.50 B.C.) , and certainly in Philo c. 20 B.C. - c. 50 A.D.
3. Creation is a Trinitarian Act
  - a. Each of the persons of the trinity are involved in creation. The Father is the direct agent of creation, all things are from the Father ( 1 Cor 8:6; Rev 4:11; 10:6). The Son is the mediator of creation, everything is through the Son (John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:15 – 17; Heb 1:10 – 12). The Holy Spirit is the executor of the act of creation, all things are made by the Spirit (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13;33:4; Ps 104:30; Isa 40:12 – 13).
  - b. Creation is an outflow of the dynamic of the trinitarian life, where the Father is the first giver of life, the Son the one who expresses or mediates the life of the Father, and the Spirit the one who binds together the loving purposes of Father and Son for each other.
  - c. This explains why the Bible teaches that creation exists for " the glory of God" (Ps 19:1 – 2; Isa 43:7; Rev 4:11). The universe's purpose is to share in and express the life and love of God in which it was created.
  - d. This means that God did not need to create the world or humankind, but creation is a free and gracious act.
  - e. The world has order, purpose and destiny, not in relation to itself, but in relation to the revelation of God given in Christ.
  - f. As the First and the Last (Rev 1:17; 2:8), Jesus sets the framework for the meaning of creation.

4. The Meaning of “ Creation out of Nothing “
  - a. This does not imply “ nothing “ was some sort of thing God acted upon to bring the universe into existence.  
 No process; nothing → everything ‘instantly’; ‘nothing’ is not ‘something’
  - b. The Bible clearly affirms that God is the creator of all things (Gen 1:1; Ps 33: 6,9; John 1:3; Acts 17:24 – 25; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3; Rev 4:11).
  - c. This is a bringing into existence of things that are not (Rom 4:17; Heb 11:3).
5. The Implications of “ Creation out of Nothing “
  - a. The universe, and all in it had a beginning in time. Nothing in the universe can have equal status with God, for it owes its existence to God.
  - b. Evil cannot be eternal, nor equally as powerful as God. It can only be a deviation from God’s originally good creation (Gen 1:31).
  - c. Creation is good: God made everything ‘good’ (Gen.1:10, 18, 21, 25, 31).
  - d. If God is the creator of all things, he must have sovereign power over his creation, miraculous events are possible as God’s ‘unusual acts’..
  - e. Humans are completely responsible to God their Creator as stewards or vice – regents over the world.
  - f. Creation can be redeemed, God is not the creature nor distant from the creature but internal to it (Acts 17:28). Grace and salvation are therefore healing and not deforming to the creature.
  - g. Recognition that there was no alternative to ex nihilo as an interpretation of Genesis 1:1
    - dualism, makes matter equal with God.
    - pantheism or monism, God and world are equal, or world is an outflow (emanation) from God. God is no longer transcendent, sovereign, holy.
    - Distinctions of finite - infinite, good-evil break down.
6. Creation and Ecology.
  - a. nature is created by God and so is good (Gen 1:31).
  - b. created in the image of God, humanity is to rule nature as God rules it (Gen 1:26) i.e. with “fatherly” care cf. Matt 5:45; Acts 14:17; 17:25.
  - c. this stewardship, enacted through work (Gen 2:15), is a responsibility before God, and cannot imply a fundamental distortion but careful management.
  - d. this means a priestly exercise. “As the priest offers the animal without blemish on the altar, so we are to offer all the creation with which we have to do ... to God the Father.” (C. Gunton). (This will be through Jesus and by the Spirit.)
  - e. the Fall (Gen 3:5) leads to a crisis in humanity’s relationship with the earth i.e. toil, and exploitation through fear (Gen 3:17). The earth is now difficult to live in (Gen 3:17; Rom 8:20).
  - f. naturalism leads to either false mastery without limits or a return to nature worship (idolatry of self or idolatry of nature).

- g. the Christian hope is a new world order (Rom 8:21; Rev 21:1,4; 22:1-3) effected by the power of the cross (Eph 1:10).
- h. this is incompatible with both selfish escapism and selfish materialism. Gospel values take us beyond self-concern to a genuine care for “all things.”

## 7. Creation and Science.

Question posed by developments in modern science from the time of the Enlightenment (Galileo). In the nineteenth century this focussed on Darwin’s theory of evolution. This century the debate has moved to cosmology.

Approaches to the subject.

### 1. Continuity between science and theology.

- a. Protestant Liberalism since the Enlightenment.
- b. reinterpretation of doctrine in terms consistent with secular knowledge, e.g. “day” as geological era, “gap theory”.
- c. examples: Laplace, cosmology, and deism;  
Uniformitarianism and Noah’s flood;  
Process theology and panentheism;  
Bultmann, myth and miracle.
- d. raises questions of biblical authority and misreads the nature of scientific theory (as inerrant).

### 2. Opposition between theology and science

- a. conservative American evangelicalism, “scientific creationism.”
- b. biblical accounts are scientifically valid with respect to origins, and therefore encounter rival theories.
- c. makes assumptions about the purpose of the bible and scientific accuracy.
- d. criticised for:
  - (i) ignoring scientific data.
  - (ii) resort to miracle “God of the gaps.”
  - (iii) attempts to discredit data summarily.

N.B. Mutual triumphalism.

### 3. Distinctiveness of theology and science.

- a. lengthy history - Tertullian, Augustine, Bacon, Galileo (“heavens”), Calvin, neo-orthodoxy (Barth etc.)
- b. separate spheres of competence, theological events cannot be interpreted by natural sciences. (Sound of a vacuum cleaner cf. an organ (Barth).) Scientists not to act like theologians, and vice versa.
- c. theology asks “Why?”, science asks “How?” (Gilkey). A priori questions (theology) rather than a posteriori experiences (Rahner). Distinct epistemologies. Distinct “language games” (Wittgenstein). Data, empirical evidence, (secondary) causes, probabilities. Symbols, images, metaphors, primary causes.
- d. tends to ignore the historical relationships between theology and science.

- e. can open the door to scientific triumphalism e.g. P. Davies.
  - f. excludes scientific cf. historical, linguistic data, as an hermeneutical source.
4. Interaction of theology and science.
- a. logical considerations - the languages of science and theology cannot be completely exclusive if they are about the same world.
  - b. world views considerations - modern science could have only developed in a Judaeo - Christian environment that, on the basis of a doctrine of creation.
    - (i) treated the world as objectively real.
    - (ii) considered entities to be contingent not divine.
    - (iii) treated the world as inherently rational.
    - (iv) viewed the universe as a coherent whole.
  - c. historical considerations to do with the origin and growth of science.
    - (i) elimination of myth from nature.
    - (ii) conviction of laws of nature (Job 28:26; Prov 8:29)
    - (iii) encouragement of the experimental method in contrast to Hellenistic influences in theology and culture (Reformed thought cf. 1 Thess 5:21; Rom 12:2; Ps 34:8).
    - (iv) appropriation of a mandate to alter the earth for human benefit (Gen 1:26; Ps 8; Bacon)
    - (v) 'thinking God's thoughts after Him' (Kepler) and for his glory (Pss. 8,19,50).
  - d. science as part of the priesthood of creation:
 

“science is a religious duty while man as scientist can be spoken of as *the priest of creation*, whose task it is to interpret the books of nature, to understand the universe in its wonderful structures and harmonies, and to bring it all into orderly articulation, so that it fills its proper end as the vast theatre of glory in which the Creator is worshipped and praised. Nature itself is dumb, but it is man's part to bring it to word, to be its mouth through which the whole universe give voice to the glory and majesty of the living God.”  
(T.F. Torrance)

## 8. Creation and Preservation

- a. Creation and preservation are not sharply divided in the Bible but viewed as the one act of God ( Psalm 104; 139:13-16; Job 38:12, 31 ff. cf. Ps. 145:15; Neh. 9:6; Acts 17:28; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3).
- b. God cannot give creatures as creatures or secondary causes the power to be other than dependent on him. Therefore alternative positions, such as deism or pantheism are excluded.
- c. Preservation must be creation continued - God holding in being by his creative power what he has created.
- d. This means that the only difference between the existence of creatures and nothingness is the faithfulness of God to his creation. There is no intermediary, such as self - existent natural laws, between God and creation.

- e. Absolute dependence on God is of the essence of creation. The creature is the content of this relation.
  - f. Since Jesus is the one in whom all things hold together (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3), our personal meaning is to be found in him.
9. Creation, Preservation and Christology
- 1. Cosmic Christology.
    - a. all things were made through Christ  
John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2.
    - b. all things hold together in Christ  
Col 1:17; Heb 1:3.
    - c. everything will come together in Christ  
Eph 1:10, 18; Col 1:20; Revelation.
    - d. all things were made for Christ.  
Col 1:16.
    - e. as the First and the Last (Rev 1:17; 2:8) Christ sets the framework in which the whole of creation is to be understood. All personal meaning is found in Christ.
  - 2. Jesus as Lord of Creation.
    - a. The Gospels.
      - Jesus' nature miracles, e.g. Mark 4:41; 8:27; are signs of the re-establishment of God's reign upon the earth.
      - these acts, as acts of his humanity, restore the dominion over creation given to humanity in the beginning (Gen 1:26ff; 2:15; 1 Cor 15:25-27.
      - as resurrected, Jesus has authority over all created things (Matt 28:18).
    - b. The New Testament letters
      - Jesus shares the reign of God over everything which opposes his rule Eph 1:19-22; Col 1:15; 1 Cor 15:25-27.
      - this is the major theme to do with the Lamb in the book of Revelation.
  - 3. Creation, Christ and covenant.
    - a. "Creation is the External Basis of the Covenant." "The Covenant is the Internal Basis of Creation." (K. Barth). Through covenant God realises and reveals his creational purpose, that he will be our God and we will be his people.
    - b. Jesus is the content of the covenant: Isa 42:6; 49:8; Matt 26:28.
  - 4. Creation, Christ and trinity.
    - a. Christ can never be separated from his relation to the Father in the power of the Spirit.
    - b. a trinitarian grasp of creation means:
      - (i) creation is a free act of God, God is not bound to create nor bound to creation.
      - (ii) creation is based on a personal relation of love.

- (iii) if creation involves the Spirit, e.g. Gen 1:2; Ps 104:30, then it has a goal
- c. creation finds its rationale within the Godhead.
  - (i) creation is the gift of the Father to the Son. “Everything that the Father gives me will come to me...” (John 6:37)
  - (ii) creation is the gift of the Son to the Father. 1 Cor 15:25-27; Heb 2:5-18.
  - (iii) creation then is “the theatre of glory of God.” It is the place and process in which the love of the Father for the Son may find expression through the Spirit in creatures for his eternal praise and honour.

The goal of all creation, and so of all theology, is the joy of worship. (Gen 2:28; n.b. Eden means “delight”; Job 38:4ff; Ps 150; John 17:4-5; Heb 12:18-24; Rev 4:11; 5:11-14; 7:10-15; 14:6-7 etc.)

### **(Sovereignty and Providence)**

#### 1. Unacceptable Views of Sovereignty and Providence

##### 1.\*Deism

- a. providence identified with the laws of nature.
- b. makes providence ‘genial’ (mild benevolence).
- c. de-personalises God, substitutes nature for God; leads inevitably to atheism or ‘nature-worship’.

##### 2.\*Fatalism

- a. the ultimate principle behind the universe is responsible for everything e.g. Islam, Marxism, astrological determinism.
- b. God becomes responsible for evil, is either ‘beyond good and evil’ or capricious.
- c. God is depersonalised, exists in a mechanical relation to the world.

##### 3.\*Process Thought

- a. God’s work in creation and humanity is limited to persuasion.
- b. God ‘does his best’
  - limited by the conditions of the world and human freedom
  - what God wills is much less than he is able to accomplish.
- c. denies the sovereign government of God.

##### 4.\*Existentialism

- a. restrict providence to the human order - personal influence on the interior thought and feelings.
- b. denial of God’s rule in history e.g. Tillich - miracle would be a fracture in the structure of being, God split within himself (dualism).
- c. restricts God to human subjectivity.

## 2. The Meaning of Providence

### 1. Use of the Term

- a. Latin: providentia = foresight, prescience, provision.
- b. developed theological use:
  - (i) God foresees all events
  - (ii) God controls all events
  - (iii) God cares for his creatures
  - (iv) God has a plan for his creatures
- c. includes - preservation, history, 'general' and 'special' providence, (prayer), miracle.

### 2. The Scope of Providence

- a. Scripture:
  - (i) universe - Ps.103:19; Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11
  - (ii) physical world - Job 37:5, 10; Ps.104:14, 135:6; Matt. 5:45
  - (iii) brute creation - Ps.104:21, 28; Matt. 6:26, 10:29
  - (iv) nations - Job 12:23; Ps.22:28, 66:7; Acts 17:26
  - (v) birth and life - 1 Sam. 16:1; Ps.139:16; Prov 21:1; Is. 45:5
  - (vi) success and failure - Ps.75:6, 7; Luke 1:52
  - (vii) minor details - Prov. 16:33; Matt. 10:30
  - (viii) protection of the righteous - Ps.4:8, 5:12, 63:8, 121:3; Rom. 8:28
  - (ix) supplying the needs of God's people - Gen. 22:8, 14; Deut. 8:3; Phil 4:19
  - (x) answers to prayer - 1 Sam. 1:19; Isa. 20:5, 6; 2 Chron. 33:13; Ps.65:2; Matt. 7:7; Luke 18:7, 8
  - (xi) exposure and punishment of wicked - Ps.7:12, 13; 11:6.
- b. General Providence
  - God's control of universe as a whole
  - 'common grace', goodness to all (Matt. 5:45).
- c. Special Providence
  - particular providence in the life of the children of God e.g. answers to prayer, miracles, protection e.g. Gen. 45:5; 50:25.

### 3. Providence as Government

- a. universal rule of God as King - Ps. 22:28, 29; 103:17-19; Dan. 4:34, 35; 1 Tim. 6:15.
- b. God's rule is good, - directed to the purpose of his glory and so the highest good of his creatures.



- c. God's rule as Creator - King is adapted to the nature of the creatures he has made and governs
  - works through physical laws, moral influences, properties of the mind, direct action of the Holy Spirit
- d. the government of God cannot be equated with any human government, institution or movement i.e. Church, nation or program.
- e. the nature of the government of God is most clearly revealed in the death and resurrection of Christ. Both are within the providential power of God working in human affairs for the ultimate good of humanity (Acts 2:23; 4:28).

#### 4. The Providence of God as Concurrence

- a. Latin concursum = running together, the doctrine of concurrence refers to God's working together with his creatures.
- b. God works in human thinking and deciding (Gen. 45:5; Ex. 4: 11-12; Josh. 11:6; Prov. 21:1; Ezz. 6:22; Phil. 2: 12-13).
- c. God is not the cause of sin. He gives to the creature the power to choose, the creature freely chooses to one result. Sin arises out of the creature's deviation from the moral will of God, through the abuse of the power God gives to choose.
- d. The real model for what concurrence means is the life of Christ. His constant working together with the Father, and the Father's life in him, reveal that the power of God is not a threat to the inner meaning of human freedom, but its source.

#### 5. Sovereignty, Providence and Christ.

“The sovereignty of God is not that of an abstraction or impersonal force but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus himself is at the heart of the sovereignty. Because he and the Father are *the same in substance (homoousios)* there cannot be in the sovereignty of God any un-Christlikeness at all. It is holy, wise and powerful, gracious, loving and merciful. Furthermore, not only is the sovereignty marked by the eternal qualities of the Son, it is also enriched by his earthly experience. He stands in the midst of the throne as the Lamb who was slain. Nothing we can say of the divine sovereignty may contradict this. Foreordination, election, government, reprobation, judgement, must all be consonant with the way God has defined himself in Christ.”  
(D. McLeod)

## Lecture Topic 6 : The Doctrine of Humanity

### The Image of God

#### 1. The Biblical Framework

##### 1. Creation in the image of God. Gen 1:26-31.

n.b. 'likeness' in Gen 1:26 explains that 'image' does not mean identity. Other uses of "likeness" indicate it means representation (Numb 33:42; 1 Sam 6:5, 11; 2 Ki 11:18; Ezek 23:14).

##### 2. A property unique to human beings (not shared with angels or animals).

##### 3. More than other creatures, but still a creature. 'Man has sprung from God and the dust.' (J.P. Curran)

##### 4. The image of God remains after the fall. Gen 5:1-3; 9:5-6; 1 Cor 11:7; James 3:9.

##### 5. The image is corrupted through idolatry. Exod. 20:4; 34:17; Rom 1:18-32. If the image of God somehow relates to what it means to be a human being as such, then sin must affect the whole person, body, soul and spirit.

##### 6. Christ is the perfect image of God. Col 1:15; Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 4:4; Heb 1:3.

##### 7. The New Testament discusses the image of God in terms of transformation into Christ-likeness. Rom 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18 - 4:11, Col 3:10.

#### 2. Inadequate views of the Image of God.

##### 1. The body is the image of God

Being in the image of God does involve our bodies (for we express who we are through our behaviour) but God himself is bodiless, e.g. John 4:24. (Anthropomorphites, Mormons.)

##### 2. The mind is the image of God

To focus on the mental aspect of what distinguishes humanity from the beasts is too narrow and inadequately personal. (Augustine, Boethius etc.)

##### 3. The soul is the image of God

A reflection of Greek dualism, where the soul is the real and religious dimension of humanity. The idea of a higher part of human constitution is false, cf. Romans 12:1.

##### 4. Male - and - Female is the image of God

Genesis 1:27b 'male and female' explains 1:27a 'image of God.' This means that human beings are social, not solitary. "Man" means "man and woman" who in their union constitute the basic unit of humanity. This is an intra-relational structure particularly expressed in the "one-flesh" act of marriage, whereby through procreation the essential social nature of being in the image of God is transmitted.

The covenant partnership of marriage exhibits the covenant partnership between God and humanity. That this is dependent upon a plurality or bi-polarity in humanity (male/female) reflects the inner plurality of God as trinity: "let us make..." Both within God and within humanity an "I" and a "thou" confront each other.

Whilst this view has much to commend it, it is too narrow. For example, the relevant later texts in Genesis do not take up the male-female theme. Even if we keep in mind the male/female dynamic includes all gender different relationships, e.g., mother to

son, the tendency is to reduce it to marriage. Also, this position tends to be too focussed on the horizontal aspects of the image.

#### 5. Dominion is the image of God

The basic text of Genesis 1:26 is immediately followed by: “let them have dominion.” It may be that the text of Genesis 1 and 2 fills out the meaning of dominion in terms of humans as priests of creation enabling it to praise its maker.

Certainly, to rule the earth as God’s vice- regents is part of what it means to be in covenant partnership with the Lord. This is a theme taken up at length in Psalm 8. It is not clear however whether this is the image or a product of being in the image.

### 3. Christ as the Image of God.

1. Our doctrine of humanity needs to be based on Christology and not the reverse. Only from first seeing who Jesus is, can we then understand who we are.
2. This position seems to be the most adequate because:
  - (i) the New Testament emphasises this (see above)
  - (ii) if, as sinful, we have lost the knowledge of God, and so of ourselves (see Rom 1-3), we need a revelation from outside sinful humanity to restore the image of God.
  - (iii) as God the Word made flesh (John 1:14), Christ is both the image and the reality of God. He is not so much the site of revelation as the content of revelation.
3. Christ as the image of God gathers up into himself all the dynamic relational aspects of the positions reviewed above. He restores us to perfect filial (sonship) union with God the Father. He shows us, as brother, how to love our fellow humanity. He is the true husband of the eternal bride (Eph 5:25-32; Rev 19:6-8.) His acts and life reveal what it is to have dominion over the earth in the Kingdom of God. His perfected priesthood opens it up for us to be kings and priests on the earth (Rom 5:17; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6 etc.)
4. These themes unite around the glory of the Son. The glory of a son is to be like a father (Gen 5:1 -3). In this case, “the image/likeness of God” is to share in his glory. This is seen of Jesus in Daniel 7:13- 14, where the Messiah possesses the glory of a universal and eternal kingdom, the glory of holiness before the throne of God and the majesty of the clouds of glory. These are all a share in the properties of God. Likewise he manifests, “glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:14 cf. 2 Pet 1:17). Cf. 2 Cor 4:4, “the glory of Christ, who is the image of God”.
5. If Christ is the fullness of the image of God, then what it means for us to be so created can only be revealed at the End. Only when Christ appears, “face to face”, shall we realise in full measure what it means to be in his image (1 Cor 13:12; Col 3:4; 1 John 3:1-2).
6. The essential difference introduced by the coming of Jesus is that humanity has been taken into God. Since the incarnation, “for one who is ‘in Christ’... his human nature... exists not just alongside of the Creator, but in such a way that his human being is anchored in the very being of God.

“ The breath taking import of all this ... is that our human nature has been taken up and in Jesus to the top and summit of being, and that with him and in him man is located in the very centre of all things!” (T.F. Torrance cf. Col 3:1-4).

#### 4. The Constitution of Humanity: What Makes Up People?

##### 1. Introduction

- a. This is a subject of considerable debate.
- b. The most radical position, is that there is only one part or dimension to human existence, the body. This is called “monism” and is unacceptable as a Christian doctrine because it leads to a denial of life after death.
- c. Another view is that we are composed of 2 essential parts: body and soul. This is a view held by many Christians and is called “dichotomism”.
- d. A third position is that there are 3 aspects to human life: body, soul and spirit. This popular view is called “trichotomism”.
- e. A final position stresses the unity or essential indivisibility of human life in the image of God, this is called “holism”.

##### 2. Arguments for a Dichotomy

- a. The creation story in Genesis 2: 7 pictures God animating the earth – based body of Adam through the in – breathing of a soul.
- b. Scriptures which teach that the whole person is made up of “body” plus “soul” (Matt 10:28; 1 Cor 5:3; 3 John 2). A human is therefore material and immaterial, outer and inner.
- c. Many scriptures make it clear that “soul” and “spirit” can be used interchangeably (compare Gen 35: 18 and Eccl 12:7; Gen 41: 8 and Ps 42: 6; Matt 20:28 and 27:50; Luke 1:46 and 47; John 12:27 and 13:21)

##### 3. Arguments for a Trichotomy

- a. There are texts which use a three - fold description of human life: body , soul and spirit ( 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 4:12)
- b. The “soul” is the seat of the personality: mind, will and emotions. The “spirit” is the part of a person which deals with God or knows God (1 Cor 2: 11; Rom 8:10), this is the result of being born again.
- c. The Bible teaches that at death the “spirit” of a person goes to God (Luke 8:55; Matt 27:50; James 2:27). This refers to a life principle distinct from the soul.

##### 4. Arguments for Holism

- a. The use of the terms “soul” and “spirit” interchangeably is evidence that the biblical writers did not think in terms of “parts” of a person. For example, a “soul” can depart the body at death (Luke 12:20).
- b. The Bible is not trying to describe some sort of human essence, but piles up terms which dynamically describe human life. See, for example, Matthew 22: 37. Terms like “soul” and “spirit” are references to the activities of whole persons viewed from different angles, not different portions within an individual.
- c. It is the whole person which is in the image of God and who relates to God, not some special inner sphere. **Adam** became a “living soul”.
- d. Regeneration means that the whole person is now alive to God (Eph 2: 5; Rom 6: 11).

- e. Within this framework, the “heart” represents the total orientation of a person (Prov 4:23; 23:26).
5. The Origin of the Individual Soul
- 1. Introduction
    - a. This has been a subject of considerable disagreement amongst theologians.
    - b. The question arises on the assumption that either the trichotomist or dichotomist position is correct. At some point in the history of the development of the individual an immaterial “soul/ spirit” needs to be infused into a material body.
  - 2. The Pre – existence of Souls
    - a. Individual souls are eternal, at some point they enter into space and time and animate bodies. This may happen only once, or numerous times, as in reincarnation.
    - b. This view has been held by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, Eastern religions, the New Age Movement and Mormonism.
    - c. In this thinking the soul **is** the person.
    - d. In practice this often leads to a devaluation of the body and an attempt to escape the corrupting influences of the world.
    - e. This view is incompatible with Christianity because it denies the role of God the creator. It finds no support in scripture.
  - 3. Creationism
    - a. Each human soul comes into existence by means of a direct creative act of God.
    - b. The biblical argument for this position appeal to texts which attribute the origin of the individual to God (Num 16: 42,Ps 127: 3; Isa42: 5; Zech 12: 1; Heb 12; 9).
    - c. The main objection to this view is that it seems to make God the direct creator of evil (persons).
  - 4. Traducianism
    - a. This doctrine states that the soul as well as the body is inherited from parents at the time of conception.
    - b. Biblical support is found in the idea that organisms have power to reproduce “after their kinds” (Gen 1: 24). Being in the image of God means we have power to reproduce our own likeness (Gen 5: 3). Additionally, the Bible speaks as if the descendants are “ in” the ancestor (Heb 7: 10). This position can explain the transmission of original sin from Adam (Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:22).
    - c. Objections to traducianism include the assertion that the soul cannot be divided, so inheritance is impossible, and the implication that Jesus must have inherited a sinful human soul.
  - 6. Holism
    - a. Since this view denies that humans are a composition of essential different parts, it does not address the question of the soul in the above manner.

- b. Some holistic theologians emphasise that the person emerges over a period of time as the foetus grows in the womb.
- c. Others emphasise the mysterious nature of the process as described in scripture (Ps 139: 6), concluding that any attempt to explain how people emerge goes beyond what God has revealed.

#### 7. Conclusion

- a. The lack of direct biblical material on this subject means we should not be dogmatic in drawing conclusions.
- b. The subject however cannot be ignored, as the time of the “ origin of the soul ” has important implications for abortion and birth control.

## Lecture Topic 7: The Doctrine of Sin

### 1. Our Knowledge of Sin

a. Source of our knowledge of sin : Holy Spirit (John 16:8) and Holy Scripture (Ps 119:9-11 etc)

b. Incomprehensibility of sin:

(a) Sin is an entirely negative reality

loss of ) knowledge of God (Rom 1:28)

)- glory of God (Rom 3:23)

) self-knowledge (Jer 17:9)

darkness, ignorance, foolishness, death etc.

(b) Loss of the meaning of the image of God (Gen 1:26 ff)

creature: Creator

servant: King

son : Father

Sin is the rejection of God's call for humans to enjoy the fellowship of the Son with the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit.

c. Sin revealed in the pain it causes to God.

∴ Matt 1:23)

God with us ⇔ Mark 15:34

John 1:14)

d. 2 Errors

Legalism – Law viewed impersonally

Subjectivism – sin as ignorance, accident, mistake, 'only human'.

e. Forgiveness and justification essential to receiving / desiring revelation about sin.

(cf. Jer 17:9; Rom. 7:11; Heb. 3:13.)

### 2. Biblical Terms

a. Literal

Sin )

Transgression ) See Lev 16:21;

Iniquity ) Psalm 32:1; John 3;4; 5:17

Evil ) Matt 6:13; 14, 15. Matt 12:45

Wickedness )

Trespass )

Unrighteousness )

## b. Metaphorical

Sin is described in Scripture in many colourful ways e.g.

To cast off restraint	-	Prov 29:18
To miss the mark	-	Lev 4:2; Num 15:28; Rom 3: 23
To go astray	-	Isaiah 53:6
To be “short weight”	-	Dan 5:27
To break God’s law	-	Num 15:32
To be in debt	-	Matt 6:12
To stumble	-	Jude 24
To make error	-	Heb 9:7
To go out of bounds	-	Matt 18:15
To lie	-	John 8:44
To be dirty	-	Jas 4:8
To be at loggerheads	-	2 Cor 5:19-20
To disobey	-	Rom 5:19

Main idea is on failing to be what God intended us to be.

## 3. How is sin Possible?

### 3.1 The image of God.

- To be created in God’s image is to be created ‘good’ (Gen 1:31)
- Relates to the ability to choose
- Does not relate to sinning; this is the opposite of the image of God.
- Relates to the power to resist sin which is given by obedience to God’s Word (Gen 1:27).

### 3.2 The Theology of “Free - Will”

- Not biblical but philosophical terminology. cf. responsibility.
- Not a property of personal psychology/self-awareness. It is purely God-related ie. spiritual and moral.
- Adam
  - power to sin
  - power not to sinfree to use b)  
use of a) is not freedom but slavery  
e.g. Jn 8:34; Rom 6:6; 6:17; Titus 3:3; 2 Peter 2:19  
Loss of the expression of sonship.
- Fall = loss of (2) b)  
∴ no power not to sin ∴ a sinner.

(5) Strictly speaking, sin can never be explained.

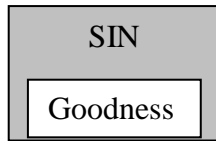


## 4. Original Sin

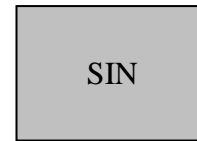
### 4.1 An illustration

- The Hammer of God p.314f.

Not:



But:



### 4.2 Original Sin

- a. Doesn't refer primarily to the first sin.
- b. Refers to the condition in which we are born, our sinful nature and condition.
- c. To be distinguished from "actual sin", sin that involves some specific decisions.

### 4.3 Key Biblical Texts

- a. Psalm 51:5: 'I was born in sin...'
- b. Romans 5:12 'sin came into the world through one man...'
- c. Ephesians 2:3 'by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.'

### 4.4 Major Theological Issues.

- a. Imputation - how sin is reckoned to us as part of the fallen race 'in Adam'.  
How we share **Adam's** guilt and punishment.
- b. Impartation - how sin is transmitted to us from Adam. The impartation of our inborn disposition to sin. (We sin because we are sinners.)
- c. Imputation implies impartation as part of the penalty, passed on Adam and the race, for sin.

### 4.5 Historical Explanations:

- a. Pelagianism : we are corrupted by our social influences.
- b. Augustine : 'in whom all sinned' (Rom 5:12 Vulgate)  
: either realism - men actually sinned in Adam; or in Adam as their representative (all souls were in Adam).
- c. Federal Theology  
: Adam the head of the covenant of works, 'immediate' imputation of his guilt to those whom he represented. (Calvinism) (This is seen as parallel to the imputation of Christ's righteousness i.e. justification.)  
This position may be compared to the impact of the decisions government figures make on behalf of the people.
- d. Arminianism : 'mediate' imputation on the basis of the sinful nature we inherit from Adam.
- e. Neo-orthodoxy: our starting point is the fact of our sin in Adam, but the Bible does not explain the 'how'.

- f. H. Blocher: God sees all people in and through Adam in the framework of the covenant of creation. The law is now written on the human heart, by virtue of our being made in the image of God. Human sin against the revelation of God given in creation is of the same order as Adam's sin in Eden.

## 5. The Extent of Sin

### 5.1 Total Depravity

- a. Not utter depravity; by the grace of God we are not as wicked as we could be.
- b. Every part of human life is affected by sin  
(Gen 6:5; 8:21; Isa 64:6; Rom 3:9-20; Rom 8:5-7). The human heart, as the well spring of life (Prov 4:23), is now a fountainhead of sin (Jer 17:9; Rom 1:21; 7:18; Eph 2:3).
- c. There are no degrees of depravity, only degrees of its expression.

### 5.2 Total Inability

- a. The inability to please or obey flows from total depravity.
- b. Human beings are:
  - helpless (Rom 5:6)
  - cannot understand God (1 Cor 2:14)
  - spiritually blind (2 Cor 4:4)
  - cannot submit to God's law (Rom 8:7-8)
  - dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1)

## 6. The Results of Sin

### 6.1 Corruption

- a) Not merely deprivation vs R.C. - loss of supernatural gifts.
- b) Depravation is total.
  - i) All powers of the soul involved - mind, conscience, heart.  
(Rom 1:21; 1 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:15; Heb 10:22)
  - ii) Mobilisation of the whole self ('I') against God. viz. enmity (Col 1:21).
  - iii) Involves / has spread to all humanity Gen 6:5.
- c) Examples of the effects of Sin.  
(H.L. Poe 1996: 223, The Gospel and its Meaning Grand Rapids: Zondervan

### 6.2. Guilt.

- a) Immediate and unavoidable - Gen 3:7ff.
- b) Universal - Rom 2:12; 3:19,23.
- c) Objective - God's decree  
Actual separation and alienation from God.

d) Registered in the conscience

*con-scientia* = 'to know together with' (Rom 9:1)

guilt = I know myself to have lost the good of God's glory cf. Rom 1:18ff.

e) Guilt means condemnation

- moral and relational failure (unrighteous)
- deserving of punishment
- liable to punishment (Rom 6:23)

### 6.3 Punishment

- a) All encompassing - all people (Rom 3:23); physical (Rom 5:12ff) spiritual (Eph 2:1) eternal (Rev 20:14).
- b) God's deliberate relational action as rejected Father.
- c) Wrath = abandonment to sin and guilt (Rom 1:24, 26, 28) ⇒ rejection of the glory of son - Father relationship.

## 7. The Nature of Sin in Christians

### 7.1 Christians and the flesh.

- a) Christians are no longer 'in the flesh': Rom 8:9.
- b) Christians still struggle with the flesh in them  
: Romans 7:18; Gal 5:16ff.

### 7.2 Christians and condemnation

- a) Scripture teaches that the dominion of sin in the Christian life is broken through the gracious work of Christ: Rom 8:1-4; 1 John 1:6-2:2.
- b) This is accomplished because the condemnation due to sin has been removed: Rom 6:14; 1 Cor 15:56-57. Guilt being removed, sin has no final power (at the judgement).

## 8. Degrees of Personal Sin

- a) This is taught in scripture e.g. Luke 10:8 ff; Mark 14:21; John 19:11; 1 John 5:17.
- b) All sin is essentially the same - it separates from God (Isa 59:1 ff).
- c) All sin deserves judgement cf. Js 2:10 ff.
- d) The seriousness of a sin cannot be judged externally e.g. 1 Tim 5:24; Acts 5:4; 8:21 (intention).
- e) Our state of sin is identical. Our expression of sin varies (common grace).

## Lecture Topic 8: Covenant

“The idea of covenant is certainly not a pact or agreement, whether you conceive of such an agreement in the unilateral or bilateral sense. It is the relation of the most intimate communion of friendship in which God reflects his own covenant life in His relation to the creature, gives to that creature life, and causes him to taste and acknowledge the highest good and the overflowing fountain of all good.” (Hoeksema)

### 1. God works by Covenant.

Key Text: Gen 12:1-3

#### 1. The covenant is eternal.

(Gen 9:12; 17:7; Ex 31:16; Lev 24:8; 2 Sam 23:5; 1 Chr 16:17; Isa 61:8; Jer 32:40; Ez 37:26; Heb 13:20)

#### 2. The covenant is of grace.

(Gen 2:9; 6:8; 9:8-17, 12:1-3; Ex 19:4-6; 2 Sam 7:11-17; Jer 31:31-34; Ez 37:24-26; Luke 1:68-75; Eph 1:3-7; 2 Tim 1:9)

#### 3. The covenant is of love.

(Deut 7:6-11; Isa 43:4; Jer 31:3; Dan 9:4; Hos 11; Matt:26:28; Rom 5:5)

#### 4. The covenant requires obedience to law.

(Ex 20:1ff; Jer 31:31-34; Ez 36:27; Rom 13:8-10; 1 Cor 9:21; Gal 4:14; 6:2; James 1:22-25; 2:8-12)

#### 5. The gift of the covenant is not conditional.

(Gen 2:17; 12:1; 15:1; 17:1; Ex 19:4; 2 Sam 7:14; Jer 31:31-34; Matt 26:28; 2 Cor 7:1; Heb 6:16)

#### 6. The covenant is never broken by God.

(Lev 26:9; Ex 2:24; Deut 7:9; Jud 2:1; Isa 54:10; Jer 3:20-21, 25; Luke 1:69,70)

#### 7. The covenant is not legalistic but life - giving.

(Lev 18:5; Ez 20:11, 13, 20-21; Luke 10:28; Rom 7:10; 10:5; Gal 3:12)

#### 8. The covenant promises relationship.

(Gen 17:7-8; Ex 20:2; 29:45; Deut 5:2,3,6; Jer 24:7, 30:22; 31:33; Ez 11:20; Zech 12:8; 2 Cor 6:16; Heb 8:10)

#### 9. The covenant brings glory to God and people.

(Deut 5:24; Acts 7:2; Rom 9:4; 2 Cor 3:10-18; 4:4-6; Heb 5:5)

### 2. The Covenant is Trinitarian.

Key Text: Heb 13:20-21

#### 1. The covenant is from the Father.

(Ex 4:22; Deut 32:6; Isa 63:16; Mal 2:10; Matt 5-7; Rom 9:4)

#### 2. The covenant is through the Son.

(2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2; 89; 110; Isa 42:6; 49:8; Matt 26:28; Heb 7:22; 8:6; 9:15 12:24; 13:20-21)

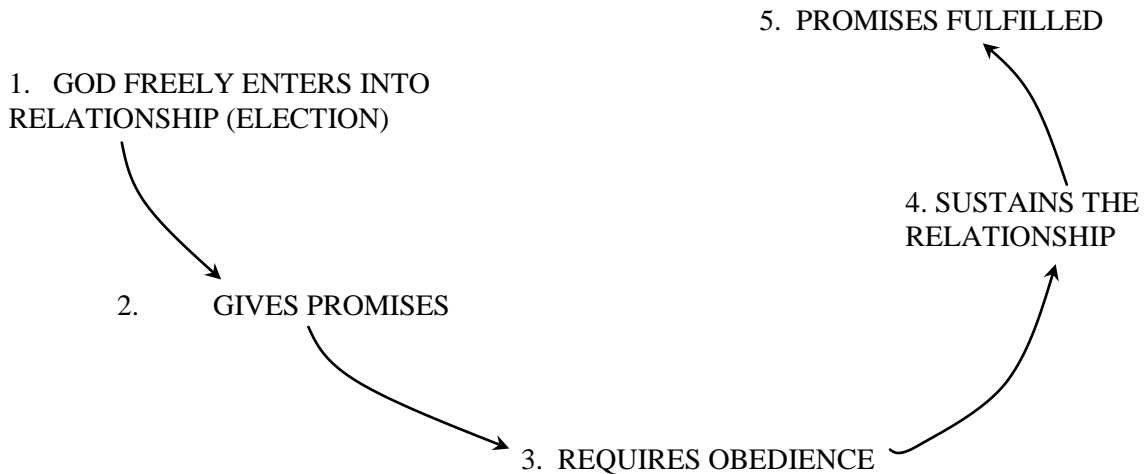
#### 3. The covenant is by the Holy Spirit.

(Ez 36:16-31; 37:1ff; 39:25-29; Isa 42:1; 61:1; Joel 2:28; 32; 2 Cor 3; Gal 3:13-14.)

4. The covenant expresses the relationships within the trinity.
  - a. The Father prepares the Son a body, which he would inhabit through the Holy Spirit.  
(Luke 1:35; Heb 10:5)
  - b. The Father equips the Son for his task as Messiah by giving him the Spirit.  
(Isa 42:1,2; 61:1; John 3:31)
  - c. The Father enables the Son to go to the cross through his Spirit.  
(Heb 9:14)
  - d. The Father enables the Son to destroy the dominion of Satan and to establish the kingdom of God by raising him from the dead.  
(Ps 16:8-11; Acts 2:25-28)
  - e. The Father gives to the Son all power in heaven and on earth to rule the world and the church.  
(Matt 28:18; Eph 1:20-22; Phil 2:9-11; Heb 2:5-9)
  - f. The Father gives the Son, as a reward for His accomplished work, to send out the Holy Spirit for the formation, instruction, guidance, and protection of the Church.  
(John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13, 14; Acts 2:33)
  - g. The Father gives the Son brothers and sisters from all nations and tongues.  
(Ps 22:27; 72:17; Rev 4:9-10; 14:1-6)
3. The Covenant has various forms. Key Text: Gen 17:7
  1. The covenant with Adam: implied rather than stated cf. Jer 33:19- 21  
(Gen 1:26-30; 2:15-17; 3:16-24; Hos 6:7; Rom 5:12-21)
  2. The covenant with Noah: n.b. “establish” means “confirm” (6:18)  
(Gen 6:11-22; 9:9-17)
  3. The covenant with Abraham.  
(Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-16; 17:1-4)
  4. The covenant with Moses.  
(Ex 2:23-25; 20:1-17; 24; 34:28; Deut 29:13; Jer 34:13; Ez 16:3)
  5. The covenant with David  
(2 Sam 7:12-17; Ps 89:3-4; 26-27; 132:11-18)
  6. The new covenant in Christ.  
(Jer 31:31-34; 32:36-41; Isa 42:1-9; 49:8-12; 55:3-4; 59:21; Ez 16:59-63; 20:37; 36-37; Luke 1:67-79; Acts 3:25; Rom 9:4; Gal 3:15-19; 2 Cor 3:4-11; Heb 8-10)

4. The Covenant Pattern.

Key Text: Jer 31:31-34



Illustrations of the Covenant Pattern

1. The Covenant with Abraham

- a (i) Initiated by God: Genesis 12:1; 15:1; 17:1.
- (ii) Unmerited: Unearned cf Deut. 7:7-8  
The call creates the relationship.
- b. Unconditional: promises 'I will' cf Heb 6:13  
'be your God' Gen 17: 7-8 = covenant love
- c. Response: Gen 17:1 surrender of faith  
Gen 15:6 faith - righteousness

NOT CONTRACT: if X then Y

<u>BUT</u>	Unconditional	)
COVENANT	Love	- <b>GOSPEL</b>
	I will <u>do</u> this ∴	)
	<u>Receive</u> it	

d. The goal of the Abrahamic covenant is not merely Canaan but the nations of the world (Gen 12:3; Rom 4:13 cf. Heb 11:10, 16).

2. The Covenant with Moses

Exodus 19: 4 - 6

- a. Initiated by God: v.4 ..'I did .... I brought ...'
- b. Promises v.5b-6 'treasured possession...kingdom of priests...holy nation'
- c. Response: v.5a .. 'obey me . . . keep my covenant . . .'

d. The Place of Law

A: Follows covenant/grace

B: Spells out boundaries/responsibilities for the relationship

**NOT** conditions for relationship.

e. Legalism: entry into relationship by fulfilling a set of conditions and keeping laws  
i.e. contractual

Reverses the true order : covenant grace→ Law Law→ “covenant grace”

3. The New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Ezek. 37:26-27)

a. Initiated by God: v31, 33.. ‘I will make...’

b. Promises

(1) ‘my law in their minds. . . . on their hearts’

(2) ‘they will all know me’

(3) ‘I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more’

→ new quality of relationship

c. Response: faith is implied

d. The new covenant is the full realisation of the grace working in all the covenants.

5. Christ is the Content of the Covenant. Key Texts: Isa 42:6; 2 Cor 1:19-22

1. Covenant is related to sonship.

(Ex 4:22; 2 Sam 7:14; Hos 11:1; Luke 3:38; Rom 9:4; 2 Cor 6:16-18; Gal 3:26-29)

2. Jesus’ Sonship sums up all the Old Testament promises.

(Luke 1:32-33; 72; 3:23-38; Acts 2:30; Gal 3:16-18)

3. Jesus death mediates the covenant.

(1 Tim 2:5; Heb 7:22; 8:6; 9:15; 12:24)

4. Jesus resurrection fulfils the covenant.

(Acts 2:29-32; 13:30-34; Rom 1:4; Heb 13:20)

5. Jesus embodies the blessings and presence of the Lord promised in all covenants.

6. The gospel proclaims God’s covenant faithfulness.

(Luke 1:32; 54:55; 72: 2:29-32; Acts 3:24-26; Gal 3:16-18, 29; Eph 2:11-13; Heb 13:20)

6. The Covenant is Fully Expressed at the End. Key Text: Rev 21:1-8

1. This is the content of eschatology.

2. The climax of covenant is the complete mutual indwelling of God with humanity

(Ezek 37:27; Rev 21:3).

## **Lecture Topic 9: The Person of Christ : Humanity and Deity**

The major difficulties in this area arise because we assume we know in advance the meaning of the two key terms. A Christian methodology will in fact take the proper meaning of the terms from the person of Jesus.

### **9.1 The Humanity of Christ: Evidence**

Evidences for fulness of the humanity of Christ include references to the total range of those dimensions we would consider to make up a human being (Luke 2:52).

1. Physical - body, growth.
2. Psychological - emotions, knowledge.
3. Spiritual - prayer, Worship
4. Social - fellowship.

#### **9.1.1 His Birth**

His birth itself and His genealogy on both sides of the family are described in Scripture as indicative of humanity (Luke 2:1-7; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).

#### **9.1.2 His Life**

For most of His life, Jesus lived in obscurity, known as the son of a carpenter, with four brothers, and sisters, and having nothing by way of physical appearance which distinguished Him in a crowd (Mark 6:3; John 4:9; Matthew 26:48). He was subject to normal human limitations - hunger (Luke 4:1-4); weariness (John 4:6; Matthew 8:24); thirst (John 19:28); death (John 19:30,34). He spoke of His body (Matthew 26:12); soul (Matthew 26:38) and spirit (Luke 23:46), elements essential to humanity.

#### **9.1.3 His Emotions**

Joy (John 15:11); sorrow (John 11:35; Matthew 26:37); compassion (Matthew 9:36); astonishment (Mark 6:6); indignation (Mark 10:14); anger (Mark 3:5); loneliness (Matthew 26:37); were all part of Christ's experience.

#### **9.1.4 His Need for Prayer**

Christ shared our need for communion with God (Mark 1:35; 6:46; Luke 3:21; Hebrews 5:7) / dependence on Father.

#### **9.1.5 His Limited Knowledge**

In common with all men, Jesus lacked full knowledge, he expresses surprise (Mark 6:6; Luke 7:9), he asks questions (Mark 9:21; Luke 8:45; John 11:14,34). At times, things were supernaturally known to Jesus (Luke 9:47; John 1:47; 4:29 etc.). This was evidently a word of knowledge, revealed by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8). (The Gospel record of Jesus' journey from conception to cross indicate a deepening knowledge of his identity as the incarnate Son of God. This came prayer by revelation of the Spirit, especially in prayer and time of crisis.)

#### **9.1.6 His Temptation**

The temptation stories locate the truth of his humanity in his response to the Father: 'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only...' (Luke 4:8) (Gunton)

Temptation is a human experience, not a divine one (James 1:13). Yet Jesus was tempted, just as we are (Luke 4:2,3; Hebrews 4:15). (Struggle in Gethsemane.)



### 9.1.7 His Witness

Jesus called Himself a man (John 8:40), and was recognised as such by others (John 1:30; 4:29; 5:12).

### 9.1.8 His Death

Jesus suffered and died as a man, in weakness and agony of body (Matthew 27:32; John 19:28,30).

### 9.1.9 The New Testament Witness

The Scriptures claim that Jesus was a man in every way (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15; Philippians 2:8; 1 Timothy 2:5). Paul's attitude 2 Cor 5:16; 1 Tim 3:16; anti-docetic: John 1:14; 1 John 1:1; 'handled touched.'

Post Resurrection: 'a spirit has not flesh and bones' Luke 24:39 cf. John 21).

It is clear we are meant to be left in do doubt that Jesus Christ came as a man amongst men, sharing all the experiences of men, and dying a man's death.

## 9.2 The Humanity of Christ: The Sinlessness of Jesus

### 9.2.1 The Biblical Evidence

- 1 The opponents of Jesus were unable to name a sin in him (John 8:46), and they were unable to sustain a charge against Him (Matthew 26:59ff; John 18:38).
- 2 There is no record of Jesus ever confessing His sin or praying for forgiveness, unlike the other great figures of Scripture.
- 3 The writers of the New Testament explicitly emphasise the sinlessness of Jesus (2 Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15;7:26; 1 Peter 1:19;2:22; 1 John 3:5).

### 9.2.2 Sinlessness and Humanity

- 1 The sinlessness of Jesus is a function of His **humanity** not of His deity.
- 2 It is not even truly possible to think of God sinning : God would not be God, what would be His motive, it implies a law 'above God' being broken etc; cf. James 1:13.
- 3 The fact of Jesus' sinlessness lies in His actual submission to the will of the Father to become sin on the cross i.e., it is a function of His Holiness (John 8:29; 15:10; Acts 2;27; 3:14; 4:30; 7:52; 13:35). Jesus did not draw on the infinite divine reserve as some sort of a 'fallback' to avoid sin. The Holy Spirit is the power by which Jesus is free and truly human, his life entirely directed to the praise of the Father (Luke 4:1 – 2; Heb 9:14).

### 9.2.3 The Saving Significance of the Humanity of Jesus

- 1 A true human being does not have to sin. This is not a part of God's normality.
- 2 Through our share in the Spirit of Christ sin is never necessary for us.
- 3 Only under the conditions of our life could our fallen state be undone. Salvation is in proportion to the fullness of the humanity (body, soul, spirit, will) of God in Christ.
- 4 God now has a human identity so that a perfect mediation and communication between the divine and human has been accomplished.

### 9.3.1 THE DEITY OF CHRIST

#### 9.3.1 Assumptions about the Deity of Jesus

- 1 The focus of the New Testament is on a functional not ontological Christology. What Jesus does for us is the primary frame of reference. Who Jesus is, is progressively revealed by his works.
- 2 If only God can reveal God, no amount of evidence as such can demonstrate that a particular human being is God.
- 3 Since the knowledge of God is a share in the inner life of God, only the revelation of the Spirit could lead to the conclusion that Jesus was God in the flesh cf. Matt 16:16ff.

#### 9.3.2 Statements about the Pre existence of Christ

##### 1. The Synoptics

Given that the Synoptics record the public ministry of Jesus, it is not surprising that while there are passages which imply his pre-existence (e.g. Matthew 22:41-45) direct reference is quite limited.

##### 2. John

The high christology of John, a christology from “above”, means from the very outset of this gospel, we are left in no doubt that Christ came from the Father into the world (John 1:1-4; 9-14). Jesus Himself declared that He came from heaven (John 3:13; 6:33-42). His statement to the Jews that “before Abraham was born, I am,” while revealing more than pre-existence, contained that truth (John 8:58).

Jesus made His most explicit declarations (John 13:3,16:27,28; John 17:5,21,24) in relation to the occasion of his passion. Not only had He come from God and was returning to Him, but He had, in His pre-incarnate state, shared His Father’s glory.

##### 3. Paul

In a number of passages, He speaks of Christ’s part in creation and its ongoing sustenance, and in His pre-existent glory (Colossians 1:16,17; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Philippians 2:5-7).

##### 4. Hebrews

The writer to the Hebrews gives a similar testimony (Hebrews 1:1-3,10).

#### 9.3.3 The Qualities of his Life

A number of the qualities of the person of Christ, while not being proofs, together give cogent witness to His deity.

##### 1. His Self-awareness

Even at the age of 12, Jesus was conscious that His subjection to His Father took precedence over familial relationships (Luke 2:49). By the time His public ministry began, He understood who He was, and what lay ahead of Him (as evidenced in His baptism - Matthew 3:13-17). See John 6:38,46,62; 8:32,42 for examples of this understanding. At the conclusion of His ministry, Jesus said to His disciples that both the Father and He would dwell within His followers, thereby demonstrating His awareness of His place and function in the Godhead (John 14:23).

## 2. His Self-assertion

He left no doubt in the minds of His hearers that He knew Himself to be equal with the Father (John 5:18,22,23; 10:30). It was this assertion above all others that angered the Jewish leaders (Mark 14:61-64; John 10:30ff).

He also claimed the right to judge the world (Matthew 7:21-23; Mark 13:4) and to call the dead to life (John 5:25-29). He also claimed to be the sole avenue to God (Matthew 11:27; John 14:6). These are the prerogatives of God alone.

## 3. His Self-declaration

Frequently Jesus declared His nature and purpose through the expression "I am" (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:7-9, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:11). Normally a Greek verb contains within itself the pronoun indicating who is speaking. Thus *eimi* means "I am" *estin* means "he is". There is no need for the word for "I" and "he" - except for special emphasis. In all of the "I am" declarations, however, the verb *eimi* is prefaced by the emphatic pronoun for "I," (*ego*). In effect, Jesus is saying, "I, yes I, am ...". These claims were exclusive claims, beyond the scope of a man and implying deity.

It is clear that Jesus was making claims of such an extraordinary and universal nature that no mere man could ever fulfil them. They require the speaker to be divine.

Note that when Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am," He again used the emphatic pronoun, *ego* (John 8:58). Secondly, His use of the present continuous tense, rather than the more correct past tense implied a continuity of existence of a kind known only to God. Thirdly, it corresponds almost exactly to the words of God in Exodus 3:14; "I am who I am". In fact, the LXX uses the very words *ego eimi* in Exodus 3:6; 3:14; 20:2, etc. Clearly, the Jews understood Jesus to be declaring:

His eternal being, and

His equality with God.

## 4. His Authority

Christ exercised an authority that was unique. He came with the same message as John (cf. Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17), but He drew men in a way that even John was unable (John 3:36). When He called men to follow Him, there was a compulsion about that call that seemed irresistible (Matthew 4:18-22).

In His teaching He spoke, not *from* authority, as did the rabbis of the day, but with authority (Mark 1:22; John 7:46). Whereas the teachers would say, "It is written," and the prophets would say, "Thus says the Lord," Jesus said, "I say ...". It is no wonder that the crowds were amazed at His teaching (Matthew 7:28,29).

## 5. His Forgiveness of Sins

Christ not only claimed the authority to forgive sins, but vindicated that claim by His actions (Mark 2:5ff). Nor did He refute the declaration of the Jews that only God could forgive sins. Instead He demonstrated that the power to forgive and the power to heal were both vested in Him.

## 6. His Acceptance of Worship

Only that which is divine is rightly worshipped. No righteous man would accept another's worship (Acts 10:25,26; Revelation 19:10). Yet Jesus, man though He was, and righteous though He was, accepted the worship of men (Matthew 14:33; John 9:38; John 20:28f). Jesus was adamant that only God was to be worshipped (Luke 4:8), yet freely received the homage of His followers. Only God can fully reveal God.

### 9.3.4 Explicit New Testament Texts which Witness to Christ's Deity

There are a number of passages which directly declare Jesus to be God, and many more in which the inference is unmistakable. Consider for example:

*Titus 2:13* - "our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ". While this might be translated "of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ" (KJV), the Greek construction is literally "of the great God and Saviour of us Jesus Christ," where "Jesus Christ" carries the same (genitive) case as "the great God and Saviour". It is therefore more accurately translated as does the NIV.

*Hebrews 1:8* - in which the Son of God is addressed by the words "O God". These words form a part of a tribute to the deity of Christ, coming as a prophetic word, from God Himself.

*1 John 5:20-21* - where Jesus is described as the true God and eternal life.

*Romans 9:5* - "Christ, who is God over all, forever praised". Again, the original Greek construction favours this translation, rather than one which separates the phrase "God who is over all be forever praised". As the NIV Study Bible puts it, this is "one of the clearest statements of the deity of Jesus Christ found in the entire NT, assuming the accuracy of the translation" (p1719).

*2 Thessalonians 2:16* - This passage, along with many others, links the names of Jesus with God in such a way as to infer equality. Note that Jesus' name is placed first, and that the verb (v17) is singular rather than plural, implying unity of Father and Son. (See also *1 Thessalonians 3:11*; *1 Corinthians 1:3*, etc.).

*2 Timothy 4:8* - The term "the Lord, the righteous judge" appears to refer to God, but the latter part of the verse makes it clear it is a reference to Christ, for it speaks of "his appearing".

*Colossians 2:9* - A very popular philosophy among the Greeks was known as Gnosticism. Briefly, it taught salvation by knowledge (hence its name) and was in some ways like modern day Scientology. It postulated a whole universe of Gods, among whom were Yahweh and Jesus, who *together* make up what was called the *pleroma*, which is the Greek word for fullness.

Clearly, Paul is saying that, far from being just a part of the *pleroma*, Christ actually *is* the fullness! He does not dwell in the fullness - the fullness dwells in him! All that can be called God is found in Jesus.

### 9.3.5 Functional Equivalence Between God and Christ

As we compare various passages, we see that the names "God" and "Christ" are used interchangeably in the New Testament.

1. Forgiveness comes from God (*Colossians 2:13*) or Christ (*Colossians 3:13*).
2. Revelation is from God (*Galatians 1:16*) or Christ (*Galatians 1:12*).
3. Churches are of God or Christ (*Romans 16:16*; *1 Thessalonians 2:14*).
4. The judgement seat is of God or Christ (*Romans 14:10-12* and *2 Corinthians 5:10*).
5. God purchased the church with His own blood (*Acts 20:28*).
6. In the book of Revelation the Lamb and the One on the throne are treated as one by the use of singular verbs, (*7:9-10*; *20:6*; *21:22*; *22:1-4*).

### 9.3.6 The Saving Significance of the Deity of Christ

1. **God** is revealed **in** Christ. cf. Col. 2:9; John 14:9.
2. The Incarnation reveals **God's** costly, sacrificial love. It is God who bears the cost of sin and makes reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19)
3. The Incarnation defines the nature of God, he is known in Christ in terms of a gracious personal relationship.
4. God and man are reunited (eternally) in the person of Christ. This is the assurance of our salvation and at the same time the revelation of our humanity.
5. God in Christ is the fit object of human worship. Christian life and worship is framed incarnationally.

## Lecture Topic 10: The Person of Christ and His Offices

### 10.1 The Essential Problem – The Nature of Hypostatic Union

The Bible clearly teaches the full humanity and deity of Jesus. How can two apparently contradictory natures combine in one person? God is infinite, eternal, omnipotent, etc., human nature is finite, temporal, limited etc

### 10.2 Inadequate Views of the Person of Christ

These were all responses within the early church to the above question. It needs to be noted that none of these positions sought to deny either the deity or humanity of Jesus.

#### Apollinarianism

- a) Jesus had a human body but did not have a human mind. This was replaced by the Logos.
- b) This view was condemned as a denial of the full humanity of Christ needed for human salvation.

#### Nestorianism

- a) Spoke as if there were two parallel persons in Christ, one human and the other divine.
- b) This is untrue to the biblical picture of Jesus. It nowhere witnesses to anything like an inner dialogue or even struggle between the divine and the human. Jesus never speaks of himself as “we”.

#### Monophysitism (Eutychianism)

- a) This teaches that Jesus had one (*monos*) nature (*physis*) only.
- b) This is the divine nature which has absorbed the human nature.
- c) This effectively denies the humanity of Jesus and our contact with God through him.

### 10.3 The Chalcedonian Definition (451 A.D.)

This was the ecumenical or catholic response to the christological disputes of the third and fourth century. Some of the relevant sections are quoted below:

of a reasonable soul and body (against Apollinarius), in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably, the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union (against Eutyches), but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and occurring in one Person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons (against Nestorius), but one and the same Son...

### 10.4 The Unipersonality of Christ

#### Expressed in Scripture

The persons of the Godhead may address one another (Ps 2:7; John 17:1ff), but Jesus never uses the plural in referring to himself.

#### 1. Both Natures are United in the One Person

Passages of Scripture which refer to both natures intend only one person (Rom 1:3 – 4, Gal 4:4 – 5; Phil 2:6 – 11). The divine nature is always spoken of in concrete relation to the human nature, the Son of God is the man Jesus (John 1:14; Rom 8:3; 9:5; 1 Tim 3:16 etc.).

2. The One Person is Spoken of in Terms True of Either of the Two natures

The attributes of one nature are predicated of the person, while that person is designated by a title derived from the other nature: human attributes and divine title (Acts 20:28; 1Cor 2:8; Col 1:13- 14); divine attributes and a human title (John 3:13;6:62; Rom 9:5).

**10.5. The Communication of Attributes**

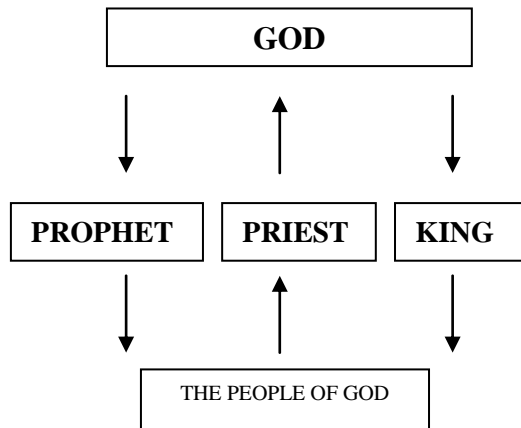
1. This involves a discussion of how the two natures of Christ are affected by the union in one Person.
2. The attributes (properties) of both natures can be attributed to the one Person. It must be said that Jesus Christ is almighty and limited, immortal and able to die etc. This however does not mean that the properties of the natures fuse. Jesus is not, for example, an omniscient man. The properties of the natures are properties of the Person but not of one another.
3. The Person of Jesus then may be said to be omniscient, eternal, tired, dying, resurrected etc.
4. The implications of this doctrine are enormous:
  1. The distance between God and humans no longer exists, it is overcome in the Person of Christ..
  2. Jesus must be worshipped as God.

“Low within a manger lies  
He who built the starry skies,  
He who throned in height sublime  
Reigns above the cherubim”  
(Luther, cited in McGrath, C.T. 1994: 293)
  3. What Jesus does, God does. This communication of actions makes him the perfect revelation of God.
  4. The divine-human Person suffers and dies as a person on the cross.
  5. This means that the penalty of sin is taken up in the Son into the very being of Father. This means that the atonement is an event within the life of God himself.

## 10.6. The Offices of Christ: Prophet, Priest and King

### 1. The Offices of Christ as Mediation

Three Offices of Mediation



### 2. Christ the Prophet

#### 1. Recognition as a prophet.

Jesus was called a prophet (Luke 7:16; John 4:19; 9:17), but not by his disciples. He seems to be identified with the Mosaic eschatological prophet in John 6:14. He referred to Himself as a prophet (indirectly) (Matthew 13:57; Luke 13:33).

#### 2. The scope of Jesus' prophetic work.

It can be said that Christ's prophetic work is eternal, having existed before His advent (John 1:9). It was Jesus who inspired the Old Testament prophets (1 Pet 1:11). This prophetic work continued during His earthly ministry, exists now through His Church (Acts 1:1) and by His Spirit (John 16:12-14, all N.T. revelation), and continues into eternity (John 16:25; 17:26).

#### 3. The key to Jesus' prophetic power is His dependence on His Father (see John 5:19; John 12:49,50; John 5:19,20). Because of this he is the anointed prophet and suffering servant of the Old Testament (Luke 4:18 – 21; cf. Isaiah 61:1ff; Acts

#### 4. The importance of Jesus' prophetic work.

1. Jesus is the consummation of all prophecy.
2. He proclaims himself in the gospel to be the one in whom the Father has revealed himself by putting all good things in Jesus. (The Father is known only in the Son.)
3. Without Christ as prophet offering himself to us in the gospel, the wonderful exchange in Christ would profit no one.

### 3. Christ the Priest

#### 1. The scope of Jesus' priestly work

The whole shape of Jesus' life is a self-offering to God. The baptism and temptations are the beginnings of a priestly action of self-offering to the Father on behalf of humanity. The Spirit which descends upon Jesus at his baptism is directed towards the cross (Heb 9:14).



## 2. The Order of Christ's Priesthood

The Levitical priesthood is a type of Christ. The other Old Testament priesthood which is compared to that of Christ is the priesthood of Melchizedek (see Hebrews 7:1ff).

## 3. Priesthood and Sacrifice

Sacrifice is of the essence of priesthood. This dominates the Old Testament action of priestly service. The letter to the Hebrews emphasises the higher order of the sacrifice of Jesus:

Ch. 1-4: Jesus greater than angels, Joshua, Moses, priests.

5-7: Jesus' priesthood is of Melchizedek i.e., greater than the Aaronic order.

8-10: Jesus' offering:

(a) actual cf. symbolic atonement (9:12).

(b) new covenant is real and eternal cf. symbolic and temporary.

(c) redemption is eternal - 'once for all' (10:10).

## 4. The intercession of Christ

Christ's work as High Priest continues in heaven. Whilst the priestly work as a sacrifice is complete his work as intercessor continues.

### 1. Jesus as Intercessor

Christ as our advocate pleads the believers' cause with the Father against Satan the accuser (Zech 3:1; Heb 7:25; 1John 2:1; Rev 12:10).

### 2. The Importance of Christ's Intercession:

The intercession of Christ at the right hand of the Father is itself an atoning act. through it the Father accepts the sacrifice of the Son for sinners.

### 3. Christ the Perfect Intercessor:

1. Perfect access to God - at God's right hand in the true tabernacle in heaven (Heb 9:24 - 25; Rom 8:34).

2. Perfect understanding of our needs:

(i) a human being (1 Tim 2:5).

(ii) tempted (Heb 4:15).

(iii) suffered (Heb 5:7 - 10).

(iv) sympathetic (Heb 4:15).

3. Perfect sufficiency:

(i) his life is the prayer, he is in complete unity with the Father (John 17:9,11,15,17,20,24). Does this exclude or include specific requests?

(ii) the Father always answers the Son in the affirmative (John 11:41-42 cf. Luke 11:22,31f).

See especially Hebrews 7:24-25.

#### 4. The Content of Christ's Intercession

1. Carries humanity into the presence of God (Heb 9:24). cf. the twelve tribes of Israel - the breastplate of the High Priest.
2. Makes any charges brought against the elect invalid (Roman 8:33-34).
3. Makes all the offerings of God's people in prayer, worship and service acceptable to God (1 Pet 2:5).
4. Asks for the sanctification, protection and preservation of the people of God (John 17:17,24; Heb 4:14,16; 10:21-22; 1Pet 2:5).

#### 4. Christ the King

The characteristics of the rule of Jesus as both God and human can be listed as follows:

##### 1. Eternal

As the subjects of the kingdom were chosen before time began (Ephesians 1:4), so Christ has been King over those subjects from eternity, and began to function as such from the fall. We receive glimpses of His kingship typified in the judges and then the kings of the Old Testament.

##### 2. Universal

All authority is His (Matthew 28:18) as He upholds all things by His word (Hebrews 1:3). His title of Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords is not rhetorical, but actual and permanent (Ephesians 1:19-23; Revelation 19:15,16). It is not bounded by space or time i.e., is co-extensive with the kingdom of God.

##### 3. Spiritual

Administered not by external or earthly forces but by the spiritual means of Word and Spirit. The same means by which he was sanctified and entered into his kingship.

It was not a worldly one (John 18:33-38), not one of might (Matthew 26:52-53), nor of popularity (John 6:14f). It was a humble one (Matthew 21:5).

##### 4. Gracious

All we experience of God, whether beyond or within ourselves, is initiated by the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit. Christ Himself has founded and now administers, defends and extends His church as the earthly expression of His kingdom (Ephesians 1:22f). We are freed by grace (Ephesians 2:8,9) in order to enter into grace (Hebrews 4:16).

##### 5. Glorious

The glory of Christ is being revealed (John 17:24) and will be both revealed to us and experienced by us at the end of time (2 Peter 1:11). This is the Christian's great reward (Philippians 3:13,14 cf. 3:8-10), the source and content is the cross.

6. Anti – demonic

Has a special focus on the defeat of the powers - Col 2:15; 2Cor 2:14; 1John 3:8; Eph 2:6; 6:11-12; Heb 2:14 ff; Rev 5:10. Cf. Jesus' exorcisms. This is achieved only through the work of the cross (John 12:31).

The victory of Jesus is in his refusal to overpower; in submission to the will of the Father, by suffering, he undermines the authority of the powers; 'might is not right.'

7. There is a special focus on Christ's role 'for the church' (Eph 1:22) as this is his body. Jesus reigns for us.

8. Christ extends his rule through the Church over the world.

Matt 28:18-20 'all authority is given to me, go therefore....'. The discipling of the nations is the extension of his universal rule **de facto**.

9. Now He reigns and will continue to do so until all is consummated

(1 Corinthians 15:24-28) and humanity's original kingship is restored.

## Lecture Topic 11: The Work of Christ

The topic of the work of Christ covers what he has done for our salvation. Even though it is usual to deal with the distinct aspects of the work in chronological order: death, resurrection, ascension, session, it needs to be remembered that these are all defining stages in the life-formation of the one person. As the person is being formed the work is being done, for at the most profound level the person and the work are one.

### 11.1 The States of Christ

#### 11.1.1 Meaning of the States

1. Two basic states:
  - (a) Humiliation - movement of Christ's work downwards.  
- earthly conception to death.
  - (b) Exaltation - movement of Christ's work upwards.  
- descent into hell to return.
2. This is the characteristic V shape we have already seen dominant in the christological hymns of the New Testament.

#### 11.1.2 The Unity of the States

1. It is the one person in both states (Acts 2:33-36), the humanity is most visible in the humiliation, the deity in the exaltation.
2. The two states form a necessary sequence in the redemptive history of Christ, humiliation is the ground of exaltation.  
e.g., Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 2:9; 4:15; 9:25ff; John 12:23-38; 13:1-16; 17:1-5.
3. The States are Progressive  
e.g., Jn 7:39 the Spirit can only come when Jesus is glorified.

### 11.2 The State of Humiliation

#### 11.2.1 Incarnation

1. The **kenosis** - surrender of the exercise of his divine attributes  
(Phil 2:5ff).
2. Assumption of a human nature weakened and subject to suffering and death  
(Rom 8:3; 2Cor 8:9).

#### 11.2.2 Suffering

1. Jesus' whole life involved suffering - sinless one in the midst of sin, holiness amidst evil, love before hatred, empathy.
2. Suffered in body and soul - tired, hungry, agony of Gethsemane etc.
3. Unique sufferings - unique sensitivity to moral pain and evil, grief and empathy etc., cf. Isa 53:6,10.
4. Sufferings in temptation - 'passive obedience' of Christ, i.e., allowed himself to be tempted, submits to will of Father in order that things might be done **to** him.
5. Death
  - the death of body and soul, i.e., person cf. Jn 14:6 'the life'.
  - loss of conscious union with the Father.

- dies with criminals (Isa. 53:9).
- worst form of death (1 Cor. 2:2; Phil 2:8).
- died under a curse (Gal 3:13). Cf. Rom 6:9.

## 6. Burial

- return to dust is a humiliation (Gen. 3:19).
- descent to the place of the dead (Acts 2:27, 31; 13:34,35).

## 7. The Descent into Hades

### 1. N.T. Texts:

Luke 23:43 - 'today...in paradise'.

Acts 2:25-27 (Ps. 16:10) 'you will not abandon my soul to hades', i.e., Jesus must be in paradise.

### 2. **Hades** does not mean eternal place of punishment, i.e., 'hell' of second death (**gehenna**).

**Can** mean 'place of dead' (neutral cf. **sheol**) or paradise.

### 3. The New Testament does not dwell on this period of the life of Christ. We may say that the experience of Jesus between death and resurrection is a saving event for us who will die in him. However it is not a focus in the Scripture as its hidden nature does not as yet manifest the victory of the cross.

## 11.3 The Death of Christ

"it pervaded subliminally His holy person. He was born for the cross. It was His genius, His destiny" (P T Forsyth, *The Work of Christ*, p108).

"We are speaking of that which is the centre, not of thought, but of actual life, conscience, history and destiny ... and the sole meaning of Christ Himself. **Christ is to us just what His cross is.** All that Christ was in heaven or on earth was put into what He did there ... You do not understand Christ until you understand His cross" ( P.T. Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Cross*, p44f).

Forsyth's estimation of the centrality of the cross seems to be eminently biblical (1 Corinthians 2:1ff; Galatians 6:14).

What was achieved by the cross?

### 11.3.1 Sin was Conquered

Sin, together with its penalty and its power, was fully overcome. All the moral pollution was placed upon Jesus (Isaiah 53:6). The penalty of sin, being the alienation from and the wrath of God, has been paid (Colossians 1:21,22) and its power nullified (1 Peter 2:24).

### 11.3.2 All Evil was Defeated

Jesus came to destroy the devil's work (1 John 3:8). It was on the cross that He accomplished that aim (Colossians 2:14,15). As Jesus predicted, the "prince of this world" came against Him (John 14:30; Luke 22:53) and was defeated (Hebrews 2:14). By bearing our sins and dealing with our guilt Christ rescued us from Satan's kingdom, breaking the power of evil (Galatians 1:4; Colossians 1:13,14).

### 11.3.3 The Condemnation of the Law was Broken

Humanity has consistently failed to do what God in His grace wants done, and thereby He has come under the curse of God's law (Galatians 3:10). In bearing that curse, indeed, becoming a curse, Christ redeemed us from it (Galatians 2:19,20). Hence we are no longer under the curse of the law, but have died to the law (Romans 7:4) and are alive to God's grace (Romans 6:14).

### 11.3.4 Death Itself was Defeated

1 Corinthians 15:55,56 makes clear that death's sting is sin, and that the power of sin is bound up in the law (that is, its condemnation). In breaking the condemnation of the law (Colossians 2:13,14) He also dealt with our sin (Romans 6:10) and paid out its wages (Romans 6:23a). Thus death's sting, sin, was borne to extinction, as sin was fully judged in His flesh (Romans 8:3). In some way death, which could not touch Jesus in His sinlessness, had dominion over Him when He became sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), and Jesus bore that dominion to its extinction, so that the "it" being finished, included the defeat over death.

As Bingham says, "Sin being defeated, death is vanquished. Jesus did not have to fight a second battle in the grave. To defeat sin was to defeat death" (*The Person and Work of Christ*, p98). But it is the victory over death on the cross that makes the resurrection possible.

## Lecture Topic 12: The Resurrection and the Ascension

Much of the early apostolic preaching was devoted to the resurrection: Acts 2:24,32; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30,32; 10:40,41; 13:30-33; 17:31. This shows that it is of essential saving significance.

### 12.1 The Resurrection

‘Only he whose existence itself is taken up by the witness and act of the Spirit into the death and the resurrection of the Lord is placed in the situation of analogy from which the resurrection can be a possible object of knowledge.’ (Thielicke)

#### 12.1.1 The Evidence for the Resurrection of Christ

##### 1. *Early Witness*

The NT gives a very early witness to the resurrection. Paul gives a fairly complete list of resurrection appearances in 1 Corinthians 15 (written about AD55). This list had already been given to the Corinthians verbally (1 Corinthians 15:3), probably about AD50. Some of this information (e.g. about James - v7), Paul probably got when he visited Peter and James (about AD40). So this evidence comes from a time less than ten years after the resurrection happened. Moreover, Paul says that most of his witnesses were still living (v6).

Mark is also an early witness, gaining his knowledge from Peter (1 Peter 5:13). Moreover, it is likely that Mark was the young man in the garden at Jesus’ arrest (Mark 14:51), and the young man at the tomb on the resurrection morning (Mark 16:5). He was also Barnabas’ nephew. His gospel was probably the first of the gospels to be written - it thus offers another early testimonial.

##### 2. *The Empty Tomb*

The apostolic preaching in the book of Acts assumes that the tomb was empty; it does not try to prove it. Obviously, there was no doubt about this fact. The body was gone. If there was a body, then there were plenty who would gladly have produced it. Clearly, nobody could. What the apostles did was proclaim the reason for its disappearance!

##### 3. *The Testimony of Believers*

For seven weeks, Easter Sunday to Pentecost, no-one said anything about the risen Christ: suddenly, they burst forth with the message. What happened during the seven weeks? Obviously, something which transformed their whole lives. And they would die, as thousands did in the years that followed, rather than deny it.

#### 12.1.2 Common arguments against the Resurrection of Christ

##### 1. Jesus “swooned”

Jesus was not really dead at all, but only unconscious. In the coolness of the tomb He revived and later appeared to the disciples.

Comment:

Effectively denies the reality of the crucifixion. Cannot explain the impact of the risen Christ on the disciples.

##### 2. Hallucination

Jesus did not really appear to the disciples. What they experienced was in the form of a hallucination (cf. appearances of the Blessed Virgin today). Only disciples “saw” Jesus. Why did no unbelievers see Him?

Comment:

Hallucinations normally occur when one is expecting them to occur. There is no evidence that the disciples were expecting a resurrection: in fact, all the evidence suggests that they were not (e.g. Luke 24:25 etc.).

Hallucinations are normally individual. Two people do not usually see the same thing unless they are together and both undergoing similar psychological pressures etc. Yet different people in isolated places, at quite different times all saw the same risen Christ.

The fact that only followers of Christ saw Him is not significant, Jesus chose to reveal himself only to those whom he had chosen.

Finally such hallucinations could be easily scotched by producing the body from the tomb. No one could.

### 3. The Wrong Tomb

The women, being strangers to Jerusalem, went to the wrong tomb, where a young man told them, "He is not here (in this tomb) ... Behold (the tomb) where they laid Him" (Mark 16:6). The women misunderstood and thought that Christ was risen.

Comment:

The story assumes that Jesus' body was still in the "right" tomb. In which case, Christ's enemies could have immediately exploded the whole theory by the simple expedient of producing the body.

### 4. Fabrication

The resurrection story was deliberately fabricated by the Disciples.

Comment:

There were a large number of witnesses to the resurrection: probably too large a number for a fabrication to be effectively put forward.

Moreover, these witnesses were basically of upright character, who themselves taught the need for morality, integrity and honesty: they were not the type of people to promulgate a fraud.

Thirdly, these men were prepared to die rather than deny this fabrication: a most unlikely turn of events.

Fourthly, it is impossible that such disorganised and frightened men as the apostles could organise such a scheme overnight - as they would have had to do.

Fifthly, what did they do with the body?

### 5. A Spirit

Jesus did not rise bodily; it was only a spirit that the disciples saw.

Comment:

Once again, we ask, where was the body?

Furthermore, all the gospel evidence is that the risen Christ was in some way physical. He ate and drank, he spoke, he felt physical. And see some of the above arguments.



### 12.1.3 The resurrection is a Trinitarian Event

The Author of their resurrection is said to be:

1. God: Acts 2:24; 32; 3:26; 5:30; 1 Cor 6:14; Eph 1:20.
2. Father: Rom 6:4; Gal 1:1; 1 Pet 1:13.
3. Son: John 2:19-21; 10:18; 11:25.
4. Spirit: Rom 1:4; 8:11; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18.

### 12.1.4 The Value of the Resurrection of Christ

1. It Declared Jesus to be the Son of God (Romans 1:4)

Though other prophets had worked miracles, and others had been raised from death (and subsequently died), Jesus was raised by the direct work of His Spirit, in divine power (Ephesians 1:15ff).

2. It Declared Jesus' Victory over Death (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Acts 2:24-32).

Unequivocally, Jesus demonstrated that death could never hold men captive; its power was broken (Hebrews 2:15; John 14:19). Thus He guaranteed everlasting life (John 11:25f; 1 Corinthians 15:20 - the "first fruits" guarantee a harvest to come).

3. It Declared Jesus' Victory over the State of Death (Acts 2:27-31).

Christ conquered Hades (or Sheol, the place of the dead, the unseen world) by breaking out of it (Acts 2:31) and by claiming its keys (Revelation 1:18), thus ensuring no believer would ever again be held by it.

4. It Declared Jesus' Victory over Satan (Ephesians 1:15-23)

The victory won at Calvary (Colossians 2:15) was made public at the resurrection (Luke 24:26; 44-47) Satan's defeat was made known in the authority given to Jesus (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20,21; 1 Peter 3:21,22). Eph 1:10; Col 1:20 head of the powers.

5. It Declared Jesus' Victory over Sin (Romans 4:25)

Our justification is contained in the resurrection – vindication of Christ.

6. It Declared the Certainty of the Day of Judgement (Acts 17:31)

By Christ's resurrection, God has established that He will judge the world.

### 12.1.5 The Resurrection as the Transformation of Humanity in Christ

1. At the resurrection, the adoption (Psalm 2:7; Acts 13:33; Rom 1:4), justification (1 Tim 3:16), sanctification (Romans 6:9 – 11) and glorification (1 Cor 15:42ff; 2 Cor 3:17f; 4:4-6) **of Jesus** takes place.
2. The resurrection of Christ is the point of transition for creation and humanity from the old age to the new creation (Rom 6:4; 2 Cor 5:17). In Jesus, the end of the world has begun.
3. What is true of Christ becomes true in us from the time of our union with the glorified Lord.
4. What is already true of Jesus in terms of eternal transformation results in (cf. Matt 19:28) our regeneration (Titus 3:5).

## 12.2 The Ascension

This refers to the final departure of Jesus from earth to heaven (Luke 24:50 –53; Acts 1:6 – 11)

### 12.2.1 The Exaltation of Christ

#### 1. He is exalted in Title

God has given Him a name which is above every name (Ephesians 1:20-21; Philippians 2:9).

#### 2. He is exalted in Office

God has made Him Leader and Saviour (Acts 5:31). He is thus the Leader and Head of the Church, as well as its Saviour (Ephesians 5:23-25).

#### 3. He is exalted in Authority

He is the head of all rule and authority (Colossians 2:10), and He is Lord both of the dead and the living (Romans 14:9). In Ephesians 1:19-23 Christ is said to be far above all rule, authority, power, dominion and every name that is named. So too Eph 4:8-; 1 Pet 3:22 .

#### 4. He is exalted in Position

Christ is now seated at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20; Mark 16:19). This is an expression which signifies regality (1 Kings 2:19). It tells us that Christ is honoured by God. Moreover, it suggests that He shares the throne and authority of God.

#### 5. He is exalted as Judge

Through the ascension, Christ is exalted to be the judge of mankind (Acts 10:42; 2 Corinthians 5:9,10).

### 12.2.2 The Work of the Ascended Christ

#### 1. Christ is our Fore-runner

Christ has entered the heavens on our behalf as a fore-runner, i.e. as a scout before an army, or an advance agent for a king etc. (Hebrews 6:19,20). Thus, He has prepared the way for us to follow. See also Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 12:2; Luke 24:51.

#### 2. Christ gives gifts to Men and Women

The ministries of apostle, evangelist, etc. were given after Christ ascended (Eph 4:8ff).

#### 3. Christ gives the Holy Spirit

Jesus promised that He would give the Spirit after He ascended (John 16:7; Acts 1:4,5). This promise was initially fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4; 2:33).

#### 4. Christ intercedes for us

This thought is closely connected with the Priestly office of Christ. It is as High Priest that He becomes our intercessor (Hebrews 7:24,25).

### 13. THE ATONEMENT

The Old English word, “at-one-ment,” means a making at one, and points to a process of bringing together those who are estranged.

#### 13.1 A Foundational Issue: Objective or Subjective Atonement?

##### 1. The Notion of an Objective Atonement.

Atonement makes its primary impression on the person wronged, this is God. That Christ bears the suffering which is our due is the objective cause of atonement. This makes possible not a change in God’s disposition, which is always loving, but in his favour (Rom 3:20; 1 John 2:2 etc)..

##### 2. Subjective Atonement

Subjective views of atonement focus on the impact of the sinner. God’s relationship with the sinner does not need to be affected in any way; it is precisely this that the atonement reveals (Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:19). The heart of the sinner is melted under the revelation of the suffering love of God.

##### 3. Criticism of Subjective Views of Atonement.

a) Make humans central to the relationship with God.

b) Under estimate the divine holiness and the offence of sin.

c) Lead to an emphasis on self - effort. Atonement is a process on our wills.

##### 4. The Implications of an Objective Atonement

Since atonement has objectively been made by God, sinners need to be induced to accept this reconciliation (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:19-20). This is the emphasis on the apostolic preaching. Forgiveness, the non infliction of suffering on the sinner, is an effect, subjectively, upon the sinner, which puts their conscience at rest

#### 13.2. Substitutionary Theory of the Atonement

##### a) Details

This is the atonement theory of the Reformers and of mainline Protestantism (including Pentecostals) ever since.

1. This doctrine of the atonement stresses its objectivity. Satisfaction influences the person wronged, not the offender. Atonement was intended to appease the wrath of God and to reconcile him to the sinner

2. The doctrine of substitution seems to be taught in the following places:

(a) Old Testament sacrifices were vicarious (Lev 1:4; 16: 20 –22).

(b) Various passages speak of our sins being ‘laid upon’ Christ or of his ‘bearing’ sin or iniquity (Isa 53:6,12; John 1:29; 2 Cor 5:21; Gal 3:13; Heb 9:28; 1 Pet 2:24). This can only mean bearing of guilt as liability to punishment.

(c) The prepositions used to designate the precise relationship of Christ’s work for us express the notion of substitution:

**anti:** ‘in place of’, ‘instead of’, Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45.

**hyper:** ‘instead of’ Jn 11:50; 2Cor 5:15; Gal 3:13.

13 The justice of God the Father is satisfied because Jesus endures the death of a guilty sinner in our place. He bears the penalty (penal) of the broken law of God.

## b) Comments

### 1. Tends to legalism and objectivism.

- a) God's justice and love are set in opposition to each other: especially when the former is made dominant in terms of Christ being punished for our sin.
- b) Salvation is a sort of 'legal fiction', where God treats us 'as if' we are righteous because of Christ's death. The Bible however clearly says God justifies the **ungodly** (Rom 4:5).
- c) A primary use of legal/forensic terms rather than relational terms (Father and S/son) is too impersonal.

### 2. Can misrepresents the wrath of God.

It can be represented as an innocent Christ pacifying an angry God. Yet everywhere in the New Testament it is God who puts forward Christ (who comes willingly), in love, e.g. John 3:16; Rom 3:25; 5:8. The Judge and the 'judged' are one as Father and Son.

### 3. Can separate the person and work of Christ.

The loss of connection between the incarnation of God in Christ and his death. Atonement exists in the personal self – offering of God to God in Christ. It is not external to the life of Jesus.

### 4. Tends to an externalised view of atonement.

The real problem with the penal substitutionary atonement theory is that it is often put forward as if it all happened outside of us.

Christ represents me to the Father and the Father to me. He is my relation to the Father. Inclusive views of atonement are more able to explain the remaking the sinner in the image of God.

## 13.3 THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

Did Christ die for the whole world, or only for those chosen by God to be brought into His kingdom. The two positions are referred to as universal and particular atonement, respectively.

### 13.3.1 Universal Atonement

#### a) The Scriptural Position

Those who hold to this position point to the following Scriptures for support:

John 1:29 "... who takes away the sin of the world."

John 3:16,17 "God so loved the world ... that the world might be saved ...".

Romans 5:18 "... life for all men."

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "One has died for all ... He died for all ...".

Hebrews 2:9 "... He might taste death for every one."

1 Timothy 2:6 "... gave Himself as a ransom for all."

Isaiah 53:6 "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

b) Comments

1. The decree of election out of humanity is logically prior to God's decision to save by Christ. Jesus must die for the elect.
2. The intercessory and sacrificial work of Christ is a unity, and Jesus prays only for the elect (John 17:2,6,9,10).
3. God's designs are perfectly effective, this is denied by a universal atonement. Purchase of salvation and bestowal of salvation are one. The atonement is sufficient for all, but not efficient for all.
4. References to the 'world' or 'all' as the object of the atonement are general, imply all without distinction, not all without exception.

13.3.2 Particular or Limited Atonement

a) The Scriptural Position.

The passages which point to a limited atonement:

Matthew 1:21 "... for He will save His people from their sins".

John 10:11 "The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (see v26,27 for a description of His sheep).

Acts 20:28 "... the church of the Lord which He obtained with His own blood".

Ephesians 5:25 "... Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her".

Romans 8:32 "... gave Him up for us all" (as defined in v22-29,33).

John 17:9 "I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me ...".

Matthew 20:28 "the Son of man (came) ... to give His life as a ransom for many".

b) Comments

1. Scriptures in for a limited atonement do not exclude a universal atonement, but the universal references include the particular.
2. Universal atonement is simpler, no special pleading of scripture
3. Atonement is universal in scope, particular in efficacy.

## LECTURE TOPIC 14: GRACE and ELECTION

### 14.1 Introduction

The central issue in the theology of salvation is whether it is essentially the application of Christ's work or the appropriation of Christ's work. This debate has taken on various forms: Augustine versus Pelagius, the Reformers versus Roman Catholicism, Calvinists versus Arminians etc.

The approach taken here attempts to put the focus on the theological and not on the anthropological.

(God)	(humanity)
Grace	effort
Faith	works
Objective	subjective

### 14.2 Grace

#### 1. What is grace?

Not something 'from' God

God's help to undeserving (∴ not just mercy)

(a) attitude - undeserved favour (Luke 1:28-30, 1 Cor 1:3)

- opposite of wrath

(b) action to save (Tit 2:11)

(c) gift -free (Rom 4:16)

(d) presence - God gives God (John 1:14, 2 Cor 8:9; 13:14)

#### 2. Types of Grace

1. Common grace

a. to all

b. common good (providence)

(i) physical Gen 8:22; Mt 5:45

(ii) moral Rom 2

(iii) government Rom 13:1-7

(iv) restraint Gen 6:6; 2 Peter 3:9

#### 2. Special grace

a. to people of God

b. salvation

## 2. The Scope of Grace

Scripture demonstrates that the whole plan of salvation is embraced and effected by grace.

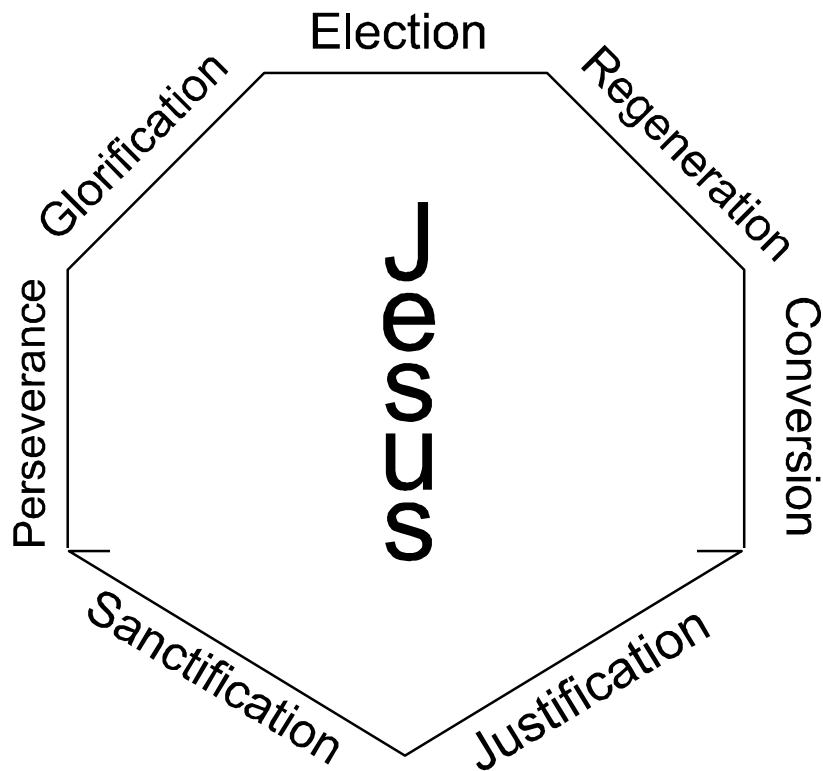
- (i) Predestination - Eph 1:4-5; 2Tim 1:9 'this grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time'  
Titus 1:2 'the hope of eternal life... promised before the ages began'
- (ii) Effectual call - Jn 10:16; Rom 8:29-30 'those whom he called he also justified...'; Gal 1:15-16; Rev 17:14.
- (iii) Faith - Eph 2:8-9; Phil 1:29; Acts 18:27 'by grace had believed'
- (iv) Repentance - Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2Tim 2:25
- (v) Justification - Rom 3:24; 5:12-17; Tit 3:7
- (vi) Adoption - Rom 8:15; Jn 1:12-13
- (vii) Sanctification - Tit 2:11-12; Rom 6:13-14
- (viii) Glorification - 1Pet 1:13; Rom 8:30

## 3. The Content of Grace: Jesus Christ

Grace gives Christ, it is the Holy Spirit repeating in us what he did in/for Jesus, putting Christ's life in us

Salvation centres on Jesus because he is its content.

God imparts to us what is already true of his Son. cf. Rom 8:28 ff.



#### 4. The Medium of Grace: Union with Christ

##### 1 N.T. Material

(a) The Johannine writings e.g. Jn 15:4-5, 14:20, 17:21,23,26; 1 Jn 2:24, 3:6; 5:20 (In 1 John it is more common to find the indwelling to refer to God).

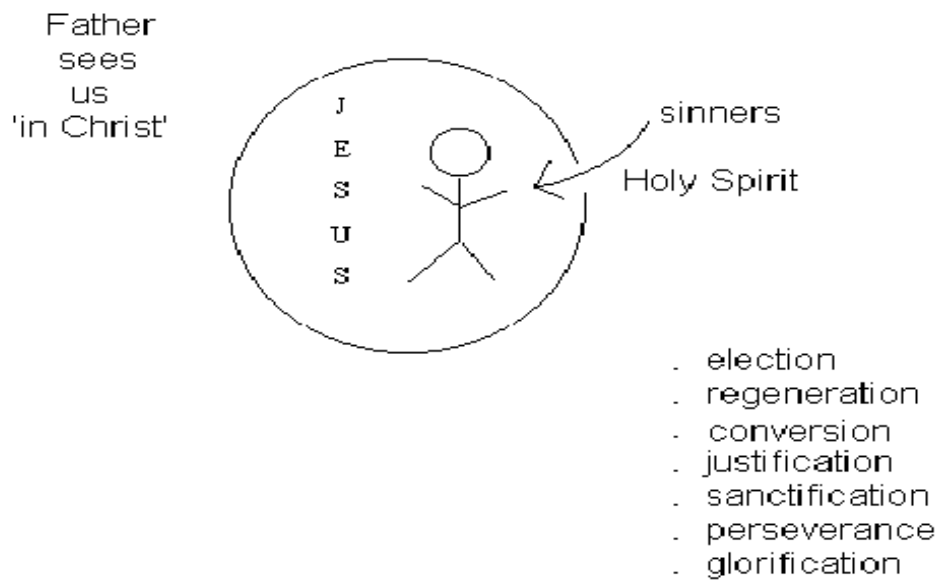
(b) Paul:

election 'in Christ'	Eph 1:4,11	'crucified with Christ'	Gal 2:20
creation 'in Christ'	Eph 2:10	'died with Christ'	Col 2:20
grace 'in Christ'	1Cor 1:4	'buried with him'	Rom 6:4; Col 2:12
redemption 'in him'	Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7		
justified 'in Christ'	Gal 2:17		
sonship 'in Christ'	Eph 1:5		
wisdom 'in Christ'	1Cor 1:30	'live with him'	Rom 6:8; Col 2:13
(righteousness, holiness, redemption)			
death 'in Christ'	1Thess 4:16	'raised with him'	Col2:12;3:1
resurrection 'in Christ'	1Cor 15:22	'seated with him'	Eph 2:6
eternal life 'in Christ'	Rom 6:23		



## 5. We are in Christ

God has always seen us in relation to Christ.



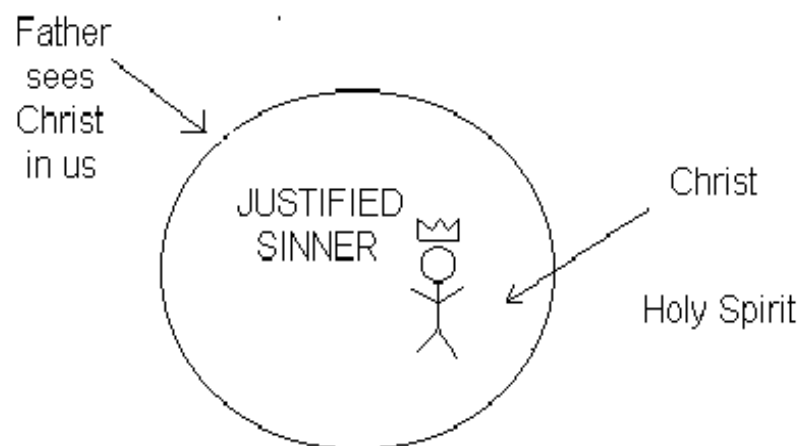
(See Section 3. The Content of Grace).

## 6. Christ is in us

From our regeneration Christ lives in us  
(John 15:5; Rom 8:10; 2 Cor 13:5; Gal 2:20; Col 1:27)

(Jn

N.B. ∴ Jesus works in our lives 'inside out' (Gal 2:20; Rom 15:18; Phil 4:13)



## 14.3 Election and Predestination

### 1. Terms

Election: ‘The act of choice whereby God picks an individual or group out of a larger company for the purpose or destiny of his own appointment.’ (N.B.D.: 1962, p. 357)

Predestination: ‘Appointing a situation for a person, or a person for a situation in advance.’ (N.B.D.: 1962, p. 1024)

Election is an act of predestination. Predestination (from our perspective) sets the eternal background to election.

Foreknowledge: Rom 8:29; 11:2; 1 Pet 1:2; (c.f. Acts 26:5).

This word derives from *ginosko* which means to know; to have knowledge of; to understand; to know sexually; to recognise. It can have suggestions of “come to know” i.e. relationship. It is the word that would be used to describe knowing personally rather than knowing about (*oida* = know, understand; perceive; be sure of- e.g. Romans 8:28a).

So *proginosko* means not just that God knows about us beforehand, but that He actually knows us personally (Jeremiah 1:5; Amos 3:2).

### 2. Foundational Principles.

#### 1. Human sinfulness.

Total depravity and inability point to the need for unconditional election.

#### 2. The eternity of God.

God is outside of time (Ex 3:14; Isa 48:3ff; Rev 1:8; 22:13) and therefore not reactive to it.

#### 3. The sovereignty of God.

This means that a) God is sovereign in relation to his own decisions.

b) God’s sovereignty extends to the human will: Ps 119:36; 114:4; 1 Sam 16:14; 1 Kings 22:21-23; Prov 16:1,4,9.

#### 4. The mercy of God.

Election is grounded in mercy to the undeserving:

Pss. 103:8-12; 136:1 ff; 145:8; Luke 1:72,78; Rom 9:15-16; 22-23; Eph 1:5.

Love is the principal cause of election:

Deut 7:7-8; 10: 14-15; Eph 1:6.

∴ election is not fatalistic / deterministic.

3. The Election of Israel.

1. Israel is the chosen of God.

Ex 19:5-6; Deut 7:6; Isa 42:1; 43:1; 44:1-2; 45:4; 48:1; 49:5.

2. Election is unconditional.

Gen 12 - no prior conditions to the election of Abraham

The election of Israel is specifically said not to be dependent upon the state of the people itself (Deut 7:6ff.), it is grounded entirely in God's free love.

4. The election of Jesus.

1. Election of the Messiah is prophesied.

Isa 42:1; 53:1-12.

2. Jesus is elected - as - Messiah.

Matt 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; cf. Eph 1:4-6; Col 1:13.

3. Jesus is predestined.

i) from eternity - (Eph 3:11; 1 Pet 1:20)

ii) for death - (Matt 26:54; Acts 2:23)

iii) for resurrection - (Acts 2:31; 13:32-33)

iv) for the sake of the Church - (Jn 12:27-32; 1 Pet 1:20)

v) for the glory of God - (Rom 11:33-36; Eph 1:5-6; Phil 2:1-11)

4. The love of the Father is the motive of election.

What is given in election is a share in the relationship between the Father and his beloved Son, Christ - the chosen Son of God.

The context is the relationship of Father to children in the realm of love, not of cause and effect.

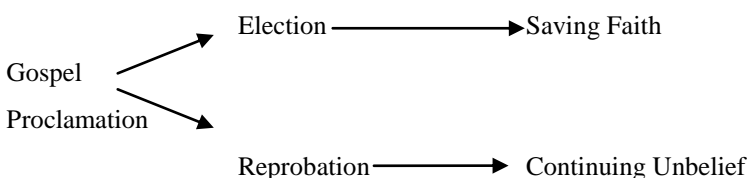
5. Christ is the content of election.

Jesus is not merely the agent or instrument of election (Eph 1:5) but also the electing God and the content of election.

6. Election is of a people.

'In Christ' the Church, saints, people of God are chosen as a collective body or unity.

1. The preaching of the gospel is the means of election and reprobation.



(John 3:19-21; Luke 2:30-35; Romans 9:33; 2 Cor 1:19; 2:15-16; 1 Peter)

This means that the preaching of the Gospel is the publication of election. To reject Jesus is to reject election in Him (cf. Luke 23:35)

## 5. Predestination.

There is a plan for our lives, the borders which are set by the Lord, and beyond which it is impossible to go.

This plan was set down “before the foundation of the world” (Eph 1:4-5). His grace was given to us “before the ages began” (NRSV), “before the beginning of time” (NIV) (2 Timothy 1:9). Thus, both guidance and security are provided for us.

## 6. In Christ.

All of this is only possible “in Christ” (Eph 1:4, 11-12 - “chose us ‘in Him’... ‘in Him’... we have been destined...”)

## 15 SALVATION

### 15.1 The Nature of Salvation

#### 1. The Tenses of Salvation.

	<b>PAST</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>FUTURE</b>
<b>1. Problem</b>	Guilt and the Penalty	Profanity and Corruption	Depravity	Mortality
<b>2. Cure</b>	A change in our legal standing before God, ie. acquittal (“I have been saved from past sin”).	A change in condition and hence our relationship with God, ie. holiness (“I am being saved from the power of sin”).	A change in our moral and spiritual nature, ie. re-birth (“I am being saved from the power of sin”).	A change in our physical bodies, ie. immortality. (“I shall be saved from the presence of sin”).
<b>3. Scripture references</b>	Acts 13:38-39 Rom 1:16-17 Rom 5:1; 8:1	1 Cor 1:30; 1 Cor 6:11 1 Thess 5:23 1 Pet 1:2	John 1:12; John 3:3; John 5 Eph 2:4-5 1 Pet 1:23	1 Cor 15:51; Rom 8:23 2 Cor 4:1 2 Cor 5:1-5 Phil 3:21; 1 Thess 5:9-10 1 Peter 1:5
<b>4. Theological Terms</b>	Justification	Sanctification	Regeneration	Glorification

#### 2. Salvation the central theme of the N.T.

Matt 1:21 - Jesus

Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18 - gospel etc.

#### 3. Helpless and hopeless without salvation.

Under wrath: Rom 5:9

Lost: Luke 19:10

Hopeless: Eph 2:12

Perishing: 1 Cor 1:18 etc.

#### 4. Jesus is the Only Saviour.

Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31; 13:23; 1 Tim 4:10; Titus 2:10..

O.T. title to YAHWEH - Ps 3:8; 62:2; 118:14

- Is 12:2; 43:3 etc.

Jesus is the Saviour of the World, John 1:29.

Only Saviour, Acts 4:12.

Only way to Father, John 14:6; 1 Tim 2:5.

5. Salvation is received by faith.

Acts 16:31; Rom 1:16-17; 10:9-10; Eph 2:8-9

No merit.

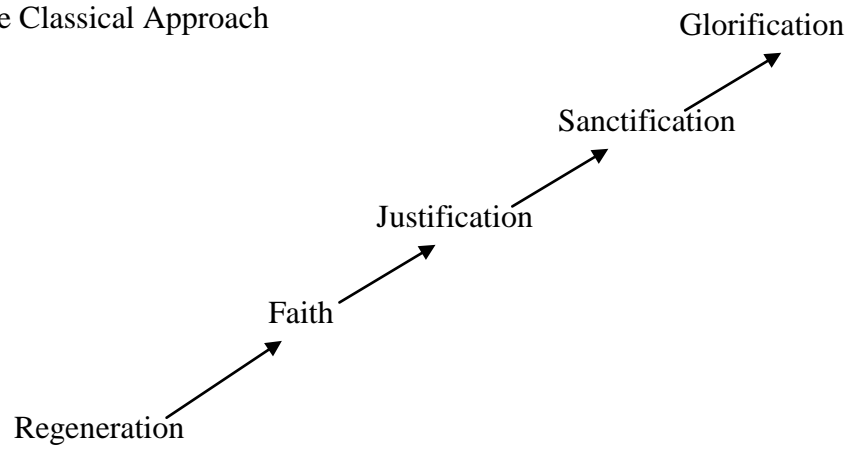
6. Salvation is corporate and individual.

God has a people, Matt 1:21; Luke 1:69,71,77.

Individual must believe, Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9, 13; 2 Tim 3:15.

15.2 The Order of Salvation?

1. The Classical Approach

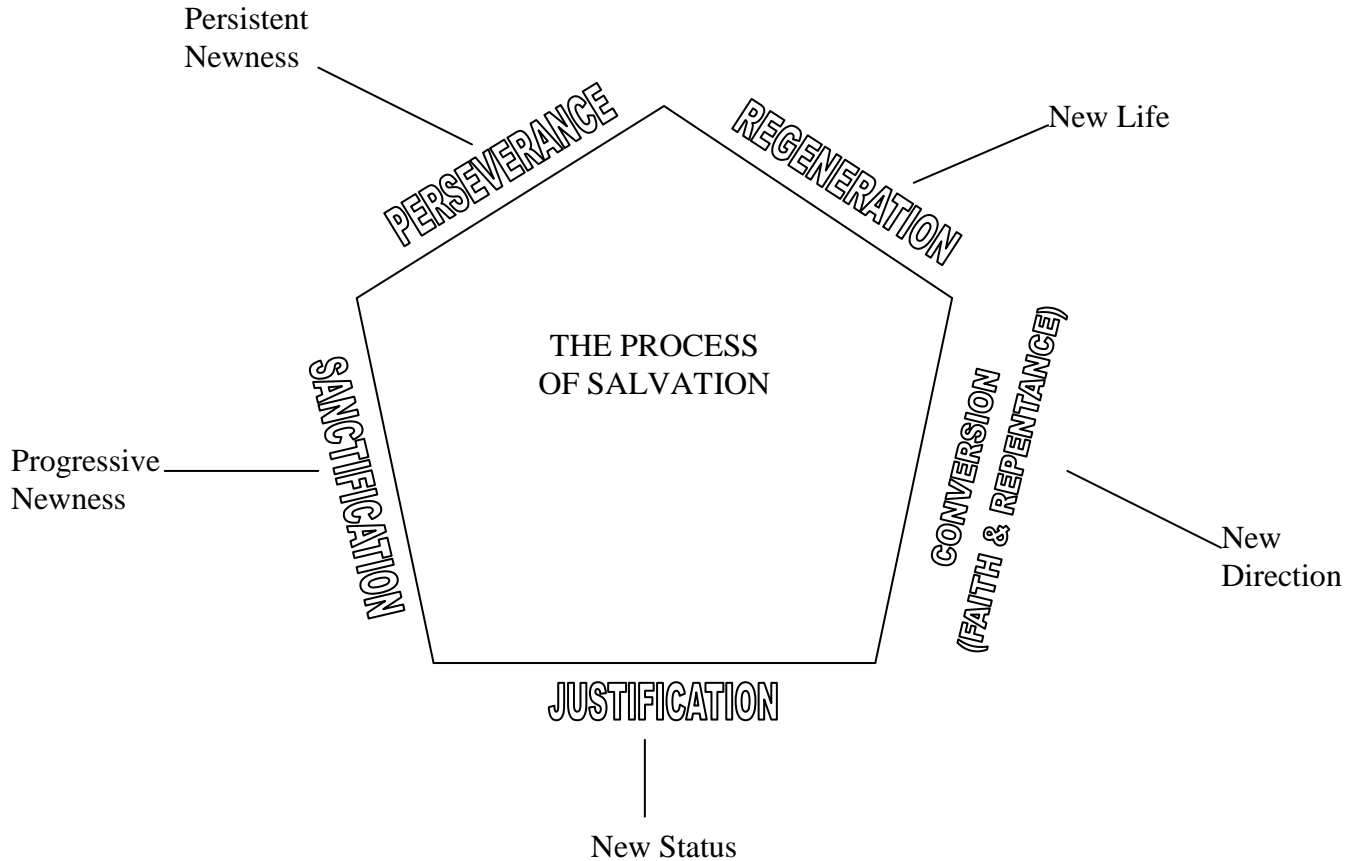


But no single linear order is found in the New Testament e.g. Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 6:11.

## 2. The Unity of Salvation

The process of salvation ought to be understood as a unitary experience involving various aspects which begin and continue simultaneously:

(A.A. Hoekema 1989: 16, Saved by Grace)



**N.B.** The integrity of the process of salvation is that its content is Christ.

### 15.3 Calling

#### 1. The General Call of God.

1. God calls all people to salvation.
2. This is an external call  
(Isa 45:22; Matt 11:28)
3. Not all people are chosen  
(Matt 22:14)

#### 2. The Effectual Call of God.

1. God issues an effective call.
2. It is particular.  
(Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-51; Luke 19:1-10; Acts 9:1-19; 1 Cor 1:23)

3. It is by sovereign power to salvation.  
(Acts 13:48; Rom 8:30; 1 Cor 1:9; 22-24; Eph 1:18; 1 Tim 6:12)
4. It is through the Gospel.  
(Acts 13:48; 2 Thess 2:10,12,14)
5. It is in Christ.  
(Phil 3:14; Heb 3:1; 9:15)
6. It involves the illuminating work of the Spirit.  
(Matt 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-51; Luke 19:1-10; Acts 9:1-10; 1 Cor 1:24)
7. It is to share God's glory.  
(1 Thess 2:12; 2 Thess 2:14; 1 Pet 5:10)
8. It is to sonship.  
(1 John 3:1)
9. It is to holiness.  
(Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Thess 4:7; 2 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 1:9; 1 Pet 2:9)
10. It is to suffering.  
(James 2:6-7; 1 Pet 2:21)
11. It is permanent.  
(Rom 11:29)

#### 15.4 Conversion

##### 15.4.1 The Meaning of "Conversion".

Latin conversio = a change.

Greek episitropho = to turn around, change direction.

i.e. from sin to God.

Conversion involves a turning of life.

Titus 2:11; 1 Tim 4:10; 1 Pet 1:9; 1 John 4:14

##### 15.4.2 Components of Conversion

###### 1. Repentance - (Mark 1:15; Acts 26:20)

###### 1. The meaning of "Repentance"

(Greek) Metanoia = 'change of mind' (from sin to God).

###### 2. Elements of repentance.

###### 1. Sorrow / contrition for sin

Joel 2:12-13; Acts 8:22; 2 Cor 7:10.

Evangelical or legal repentance?

###### 2. Confession of sin.

Luke 19:9; Ps 51:1ff



### 3. Restitution

Luke 19:1-9; Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20.

### 2. Faith

(Mark 1:15; Acts 11:21)

Trust in God's acceptance expressed in Christ.

A response to the gospel revelation.

#### 15.4.3 Salvation and Grace

a. God calls us to repentance:

Acts 3:19 etc.

b. Gifts us with repentance:

Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Tim 2:25.

He saves us: Isa 6:8-10; Matt 13:15; Mk 4:12; John 12:40; Acts 28:27.

No room for boasting: (1 Cor 1:28-3).

a. God calls us to faith in Christ

John 3:16, 36; Acts 16:31

This faith finds its source in Christ's faithfulness.

(Heb 12:2; Gal 2:20)

## LECTURE TOPIC 16: REGENERATION.

An evangelical focus. Why?

### 1. WHAT IS REGENERATION?

#### 1.1 Terms.

Greek: palingenesia Matt 19:28; Tit 3:5;  
Again beginning, birth.

Anagennao 1 Peter 1:3; 23.

Up, again to beget, generate.

Ginomai = become, born, happen etc. frequent with anōthen = from above, again, anew. John 3:3.

apokueo = bring forth, produce. James 1:15,18.

God's powerful work in us cf. for us - justification.

#### 1.2 Definition.

'Regeneration is that act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy and the first holy exercise of this new disposition is secured'. (Berkhof, S.T., p.469)

### 2. NECESSITY.

Sinful nature (Eph 2:3; Rom 5:12; Jer 17:9; Js 1:12-15).

No regeneration, impossible to see / enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3,4; 6:53; 1 Cor 15:50).

### 3. THE MEANS OF REGENERATION.

The Holy Spirit (John 3:8; Titus 3:5)

Totally God's work, unlike conversion, the person is entirely passive.

E.g. Ezek 36:26-27. 'I will.....'

Regeneration 'of the Spirit' John 3:5,8

Not by human will but of God, John 1:13.

an/thkn: from above = divine origin.  
flesh = human origin.

Like miraculous birth of Jesus, 'overshadowing' of Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

N.B. Trinitarian action.

Spirit - John 3:8.

God - Eph 2:5 Father Js 1:17-18.

God, through Jesus' resurrection - 1 Pet 1:3.

#### **4. THE NATURE OF REGENERATION.**

##### 4.1 Birth.

Beginning of conscious developing spiritual life, cf. natural birth.

Already experienced (John 1:13; 1 John 5:1; 1 Pet 1:3,23).

'New born babes' (1 Pet 2:2 cf. Heb 5:12-13.)

##### 4.2 The human spirit.

(a) regeneration  $\square$  gift of the Holy Spirit. E.g. Ps 51:11; John 14:17 'with' 'in' John 20:22 'receive the Holy Spirit'.

(b) Not a simplistic distinction between a tripartite and dipartite anthropology  
(Luke 1:46-47).

(c) person is given new life, (2 Cor 5:17)

body awaits regeneration, (Phil 3:21 etc)

mind is being renewed, (Rom 12:2; Col 3:1 ff)

spirit is alive, (Rom 8:10?) united to the Lord (1 Cor 6:17)

Spirit witnesses to / with our spirit, (Rom 8:15-17; Gal 4:6-7)

#### **5. THE RESULTS OF REGENERATION.**

##### 5.1 Illuminated Mind

The Kingdom of God, spiritual things, can now be seen (John 3:3). Spiritual insight is the result of the anointing of the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27). God is now known, (Jer 31:33).

##### 5.2 Liberated Will

This makes possible turning to God in faith and repentance.

Cf. John 8:32, 36; Rom 6:18ff.

##### 5.3 Cleansing from Sin.

To be 'born of water' (John 3:5) is to be cleansed from evil desire (Ezek 36:25-27; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5)

##### 5.4 A New Heart

This is the new covenant promise (Ezek 36:26 cf. Jer 31:33)

The heart is circumcised by the Spirit (Rom 2:29 cf. Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4; 9:25-26; Ezek 44:9)

## 5.5 New Life.

(a) regeneration is the impartation of new life.

(b) from death to life: (John 5:24; Rom 6:23; 1 John 3:14)

have Christ have life: (John 3:36; 1 John 5:12) this is  
: new (Rom 6:4)  
: eternal (John 3:14-16; 1 John 5:11-12 etc)  
: abundant (John 10:10)  
: Christ's own (2 Cor 4:10-11; Gal 2:20; 1 John 4:9)  
: transforming (2 Cor 5:17)

## 5.6 New Nature.

Regeneration the result of union with Christ in his glorified humanity. He is our life (Col 3:4).

Christ's coming to indwell regenerates us (Rom 8:10; Gal 2:20).

N.B. Christ in us  $\square$  our new life.

A new nature as part of being 'in Christ', who is the new creature / creation (2 Cor 5:17).

The old nature is / to be put away (Col 3:9; Eph 4:22-24).

Christians remain 'in' the flesh (1) but no longer 'after' the flesh (2), (2 Cor 10:3; Gal 2:20 cf. Rom 6:19; 7:18 etc).

(1 = bodily, natural weakness, 2 = state of sin)

## 5.7 Sons of God.

### 1. Background

Israel the 'son of God' (Hos 11.1) etc cf. 2 Samuel 7:14.

Special covenant relationship.

2. The sonship which has come to the Church is the fulfilment of the O.T. promises (Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 6:18).

3. This sonship takes effect when God reveals his Son (Gal. 4:4) through his Spirit (Gal.4:6). It is sonship 'in Christ Jesus' (Gal.3:26). The sonship of humanity is participation in the obedient Sonship of Jesus in his relationship with the Father. To know the Son is to know the Father; it is to know the Father-Son relationship in the power of the Spirit, it is this revelation of the trinitarian God, which is the essence of our sonship.

4. This is much more than the created sonship given to humanity 'in Adam' (Luke 3:38; Acts 17: 24-29) See Romans 5:15, 17 - 'much more'.

## 5. The Benefits Of Sonship Include

- (a) forgiveness (Eph. 4:32)
- (b) peace with God (Rom. 5:1)
  - for one is no longer under the law (Gal. 4:1-5)
- (c) reconciliation - the end of enmity (Rom. 5:8,10)
- (d) the liberty of the children of God - the opposite of slavery, bondage, compulsion, ie friendship, intimacy, joy (Rom. 8:14-16)
- (e) providential Fatherly care (Matt. 6:25-34 ; Phil. 4:19)
- (f) discipline (Heb. 12:5-11) in love
- (g) favour cf. John 15:14-15
- (h) inheritance : 'joint heirs with Christ' (Rom. 8:17 cf Gal. 3:26, 29; 4:7).

Sonship is the power and principle of the whole Christian Life. 'It admits of expression neither only in juridical nor in ethical categories. It is the privilege of the church as the true people of God, but at the same time it affects the individual believer in the deepest motives of his existence. It has bearing not only on his inner, but also on his physical life; indeed it brings with it the redemption of the whole cosmos. The present and the future are therefore spanned by it. The whole love of the Father, the whole redeeming work of Christ, the whole renewing power of the Holy Spirit, are reflected in it.' (H. Ridderbos, 1975: 204, Paul, Eerdmans.)

## 6. REGENERATION AND CONVERSION.

### 6.1 The Priority of Regeneration.

1. Regeneration precedes/makes possible a response to God. Cannot see/enter Kingdom of God unless born again, (John 3:8). Acts 16:14 cf. Eph 2:4-5; Col 2:13.
2. No Holy Spirit, no reception of the things of God: 1 Cor 2:14.
3. Only someone with the nature of a son can obey the Father.
4. It should be noted that regeneration is not experienced as such, but its effects in faith and repentance are.

## 6.2 Regeneration and Conversion Compared.

### REGENERATION

God's act alone

Unrepeatable

(Heb 10:10-14; Col 2:9,11; 3:1-4)

Not a conscious experience

Enables conversion

God's opening of the heart

(Acts 16:14)

Once – for – all cleansing

(John 13:10; 1 Cor 6:11; Titus 3:5)

God's sole power

### CONVERSION

Requires human faith and repentance

Jer 31:18-19; Acts 18:27; 20:21

Repeated turnings to God in faith and repentance.

(Luke 22:31-34)

Turning and trust are conscious experiences

Actual turning and trust

Heart response of obedience in faith

(Acts 16:15)

Continues the renewal begun in regeneration

God's enabling power.

(Best, W.E. 1975:48-49, *Regeneration and Conversion*, Houston: South Belt Assembly of Christ)

## 7. REGENERATION AND THE GOISPEL

'Paul's well known statement in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is probably a deliberately ambiguous one: "If anyone is in Christ, (he / there is) a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." The words in brackets do not occur in the original Greek. Notice Paul does not say "If Jesus is in anyone", as it is so often interpreted. The emphasis is on the new creation which is in Christ..... subjective regeneration or being born again is the fruit of the gospel, to proclaim the necessity of the new birth is not of itself to proclaim the gospel. The gospel is not "You must be born again!" ' (G. Goldsworthy 1991: 291, According to Plan, Lancer.)

## LECTURE TOPIC 17: JUSTIFICATION

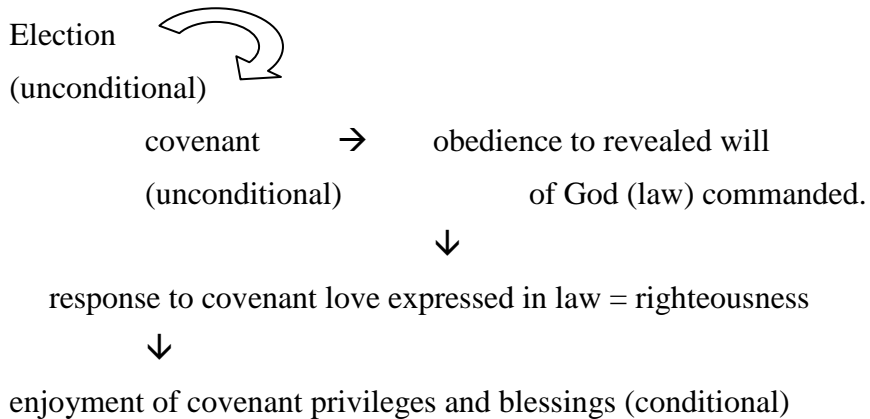
### I AM ACCEPTABLE TO GOD (ie JUSTIFIED) BECAUSE-

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Christ died for me                                      | T | F |
| 2. The scripture says I am                                 | T | F |
| 3. I am filled with the Holy Spirit                        | T | F |
| 4. I have a sense of joy and peace                         | T | F |
| 5. Christ bore my sins on the cross                        | T | F |
| 6. Christ lives in me                                      | T | F |
| 7. The Spirit bears witness with my Spirit                 | T | F |
| 8. Christ perfectly fulfilled the law on my behalf         | T | F |
| 9. Christ suffered the penalty of the law for me           | T | F |
| 10. I have been born again                                 | T | F |
| 11. I have experienced the reality of God's love           | T | F |
| 12. I feel the Lord's presence with me                     | T | F |
| 13. I am walking in the Spirit                             | T | F |
| 14. The cross covers all my sin, past present and future   | T | F |
| 15. If I do sin, I confess it                              | T | F |
| 16. Christ's saving work is totally sufficient for all sin | T | F |
| 17. I pray everyday  | T | F |
| 18. No sin can change my relationship with God             | T | F |
| 19. I believe in the grace of God towards me               | T | F |
| 20. I believe in the life of God within me.                | T | F |

# 1. JUSTIFICATION IN THE O.T.:

## 1.1 Justification in the O.T.: A Framework.

Gen 12:1ff; Ex 19:4-6; 20:2 ff.



## 1.2 A justified person is positively righteous. Deut 25:1.

A.V. 'justify righteous ... condemn wicked.

N.I.V. 'acquit innocent ... condemn guilty.

N.R.S.V. 'declare .. in the right ... in the wrong.'

# 2. NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING ON JUSTIFICATION.

## 2.1 Background.

Greek stem dik common to English 'righteous', 'just' 'justify' etc.

dikaoo (40x) - to acquit, justify, make righteous etc.

dikaiois (81x) - upright, righteous.

dikaiosune (94x) - righteousness.

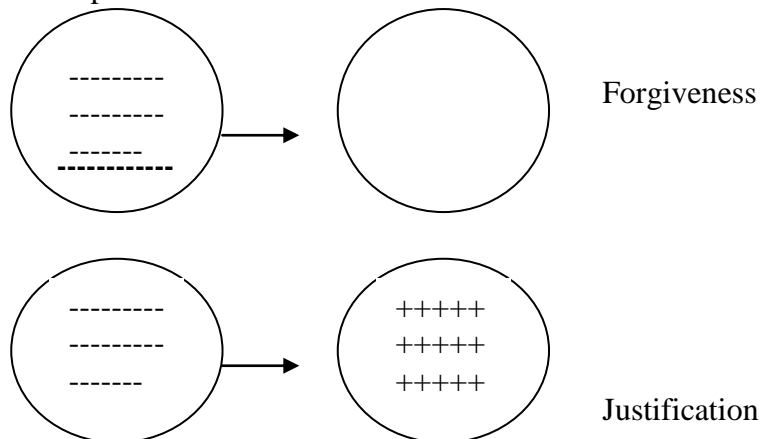
dikaionoma (10x) - righteous deed.

Secular Greek dikai = upright (noun)

L.X.X, via Hebrew, dikai = justice.

N.T. emphasis is legal rather than moral.

## 2.2 Justification Represented.



(W. Grudem, Systematic Theology, 1995: 725)



### 3. WHY IS JUSTIFICATION NECESSARY?

- a. righteousness of God.
  - b. sinfulness of humanity
- } condemnation

### 4. WHAT IS THE BASIS OF JUSTIFICATION?

#### 4.1 The Love of God (motive).

1 John 4:10-18.

#### 4.2 The Righteousness of God.

Romans 3:19-26. Righteousness Revealed.

##### 4.2.1 By the giving of the Law.

v. 20 'knowledge of sin'  
guilt and condemnation.

##### 4.2.2 By giving of Jesus Christ

vv. 21-26.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS or JUSTICE

(Rom 3:19-26)

STANDARD SET

LAW

JESUS CHRIST

MEANS OF

WORKS

FAITH

ATTAINMENT

IMMEDIATE RESULT

KNOWLEDGE OF SIN

EXPIATION

ie REMOVAL OF GUILT

FINAL RESULT

CONDEMNATION

JUSTIFICATION

##### 4.2.3 Propitiation.

Key Term: Greek = hilasterion Rom 3:25, 1 John 2:2, Heb 2:17.

Modern consensus - not 'mercy seat' as such, but the function it represented  
(focal point of God's provision of atonement.)

Liberal exegesis - 'expiation'

Expiate acts: cancel, cleanse, cover, forgive.

Propitiation of a person: turning away of God's wrath by Christ on the cross.

Focus: results of sin dealt with cf. the sinner.

Key question: God's attitude towards the sinner.

#### 4.3 The obedience of Christ.

Romans 5:12-21.

(It is the positive faith-obedience of Jesus that is imputed to the believer.)

#### 4.3.1 Christ restored what was lost through Adam.

ADAM	CHRIST
Sin (12)	Grace (15)
Disobedience (19)	Obedience (19)
Condemnation (16)	Justification (16f)
Death (“wage”) (21)	Life (“gift”) (21)
To all men	To all men.

#### 4.3.2 Christ became sin for us

1 Peter 2:24; 2 Cor 5:21.

Bore guilt.

#### 4.4 God justifies the ungodly.

##### 4.4.1 The subjects of justification are the wicked.

Romans 4:4-5 cf. Ex 23:7; Prov 17:15; 24:24; Isa 5:23.

##### 4.4.2 God justifies by covenant grace, not contractual arrangement.

God “accounts” by grace, by forgiveness. cf. Ps 32:1-2; 103:1-3.

### 5. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JUSTIFICATION?

#### 5.1 Freedom from guilt.

Romans 8:1.

‘no’ - absolute

Greek: ouden - strong negative

- emphatic position

‘now’ - present.

##### 5.1.1 Not a moral condition

Justification like condemnation is legal.

##### 5.1.2 ‘Justify’ is used in a legal sense in scripture.

Isa 53:11; Prov 17:15; Rom 4:5,8; 2 Cor 5:19; Gal 2:16; James 2:23.

‘imputed’, ‘declared’. ‘reckoned’.

##### 5.1.3 Romans 8:33 ff explains the ‘not guilty’ verdict.

#### 5.2 Forgiveness

Romans 4:6-8.

Total, complete e.g. Ps 32:1-2; 103:10-12; Mic 7:18-19; Rom 4:6-8;

Eph 1:7-8; Col 1:14.

“The article of justification is the master and prince, the lord, the ruler, and the judge over all kinds of doctrine.” “As I often warn...the doctrine of justification must be learned diligently. For in it are included all other doctrines of our faith; and if it is sound, all the others are sound as well.” (Luther).

“the principal ground upon which religion must be supported.” (Calvin)

## (1) Forgiveness and Justification Compared

### Forgiveness

An act, followed by a succession  
of such acts

Repeated throughout life

Negative, removing condemnation  
(No debts e.g. Matt 18:23-35  
Luke 7:41-47)

Does not of itself alter formal status  
(righteousness)

### Justification

An act followed by an attitude.

Complete, never repeated

Positive, the bestowal of a proper  
standing before God (righteousness)

A reinstatement.

(T.C.Hammond, In Understanding Be Men, London, 1968, p143)

It should be noted that whereas forgiveness removes our failure to be true sons of God 'in Adam', justification places us in the righteousness of Jesus as the Son of God. Hence the 'much more' of Romans 5. We enjoy the status with God of the triumphant glorified Son whose submission to the Father was absolute (in the cross).

## (2) Forgiveness and Atonement

Christ's death cancels the guilt of humanity

e.g. 2 Cor. 5:19 'not counting their trespasses against them'

cf. Rom. 5:10 reconciled while sinners

Redemption means forgiveness for all. Eph. 1:7 ; 1 Peter 1:18-20

## (3) Forgiveness and Fellowship

Forgiveness is both once for all [see (2)] and repeated e.g. 1 John 1:8-9

The initial reception of forgiveness deals with our objective alienation from God as sinners. Ongoing confession and cleansing deals with the subjective disruption of fellowship with God as sons.

The first deals with condemnation and brings us into union with Christ, the second maintains communion.

## 5.3 Access

Romans 5:1-2

- permanent, favoured.

## 5.4 Reconciliation

Romans 5:1,10.

- end of hostility, alienation, conflict.

- friendship, peace, communion.

## 5.5 Adoption

- legal act, rights of natural children
- benefits include:

name (Romans 8:15-17 )  
inheritance ( “ “ “ )  
suffering ( “ “ “ )  
freedom ( “ “ “ ; Gal 4:5-6)  
love (Eph 1:5-6 )

Adoption - justification - legal.

Regeneration - transformation - internal.

## 5.6 Reconciliation and Adoption.

1. Cross - means of reconciliation  
- wrath removed objectively past  
- forgiveness obtained

2. Resurrection - means of justification (Rom 4:25)  
- adoption of Jesus  
(Rom 1:4; Acts 13:33) } objectively  
- justification of Jesus } past  
(1 Tim 3:16)

3. Gospel proclamation - of 1 and 2 (2 Cor 5:14 ff; Acts 13:38-39)

### 4. Regeneration

Repentance and faith - subjectively (personally) }  
Conversion united to 1 and 2 }

solidarity in sentence of  
condemnation } passed on  
justification } Christ  
objectively freed from wages of sin  
heirs of eternal life  
(Jesus' resurrection life)

## 5.7 Eternal life

Romans 5:18

Guilt = moral separation = relational death.

No guilt = no moral separation = eternal life.

Romans 3:23-26; 5:18; 6:23 etc.

## 6. HOW IS JUSTIFICATION ATTAINED?

Romans 4.

- Not by
- works (vv. 1 - 8)
  - religious observance (vv. 9-12)
  - law (vv. 13-15)
  - flesh (vv. 16-19)

But by faith (vv. 16, 22-25)

N.B. Abraham's faith "gave glory to God" (v.20), the opposite of Adam (1:21).

Faith, as reliance on God, is the means God uses to sustain an ongoing relationship with him.

Cf. Rom 1:16-17; 3:27-28; Gal 2:16; Heb 11:1-6.

N.B. Roman Catholicism: baptism freely pardons original sin, grace (sacraments) strengthens to keep the law, justification is by keeping the law.

## 7. WHAT DOES FAITH MEAN?

- acceptance of the truth (Heb 11:6b)
- trust in God (Heb 11:6a)

7.1 Saving faith is not a "good work"

- an instrument.

7.2 Faith is a gift of God.

Eph 2:8-9; 6:23; Phil 1:29; Rom 12:3; Heb 12:2; Acts 3:16; 2 Peter 1:1

7.3 Weak faith justifies just as well as strong faith.

- the substance of faith is its object.
- the effectiveness of faith is contained in the work of Christ.

7.4 Faith is the means by which God couples signs (word heard, water of baptism, communion elements etc.) to the thing signified i.e. the death and resurrection of Christ.

7.5 Faith, not goodness, distinguishes the righteous from the unrighteous.

i.e. trust in the righteousness of God.

## 8. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A BELIEVER SINS?

- a) no condemnation Rom 8:1.
- b) justification is dependent on Christ's obedience  
(Isa 53:11; Rom 3:21-26; 5:1; Gal 2:16-21; Eph 2:1-10.

" still justified.

Justification must relate to the Last Judgement cf. John 5:24

Premeditated sin?

8.1 Assurance.

Rom 5:1 ff; 8:15-17; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 John 5:11-13.

Based on justification.

## 8.2 Responsibility.

Rom 6:1-2; 1 Cor 6:12; Gal 5:13.

Not antinomian.

## 8.3 Baptism.

Rom 6:3-4; 1 Peter 2:24.

Dead to sin, alive to righteousness.

## 8.4 Mastery.

Rom 6:5-6; 1 Cor 6:12.

No longer enslaved to sin.

## 8.5 Sanctification.

Rom 6:7-23; Eph 1:5.

Flows from justification.

## 8.6 Fellowship

1 John 1:7-9.

Relationship established by justification, fellowship maintained by forgiveness.

A Summary of Basic Catholic/Protestant Differences on Justification by Faith

<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Catholic</b>	<b>Protestant</b>	<b>Catholic</b>
1. To <i>justify</i> means to account as righteous.	1. To <i>justify</i> means to make righteous.	9. The believer is pronounced righteous because Christ, his Substitute, is found righteous before God.	9. The believer is pronounced righteous because the Spirit of grace has made him righteous.
2. Justification comes by the imputation of Christ's righteousness.	2. Justification comes by an infusion of grace.	10. Justification is a declaration of the fact that Jesus, who stands in man's place, is righteous.	10. Justification is a declaration of what is a fact in the man himself.
3. The grace of God in Christ makes the believer acceptable and pleasing in God's sight.	3. Sanctifying grace in the believer makes him acceptable to God.	11. Justification is so infinite that it cannot be reduced to an intra-human experience.	11. Justification is an act of grace within man.
4. Man is justified by an extrinsic righteousness (a righteousness wholly without).	4. Man is justified by an intrinsic righteousness (a righteousness which God puts within man).	12. Justification is received by faith alone.	12. Justification comes by faith which has become active by charity.
5. God justifies the ungodly who believe.	5. God justifies only those who are born again.	13. Justification enables God to bring regeneration and sanctification to the heart of the believer.	13. Regenerating grace enables God to justify the believer.
6. Justification is God's verdict upon man in the Person of Christ.	6. Justification is God's regenerating act in man.	14. Sin still remains in man's nature after justification and regeneration.	14. Justification wholly eradicates sin; only concupiscence and weakness remain.
7. The sinner is justified by Christ's imputed righteousness alone.	7. The sinner cannot be justified by imputed righteousness alone, but by righteousness poured into his heart.	15. The believer can claim no merit for good works performed by God's enabling grace. Good works are acceptable only through the mediation of Christ's imputed righteousness, which covers all human deficiencies in the good works of the believer.	15. Sanctifying grace within the believer makes good works acceptable to God.
8. Justification enables God to treat the sinner as <i>if</i> he were just.	8. Justification means that the sinner is really made just.	16. At all times the believer is accepted only in the Person of Christ, his Substitute.	16. Sanctifying grace within the believer makes him acceptable to God.

## LECTURE TOPIC 18: THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### 1. The personal nature of the Spirit.

#### 1.1 What does “spirit” mean?

- a. Hebrew *ruah*, the expulsion of wind or breath, the idea of air in motion. Focus is not on the movement but on the energy manifested by the movement.
- b. Greek *pneuma*, stresses the power of air in motion.
- c. an element of mystery or the uncontrollable is implied, that something as intangible as air should move and have effects.
- d. although *ruah* can be associated with a gentle breeze (Gen 3:8) the dominant idea is that of power e.g. Gen 8:1; Ex 14:12; Job 1:19; Mic 3:8.
- e. the ‘Spirit’ conveys that which cannot be subdued but brings about the purposes of God.

#### 1.2 What is conveyed by the expression “holy spirit”?

- a. the expression is rare in the Old Testament (Ps 51:11; Isa 63:10).
- b. it is common in the New Testament.
- c. the root significance of the biblical terms for ‘holy’ (Heb *qados*; Greek *hagios*) convey being cut off or separated out. This means to be set apart in order to belong to God.
- d. the Holy Spirit is the one who underlies the otherness of God’s being in relation to the world and humanity, especially as this is affected by evil.

#### 1.3 Evidence for the personhood of the Holy Spirit.

- a. the notion of personhood is a difficult one to comprehend, as it seeks to express what is most ultimate in existence.
- b. the main danger is that we will try to fit the notion of a person as we understand it to the Spirit of God. (This is known as anthropomorphism). It is one reason why the word ‘person’ or ‘personal quality’ is to be preferred to the developing term ‘personality’.
- c. the Holy Spirit possesses qualities only a person can possess.

intellect	-	Romans 8:27; 1 Cor2:10f
emotions	-	Rom 5:5; 8:26; 12:1; 15:30; Eph 4:30
will	-	Acts 16:6f; 1 Cor 12:11, cf. Jn 3:8; 6:38

- d. the Holy Spirit performs such *actions* as only a person can perform.

hears	-	Jn 16:13
speaks	-	Mk 13:11; Jn 16:13; Acts 8:29; 10:19; 13:2,8; 21:11
prays	-	Rom 8:26
teaches	-	Lk 12:12; Jn 14:17, 26; 16:13; 1 Cor 2:10
comforts	-	Acts 9:31
guides	-	Jn 16:13; Rom 8:14
reveals	-	Lk 2:26; Jn 16:14f
witnesses	-	Jn 15:26f; Acts 5:32; 20:23; Rom 8:16



- reminds - Jn 14:26
- commands/forbids - Acts 16:6f
- inspires - 2 Pet 1:21
- considers - Acts 15:28
- invites - Rev 22:17
- performs miracles - Acts 2:4; 8:39
- calls people to ministry - Acts 13:2
- appoints pastors - Acts 20:28
- causes conception - Lk 1:35
- contends - Gen 6:3
- sends - Acts 13:4

e. the Holy Spirit is affected by human actions in a personal way.

- grieved - Isaiah 63:10; Eph 4:30
- lied to - Acts 5:3

He must therefore be capable of hearing and receiving a testimony.

- tested - Acts 5:9
- insulted - Heb 10:29
- resisted - Acts 7:51

f. the personal pronoun (“he”) is used of the Spirit even though the grammar requires that *pneuma* uses a neuter pronoun (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14).

g. the most powerful evidence for the full personhood of the Spirit is provided by Jesus who speaks of the Spirit as one like himself and fully capable of communicating all of who Christ is to us (John 15:26-16:15).

## 2. The deity of the Holy Spirit.

a. the Holy Spirit has divine qualities.

- omnipresent - Ps 139:7ff
- omniscient - 1 Cor 2:10f; Is 40:13f; 12:11, cf Rom 11:34
- omnipotent - Lk 1:35; Rom 15:9; 1 Cor 12:11
- possessing an eternal nature - Heb 9:14

b. the Holy Spirit does God’s works.

- responsible for creation - Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4
- responsible for regeneration - Jn 3:5ff; Titus 3:5
- responsible for raising the dead - Rom 1:4; 8:11
- responsible for casting out demons - Matt 12:28
- responsible for convicting of sin, righteousness and judgement – Jn 16:8.

- c. the Holy Spirit has divine titles.
  - the Spirit of God - Eph 4:30; 1 Jn 4:2
  - the Spirit of the Lord - Is 11:1; Lk 4:18; 2 Cor 3:17
  - the Spirit of Jesus - Acts 16:7
  - the Spirit of the Father- Matt 10:20; Rom 8:9,11
  - the Spirit of holiness - Rom 1:4
  - the Spirit of truth - Jn 16:13
- d. the most powerful evidence of the divine nature of the Spirit is however the relationship he has with the Father and the Son.
  - (i) he is regularly linked with them in the New Testament  
(1 Cor 12:4-6; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4-6; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 20-21).
  - (ii) he knows God's thoughts from the inside (1 Cor 2:10-11)
  - (iii) he reveals the Lordship of Christ and empowers the Christian confession.  
(1 Cor 12:3)
  - (iv) he leads believers into a living knowledge of God as Father.  
(Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:6)
- e. he is given the name of God.  
(Matt 28:19)
- f. to lie to the Holy Spirit is to lie to God.  
(Acts 5:3-4)
- g. all of this leads to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit is a divine person distinct from but in the most intimate fellowship with the Father and Son. Only if this is true can we have fellowship with God by the Holy Spirit.

### 3. The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus.

- 1. The conception of Jesus.
  - a. the main texts are Matt 1:18-20; Luke 1:34-35.
  - b. these emphasise that the conception of Jesus will be through the power of the Spirit, which is the power of God.
  - c. the conception of Jesus will be fully supernatural.
  - d. the "overshadowing" (Luke 1:35) is reminiscent of the Spirit's work in creation (Luke 1:35). The coming again of the Spirit marks the beginning of the new creation.
  - e. the result of the action of the Spirit is that Jesus will be 'holy' (Luke 1:35). This implies that humanity has now been united to God.
  - f. without the action of the Spirit, Jesus could not be the Son of God: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you...therefore the child to be born will be holy, the Son of God."  
(Luke 1:35)

2. The childhood of Jesus.
  - a. no explicit reference to the Holy Spirit.
  - b. the possession by the child Jesus of “wisdom” and “understanding” (Luke 2:40, 47,52) implies that he was filled with the Spirit.  
(cf. Ex 31:3,6; 2 Chron 1:10-12)
  - c. this can be seen as a fulfilment of the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 11:1-3.
  - d. his total focus on the will of the Father (Luke 2:49) confirms that the Spirit is supremely powerful in his life.
3. The baptism of Jesus
  - a. all four Gospels record that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at his baptism.  
(Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32)
  - b. the form of a dove alludes to:
    - (i) the action of the Spirit in creation (Gen 1:2)
    - (ii) the descent of the dove after the Flood (Gen 8:12,21)
  - c. it signifies grace beyond a coming flood of judgement  
(Luke 3:7-9)
  - d. the voice from heaven (Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22) identifies Jesus as the coming Messiah (“You are my Son”, Ps 2:7) and the suffering servant of Isaiah (“in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him...” Isa 42:1)
  - e. the central significance of the coming of the Spirit on Jesus at his baptism is that it marks him out as the Lord’s anointed, this is his coronation rite cf. Acts 10:38. From now on he is the King in action.
4. The temptations of Jesus.
  - a. occurs through the initiative of the Spirit  
(Matt 4:1; Luke 4:1; Mark 1:12)
  - b. Jesus is guided by the Spirit “in” the wilderness  
(Luke 4:1)
  - c. the temptations concern the nature of Sonship.  
(Matt 4:3-10; Luke 4:3-12)
  - d. Jesus’ victory occurs through adherence to the word of God in the power of the Spirit. This is a trinitarian action.
5. The ministry of Jesus
  - a. the words of Jesus are inspired by the Spirit.  
(John 3:34-35)
  - b. they mark out Jesus as a prophet sent from God  
(Mark 6:4; Matt 10:40; 15:24; Luke 4:24; 10:16; 13:33)

- c. Jesus' messianic program is outlined in terms of the Servant of Isaiah 61:1-2 whose ministry is dependent upon the anointing of the Spirit.  
(Luke 4:18-19)
  - d. Jesus' attributes his power over demons to the agency of the Spirit.  
(Matt 12:28)
  - e. it was in "the power of the Spirit"(Luke 4:14) that Jesus performed all of his deeds of power.  
(Matt 11:20-33; 13,54,58; Mark 6:2-5; Luke 4:36; 5:17; 6:19; 10:13; 19:37)
  - f. the Spirit-saturated ministry of Jesus signifies that the long awaited Messianic age, the arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth, had begun.
6. The death of Jesus.
- a. the Gospel accounts do not explicitly link the Holy Spirit to the death of Jesus.
  - b. this however is taught in Hebrews 9:14 "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God"
  - c. the power of Jesus' self-offering to the Father is the Spirit.
  - d. we must suppose that the Spirit, as the bond of love between the Father and the Son, united them in a mutual agony of abandonment.
  - e. the almost complete silence of the Scripture concerning the role of the Spirit in the crucifixion must correspond to the complete inwardness (hiddenness) of his work at the point.
7. The resurrection of Jesus.
- a. the Spirit is explicitly said to be the one who raises Christ from the dead.  
(Rom 1:4; 8:11; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18)
  - b. this is consistent with the Spirit's creative and vitalising role in the Old Testament.  
(Gen 1:2; Job 33:4; Ps 104:29-30; Ezek 37:13-14)
  - c. one of the emphases of the New Testament passages is on the impartation of power to Jesus at his resurrection.  
(Rom 1:4 cf. 1 Cor 6:14)
  - d. it is the Spirit's role to manifest the truth of the Sonship of Jesus.  
(Rom 1:4; 1 Tim 3:16)
8. The exaltation of Jesus.
- a. this refers to the ascension of Jesus to heaven and his current rule from there.
  - b. no text directly teaches that these occurred through the Spirit.
  - c. in Ephesians 1:20 however, Paul states that the exaltation of Christ happened through the power of God.
  - d. we may take it that the exaltation of Jesus represents the full and final impartation of the Father's already indwelling life in the Spirit, to his Son.
  - e. it is the incarnate, anointed, crucified, resurrected and glorified Lord who Christians will receive in the Spirit.

9. The giver of the Spirit.
  - a. this is clearly taught in Scripture.  
(Matt 3:11; Luke 24:49; John 7:39; 20:22; Acts 2:33; 8:17)
  - b. Jesus and the Spirit are held in the closest possible association in the New Testament.
  - c. this means that the Holy Spirit and Jesus are indivisible as far as their actions are concerned.
  - d. the result of this is that all genuinely Christian experience is an experience *of Jesus in the Spirit*.  
(1 Cor 12:3)
  - e. this must mean (see later) a revelation of God as Father.  
(Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6)

#### 4. The Holy Spirit as the Presence of Jesus

1. In general terms
  - a. the Spirit is a Counsellor/Advocate like Jesus  
(John 14:16)
  - b. to be indwelt by the Spirit is to be indwelt by Jesus.  
(Rom 8:9-11)
  - c. to be “in Christ” is to be “in the Spirit”
  - d. the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus.  
(Acts 16:7; Gal 4:5; Phil 1:19)
  - e. Jesus speaks as the Spirit.  
(Acts 13:2; Rev 2:1,7,11 etc)
2. In functional parallel.
 

We are sealed in Christ (Eph 1:13).

We are sealed in the Spirit (Eph 4:30)

We are consecrated in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:2)

We are consecrated in the Holy Spirit (Rom 15:16)

We are righteous in Christ (Phil 3:8-9)

We are righteous in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17)

We are righteous in both (1 Cor 6:11)

We have life through Christ (Eph 2:1; Col 3:4)

We have life through the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:11)

We have hope grounded in Christ (1 Cor 15:19)

We have hope grounded in the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5; Gal 6:8)

Christ is the alternative to the law of sin and death (Rom 10:4)

The Spirit is the alternative to the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2)

3. The following suggest a more dynamic picture; they press for action:

We are commanded to stand fast in the Lord (Phil 4:1)

We are told to stand fast in the one Spirit (Phil 1:27)

We are told to rejoice in the Lord (Phil 4:4)

We are told to have joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17)

We are told to live in Christ (Col 2:6)

We are told to walk in the Spirit (Eph 4:3). (See also Gal 5:25)

Paul speaks the truth in Christ (Rom 9:1; 2 Cor 2:17)

Paul speaks the truth in the Spirit (1 Cor 12:3)

We are called into the fellowship of Christ (1 Cor 1:9)

We are blessed with the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 13:14)

## LECTURE TOPIC 19: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

### 1. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

#### 1.1 The Terminology of “Baptism”

- a. the word “baptise” (Greek: *baptidzo*) means to “immerse”, “plunge”, “dip” or “submerge”.
- b. this emphasises the dynamic once for all nature of the outpouring of the Spirit. A person does not live in a state of “Spirit-baptism”, but has been actively baptised in/by God’s Spirit.

#### 1.2 The Old Testament Expectation

- a. the prophets anticipated an outpouring of the Spirit.  
(Isa 32:15; 44:3; Joel 2:28; Ezek 39:29; Zech 12:10)
- b. this was associated with transformation at all levels of human existence.
  - (i) personal (Ezek 11:19-20; 36:26-27)
  - (ii) the people of God (Isa 44:1-5; Joel 2:28-30)
  - (iii) the cosmos (Isa 11:1-9; 32:15-20; Hag 2:5-7)

#### 1.3 The Preaching of John the Baptist.

- a. John the Baptist speaks of “baptising in the Spirit and fire” as the central action of Messiah.  
(Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:18)
- b. this is a metaphor drawn from the Old Testament expectation of the Spirit’s transforming work (see before) plus the purifying fire of God’s judgement.  
(Isa 4:4; 30:27f; Dan 7:10; Mal 3:2f; 4:1)
- c. it seems that John expected Jesus to initiate the new age of God’s kingdom by immersing the repentant in the purifying Spirit of God which would destroy the unrepentant.

#### 1.4 The Teaching of Jesus.

- a. Jesus shared John’s message concerning the coming of the Kingdom of God with power.  
(Mark 1:15)
- b. he seems however to deliberately shift the expectation away from a ministry of judgement to that of blessing.  
(Luke 4:18-20; Matt 11:2-6; Isa 29:18-20; 35:3-5; 61:1)
- c. the consuming fire spoken by John will however fall on *him* as he drains the cup of the wrath of God at the cross.  
(Luke 12:49-50; Mark 10:38-39; 14:23,36)

#### 1.5 The Experience of Jesus

- a. Jesus was conceived or born of the power of the Spirit.  
(Matt 1:18,20; Luke 1:35)

- b. Jesus nevertheless receives an outpouring of the Spirit at his baptism.  
(Matt 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32)
- c. Peter describes this as his anointing with the Spirit and power (Acts 10:38). This, against the Old Testament background, is the installation of Jesus as Messiah – Prophet, Priest and King.
- d. this is never described as Jesus being “baptised in the Spirit”
- e. if the term “baptism of the Spirit” is applicable to Jesus, it would need to refer to the Father’s action by the Spirit in raising him from the dead (Rom 1:4; 8:11; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 3:18 cf. John 7:37-39)

#### 1.6 The Experience of the First Disciples.

- a. the first disciples of Jesus were regenerated people.
- b. this is confirmed by the event recorded in John 20:21-23.
- c. the first disciples of Jesus occupied a unique position in salvation history.
  - (i) they were born and born again under the old covenant dispensation of the Spirit.
  - (ii) through their association with Jesus they received a share in his ability to bring in the kingdom of God with power.  
(Luke 9:1; 10:1,8,17-20 etc)
  - (iii) they lived through the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- d. this means that the difference between the first disciples experience of Jesus and the Spirit before and after Pentecost *cannot* be used as a model for contemporary Christians. The totality of a current believer’s experience involves inclusion into the new covenant reality of the finished work of Christ.

#### 1.7 The salvation history plan of Acts.

- a. From the perspective of the disciples the proclamation of Jesus in Acts 1:8 means the inclusion of all nations in the kingdom of God by the Spirit.

Acts 2 – Jerusalem

8 – Samaritans

10 – Gentiles

- b. The outpouring at Jerusalem, Samaria and Caesarea represents a three – fold initiation of the basic people groups of humanity into the body of Christ, representing the universality of Messiah’s ministry.
- c. The case of the Samaritans in Acts 8:4-25 is unique.
  - (i) It is the first example of non Jewish faith in Jesus. (The Samaritans were historic enemies of the Jews (John 4:9).)
  - (ii) It is the only case in the N.T. of people who have turned to Jesus and been baptised not having ‘received’ the Spirit (8:15-17,19). (This is true whether or not ‘received’ is taken in a strict sense or of Spirit-baptism)
  - (iii) It is the one context where a people group is not initially evangelised by the apostle (following Acts 1:8)



- d. These three factors seem to come together in the action of the apostles (8:14ff). It appears that it was necessary for the apostles to lay hands on the Samaritans for the Spirit because they alone were given the authority by Christ to bring order to the coming of the Kingdom with respect to the initiation of the people groups.

(Matt 16:16-19; Eph 2:20; cf. Rev 21:14).

- e. The Gentiles (Acts 10)

The household of Cornelius does not represent a group of Christian believers but of Gentiles associated with the synagogue.

This group is therefore baptised in the Spirit at conversion.

- f. The disciples in Ephesus.

The group in Acts 19 represents a special case in salvation-history.

(i) They appear to be Gentile disciples of John the Baptist. (19:3). The disciples of John were believers in the coming Messiah without knowledge of Messiah through the Spirit.

(ii) They represent a group who had perhaps come to believe that Jesus was the Christ but who not been united to Christ in regeneration – baptism in water/Spirit.

(iii) They represent a group which has no possible contemporary counterparts.

#### 1.8 Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Day of Pentecost.

- a. the return of Jesus to the glory of the Father (John 17:1-5) must mean the immersion of his humanity in the Father's love.

- b. Jesus', who, as human, is now "baptised in the Spirit" in the degree fitting to his eternal nature as God, can pour out the Spirit upon his disciples.

(Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; John 7:37-39; Acts 2:33)

- c. the baptism of the Spirit is Jesus' sharing his life-union with the Father with the believer.

- d. it is as the heavenly enthroned king that Jesus pours out the Spirit on the church (Psalm 2:8; Acts 2:33)

- e. the power of the Spirit released at Pentecost is a share in the kingly rule of the ascended Messiah.

- f. the Spirit surges the church into mission as Jesus is proclaimed to be "Lord and Messiah"

(Acts 2:36)

- g. Pentecost is explicitly said to be an event of the "last days" (Acts 2:17).

- h. the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost creates the new people of God, the church, by the impartation of the new covenant promises.

(i) "I will put my Spirit within you." (Ezek 36:27a)

This finds fulfilment in the outpouring of the Spirit.

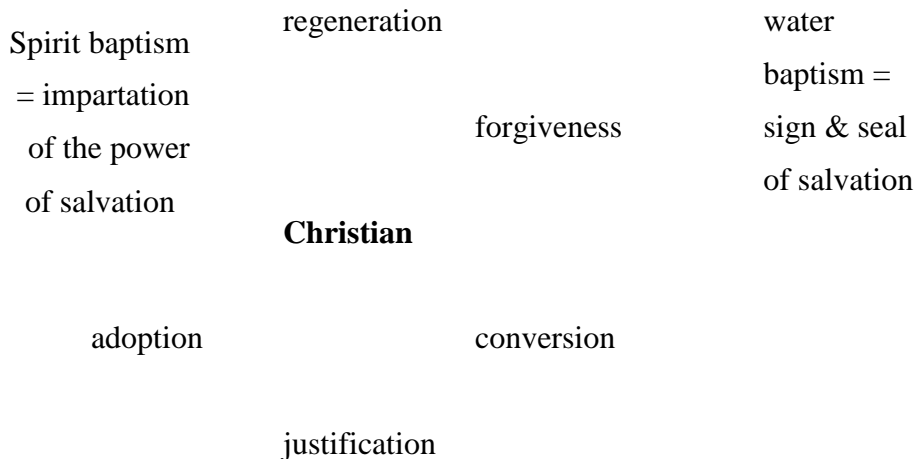
(ii) 'I will put my law within them' (Jer 31:33)

If the Spirit of God is internalised, then the author of the law is now within.

- (iii) “I will...make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances...” (Ezek 36:27b)  
The gift of the Holy Spirit means the gift of the holy power of God, with strength to fulfil the law’s commands.
- (iv) ‘they shall all know me’ (Jer 31:34)  
The gift of the Spirit of God to “all flesh” means such knowledge is now available to all (Acts 2:17,11).
- (v) ‘I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more’ (Jer 31:34)  
The coming of the Spirit is linked to the offer of forgiveness (Acts 2:38-39)

### 1.9 Conclusion

It is best think of “receiving the Holy Spirit” in terms of the power of the impartation/immersion in the cluster of realities which go to make up salvation.



## 2. The Fullness of the Spirit.

### 1. The Old Testament Background.

- a. Links to the temple being filled with God’s glory.  
(Ex 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezek 10:4; 43:5; 44:4; Hag 2:7 etc.)
- b. This will one day encompass the whole earth.  
(Nu 14:21; Ps 72:19; Isa 6:3; 11:9; Hab 2:14.)
- c. Eschatological dimensions.  
(Ezek 36:26-27; 37 etc.)
- d. Corporate dimensions: the promises in Ezek 36:26-27; 37; Joel 2:28ff; Isa 63:10-11 are to do with the new covenant community.
- e. Individual dimensions: The Spirit of God sovereignly falls on and fills prophets.  
(1 Sam 10:6,10; 19:23; Ezek 28:3; Deut 34:9; Judges 3:10; 6:34 etc.)
- f. Links to Messiah.  
(Isa 11:3; 42:1; 61:1.)

## 2. The Use of Luke - Acts.

- a. Luke uses 2 distinct Greek words:
  - (i) pimplemi - Luke 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9.
  - (ii) pleroo - Luke 4:1; Acts 6:3, 5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:52.
- b. Pimplemi refers to special influxes of ability and power in the service of God's Kingdom. This is close to the Old Testament use (1e).
  - (i) Old Testament  
Num 24:2-4; 'Spirit upon .... oracle'  
1Sam 10:6-10 - 'Spirit upon .... prophesying'  
2 Sam 23:1ff - 'Spirit of the Lord spoke through me'  
Micah 3:8 - 'filled with power ... with the Spirit ... to declare'
  - (ii) Luke's Gospel  
Luke 1:15,17 - 'filled ... spirit and power of Elijah'  
Luke 1:41,42 - 'filled ... exclaimed'  
Luke 1:67 - 'filled ... prophesied'
  - (iii) Acts  
Acts 2:4,11 'filled ... declaring the mighty works of God'  
Acts 4:8 'filled ... said'  
Acts 4:29 ff 'filled ... spoke...'
- c. Pleroo is used of an ongoing condition of life. This is close to Paul's use of "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22-24). It refers to spiritual maturity.

## 3. Paul's Use.

- a. The only place where Paul uses the expression is Ephesians 5:18
- b. Here he uses pleroo.
- c. The context is:
  - (i) corporate – how Christians should be when they meet together. The Old Testament temple associations are transferred in Ephesians to the church (2:19-22). This also picks up the eschatological dimensions.
  - (ii) ethical - Christians are not to grieve the Spirit (4:30 cf. Isa 63:11), nor be foolish with wine (5:17). They are to be "wise" cf. Acts 6:3; Col 1:9; Eph 3:14-21.
- d. The command is:
  - (i) continuous - something which should be repeated.
  - (ii) passive - not something that believers do, but God does in them.
- e. The "fullness" terminology of Ephesians is usually related to God's action in Christ (1:10, 22:23; 3:19; 4:10, 13)
- f. We may conclude that if believers lead holy lives submitted to God's purposes in Christ they will be habitually filled with the Spirit. That is, with the life of Christ.

### 3. Power Problems

1. Historical factors leading to a lack of power in the Christian Church.
  - a. the acceptance of Christian life without discipleship (cheap grace).
  - b. the tying of the gift of the Spirit (automatically) to water baptism. This was most pronounced in the case of infant baptism.
2. Factors to do with the proclamation of the gospel in a deficient manner.
  - a. preaching of the gospel in a non apostolic manner will reduce the impartation Spirit's power.
    - (i) failure to preach the finished work of Christ will lead to self-effort and striving in the recipients.
    - (ii) failure of the proclaimer to know the reality of their own salvation will impede the presence of the Spirit in Word.
  - b. since being baptised in the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ the hearers of the Word will lack the fullness of relational knowledge in like manner to the preacher.
  - c. where Jesus Christ in the gospel is not presented as the sole object of faith, we should anticipate a conversion reduced in power.
3. Personal factors.
  - a. disobedience (Acts 5:32; Gal 5:17)
    - a. unwillingness to embrace the way of the cross
    - c. lack of trust in God's desire to give the Spirit and the kingdom. (Luke 11:13; 12:32)
    - d. lack of personal desire to receive the Spirit's power. (Matt 5:6)
4. The way of Spirit fullness.

1	Have a deep desire for God	Ps 42:1ff; 63:1ff; Matt 5:6
2	Be earnest and sincere	Numbers 14:24; Jos 14:14; Jer 29:13
3	Repent of all sin	Acts 2:38f; Rom 8:5f; Ps 66:18
4	Believe God's promise	Luke 11:11-13; Gal 3:13f
5	Act on your faith	Matthew 4:13ff; Heb 13:15; Ps 89:1
6	Trust God's word	Luke 5:5; Matt 4:4

B. Chant T.C.N. 5:30

### 5. Conclusion

Obedience to the gospel (Acts 5:32) is the key to the continual infilling of the Spirit. (Romans 5:5 is set in the context of 5:1-10)

## LECTURE 20: SANCTIFICATION

### 1 WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION?

#### 1.1 A Note on Language.

It is helpful to remember that one biblical concept can be expressed by a variety of terms or metaphors. The Synoptic Gospels for instance do not speak of 'sanctification' at all. The idea that our lives are to be pure is conveyed by the fact that the children of God should live godly lives. e.g. Matt. 5:43-45a ; Mark 3:35 cf. Eph. 4:1.

#### 1.2 Justification and Sanctification Compared

<u>Justification</u>	<u>Sanctification</u>
Standing before God	Actual State
The position of the Christian	The condition of the Christian
Relationship to God	Fellowship with God
The Foundation of Peace and assurance - 'Christ for us'	The Foundation of practical righteousness - 'Christ in us'
It has no degrees - it is complete and eternal	It has degrees (But see below)
God's work alone	Man co-operates with God

(T C Hammond, 1968: 14 In Understanding Be Men, London).

#### 1.3 Terms

##### a. main stem hagi -

hagios, hagiasmos, hagiadzo, hagiosune, hagiotēs  
'holy' 'holiness' 'sanctify' 'consecrate' etc

##### b. Other Terms:

hieros (1 Cor 9:13; 2 Tim 3:15)

'temple service', 'sacred' (Cultic office)

hosios 'devout', 'pious'

hagnos 'pure' (Phil 4:8; 1 Tim 5:22; James 3:17; 1 John 3:3).

Katharos 'clean'

2 main elements

#### 1.4 Separation.

Set apart from common use, to God e.g. Ex 19:10, 22; 28:36 ff etc. - Temple set apart from sin → set apart to God.

#### 1.5 Cleansing.

O.T. ceremonial washings Ex 40:12-13; Lev 16:4.

N.T. holiness and cleansing linked 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 5:25; 1 Peter 1:2.

## 1.6 Sanctification as purity.

Before God (holiness), before the law (righteousness), before the world (blamelessness). Sanctification includes all three (1 Thess 2:10).

## 2. THE BASIS OF SANCTIFICATION.

### 2.1 God's Relationship with us.

i) God is holy e.g. Ps 78:41; 1 Peter 1:15-16.

ii) Jesus is holy e.g. Luke 1:35; Acts 3:14.

iii) God's Spirit is holy. e.g. Ps 51:11; Rom 1:4; 8:1-11; Gal 5:16-25)

God is separate from sin, therefore his people must be (Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:15-16)

God is the source of sanctification (1 Thess 4:3; 5:23)

Jesus sanctifies us (Eph 5:25-26)

Holy Spirit sanctifies us (1 Peter 1:2; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Thess 2:13).

Christ is our sanctification (1 Cor 1:30)

### 2.2 The Trinity and Sanctification

'God is Love' (1 John 4:8)

A relationship which is:

- |              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1. Total     | } | L |
| 2. Permanent |   | O |
| 3. Exclusive |   | V |
|              |   | E |

The whole of the Father's love → 'the beloved Son'

→ 'the only Son'

Outpouring of the Father-Son-love → Holy Spirit

Sanctification - being drawn into the Father-Son love by the Holy Spirit.

(Rom 8:29; 2 Peter 1:4)

John 17:19; Heb 9:14 - consummation in the cross .

## 3. THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.

### 3.1 By the sacrifice of Christ.

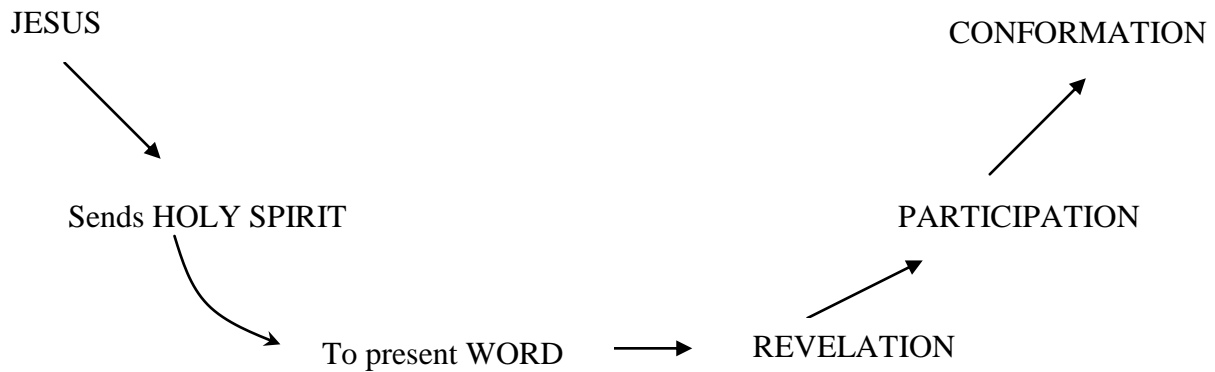
Eph 5:25-26; Heb 10:10; 13:12; Lev 16:1 ff.

### 3.2 By the Word of God.

John 17:17; 1 Tim 4:5.

### 3.3 By the Spirit.

Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 4:7-8; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:2



**PARTICIPATION:** in the relational truth given in revelation

**CONFORMATION:** to the nature of Christ (Rom 8:29-30; 2 Cor 3:18; 1 John 3:1-3)

#### **4. THE TIME OF SANCTIFICATION.**

##### 4.1 Every Christian is already sanctified.

God has separated us to himself (1 Cor 6:11; Eph 5:25-26; Col 1:2; 3:12)

Christians are 'saints' 62x in the N.T. of all believers e.g. Rom 1:7.

##### 4.2 Sanctification is instantaneous.

1 Cor 6:11 aorist tense.

1 Cor 1:30.

Heb 2:11; 9:13-14; 10:10,29; 13:12 'once for all.'

##### 4.3 Sanctification is gradual : e.g. Phil 1:6; 3:12; 2 Pet 3:18; Heb 12:14.

#### **5. THE OUTWORKING OF SANCTIFICATION.**

##### 5.1 Faith.

Directed to what God says of us 'in Christ'.

Keep from sin e.g. 1 Cor 6:11.

Rom 11:16-20; Col 1:22-23 - holiness depends on faith.

##### 5.2 Obedience.

to Jesus 1 Peter 1:2.

holy use of body Rom 12:1-2; 1 Thess 4:3-8; 1 Cor 6:19-20.

holy Body for God 1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 2:21.

entire person Rom 12:1-2; 1 Cor 2:16; 2 Cor 7:1; Phil 4:8-9.

everything 1 Tim 4:4-5.

##### 5.3 Reckoning.

'Reckon' (Rom 6:11-22.)

Not: positive or positional thinking

But: dealing with the truth of a new identity as regenerate, justified, sanctified people.

Christ is the deepest truth of my being (Gal 2:20; Col 3:1 ff).

## 6. SANCTIFICATION AND SUFFERING

This subject occupies a great deal of the N.T. Christians should anticipate suffering for Christ, e.g. Acts 14:22; 2 Tim 3:12; James 1:2; 1 Peter 4:12ff.

As believers are called to be conformed to the image of God's Son (Rom 8:29), this necessarily means that in their union with Christ they will experience power in weakness.

Faithfulness under persecution models the sufferings of Christ, e.g. Eph 3:13; Col 1:24; 1 Thess 4:7-12.

To be united to Christ means to share in his Messianic anointing, which is to suffer for the good of others (2 Cor 1:5). This is a priestly service (Romans 15:16) in the gospel. It is this form of ministry which is the essence and authentication of apostolic ministry (2 Cor 4:7-12; 13:4)

It is only by being united with Christ in his risen power, that the Christian is enabled to share Christ's sufferings (Phil 3:10-11). Only resurrection power can keep us crucified with Christ as a condition of life (Rom 6:4; Gal 2:19; 6:24), so that the power of the old nature is progressively put to death.

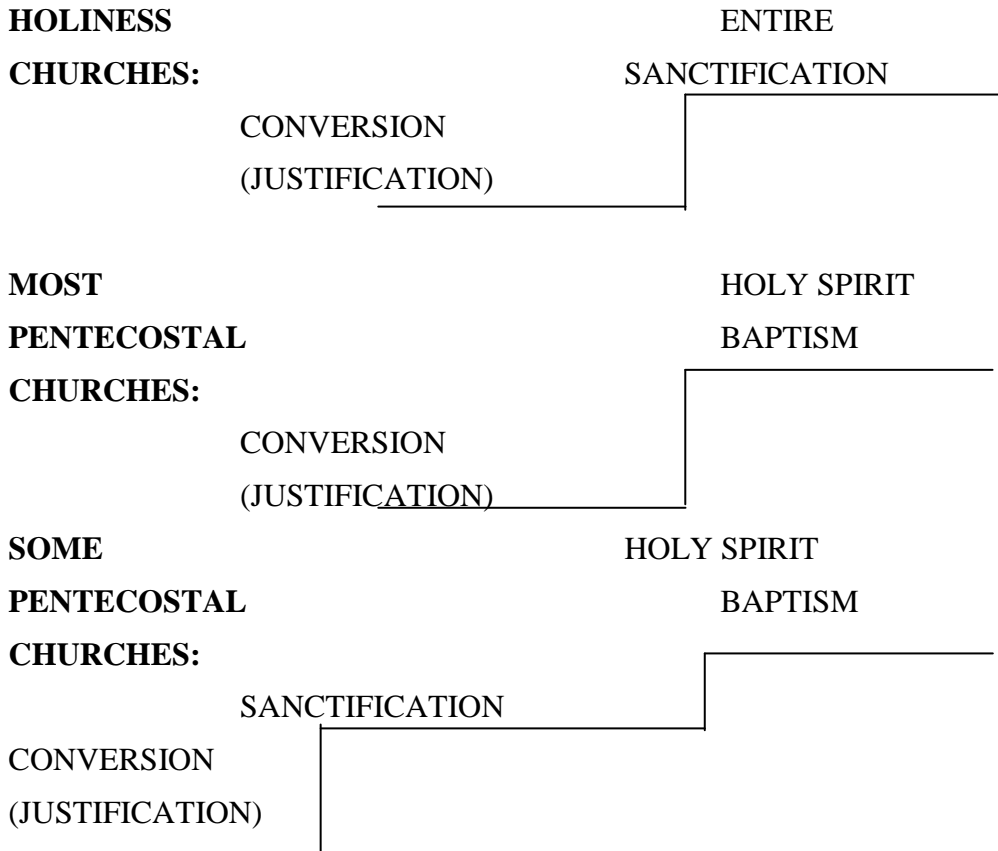
## 7. DEGREES OF SANCTIFICATION.

### 7.1 Positional

No degrees of being 'in Christ'.

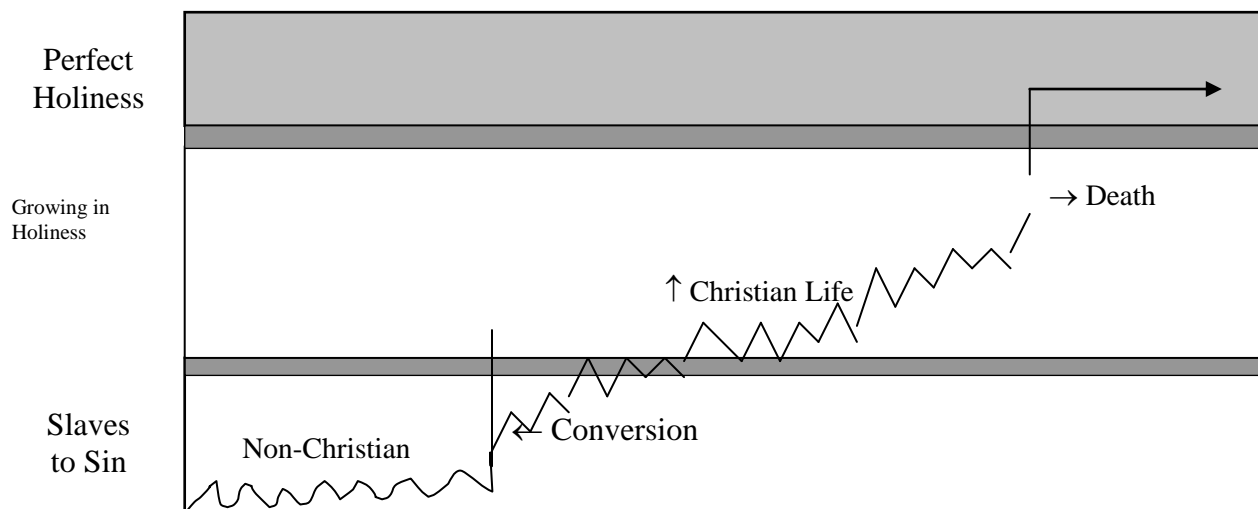
### 7.2 Progressive

Two Stage or Three stage soteriologies.



A. A. Hoekema (1979: 18), *Saved By Grace*.





## THE PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION (W. Grudem 1994: 750)

### 7.3 Perfect.

Ultimate goal, at the revelation of Christ.

(1 John 3:1-3; Jude 24-25)

No 'practice' of sin (1 John 2:1; 3:9)

### 7.4 Christian Perfectionism.

Form of perfection in this life is possible. Does not claim

- a. no sin possible cf. actual
- b. no struggle
- c. no need for Spirit.

Texts: Matt 5:48; Eph 4:13; 1 Thess 5:23 etc. But:

Rival Texts: Rom 7:18-19; 1 John 1:8-9.

- a. *Teleios* = 'mature'.
- b. sins of omission.
- c. God deals with us as with Adam

## 8. THE DYNAMIC OF SANCTIFICATION IN PAUL.

### 8.1 Pattern.

indicative	imperative	(Rom 12:1 ff)
you are this	become this	(Col 3:1 ff)
God has done	you should do	(Phil 2:13)
God works	we work	(Col 1:29)
theological	moral	(Rom 6:14)
in Christ	by Spirit	(Rom 8:1 ff)
objective	subjective	(Eph 2:8-10)
for us	in us	

## 8.2 The work of the Trinity.

Father: source of the indicative, e.g. Rom 3:25; 5:8; 8:11.

Son: content of the indicative, e.g. Eph 2:6; 3:1.

Spirit: application of the indicative, power and possibility of the imperative.  
e.g. Gal 5:16 ff.

## LECTURE 21: PRESERVATION AND GLORIFICATION

### 1. DEFINITION

‘all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again’ (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 788)

### 2. THEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

SUBJECT	ARMINIANISM	REFORMED
ELECTION	based on foreknowledge of faith response	unconditional - creates faith response
COVENANT	conditional - contract	unconditional
SIN	human ability-lapse possible	if human inability-lapse certain
ETERNAL LIFE	quality a gift quantity unsure	quality ensures quantity
GRACE	necessary	sufficient - preserves (1Pet 1:5; Phil 1:6)
UNION WITH CHRIST	union with Christ, new nature, no essential change	actual participation in Christ’s nature - new creation (Col 3:1ff; 2 Cor 5 17; 2 Pet 1:4)
STATUS	justification a present condition	justification a life condition (retrospective) e.g. ‘as he is so are we’ 1Jn 4:17; no judgement Jn 5:24 sins as a son, not an enemy Not from the heart 1Jn 3:9 ‘cannot sin’
GIFT OF SPIRIT	provisional	guarantee of inheritance (Eph 1:13-14)

‘The doctrines of grace are like a chain - if you believe in one of them you must believe the next...’ (Spurgeon)

### 3. HERMENEUTICS

Arminian - treat all texts as of equal significance

i.e. tendency to overlook type of literature (genre) e.g. parable of the sower - details not to be pressed cf Luke 8:15

The danger of this approach is to subjectify salvation.

Reformed - allow clear dogmatic texts to have priority  
e.g. Jer 32:40; John 5:24; 6:38-40; 10:27-29; Rom 8:30  
occasional texts (to a particular context) cf. general texts  
(universal) and texts to do with individuals cf. all believers, are  
secondary

The danger of this approach is to objectify salvation.

#### 4. PROVISIONAL STATEMENTS

Of an 'if...then' form e.g. 'whoever endures to the end shall be saved'

(Matt 10:22) 'present you holy...before him, provided that you continue in the faith'  
(Col 1:22-23)

Arminianism: text implies real possibility of loss, otherwise the warning is pointless.

Calvinism: those who do not remain faithful show they were never regenerate:

'if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that it  
might be plain that they all are not of us.' (1 John 2:19)

#### 5. UNCERTAIN TEXTS

1. Some references are not clear as to whether the supposed apostate was an actual  
believer e.g. 2 Tim 2:17-18.

2. No passage in the New Testament can be cited as a **doctrinal** pronouncement  
concerning actual apostasy. Nearly all the (supposed) evidence for this is contextual.

#### 6. EXTERNAL SIGNS

Unbelievers are capable of works 'by' the Spirit e.g. Balaam (Num 22-24), Judas (Matt  
10:1ff; John 6:64, 70) But 'I never knew you' (Matt 7:21ff) 'false brothers and sisters'  
(Gal 2:4), 'disguise themselves as servants of righteousness' (2 Cor 11:15,26)

#### 7. THE 'SIN UNTO DEATH'

1 John 5:16-17

Arminianism: this text is a caution to believers (v.16) not to fall into mortal sin.

Calvinism: it is not at all clear what the sin referred to is; nor is it necessary that the 'sin  
unto death' imply the second death. Most likely, this sin is committed only by an  
unbeliever in the context

#### 8. THE WARNING TEXTS OF HEBREWS 6:1 ff; 10:26f

Possibilities

(a) Hypothetical - if a believer took this course he/she would be lost

- the texts are exhortations to faithfulness, not descriptions of an actual condition  
See Heb 6:9-10; 10:39
- part of God's strategy to achieve believer's perseverance.
- in practice, this seems to be how the church uses these texts pastorally ( in  
faith, hope and love).

(b) Descriptions of Actual Apostasy

- genuine believers who turn away from Christ by way of a deliberate and conscious rebellion (10:26,29)
- as the unforgivable sin such persons cannot be restored (6:4, 6)

(c) Descriptions of Nominal Christians (Grudem 796ff)

- Heb 6:4-6 ‘repentance’ - mere sorrow (Heb 12:17)
- ‘enlightened;’ - non-saving knowledge (John 1:9)
- ‘tasted’ - temporary (Matt 27:34)
- ‘partakers’ - partners in an activity (Luke 5:7; Eph 5:7)

N. B. Heb 6:9 ‘in your case...better things that belong to salvation’

Heb 10:26-31 ‘sanctified’ - external (Heb 9:13; 1Cor 7:14)

N.B. Heb 10:39 ‘But, we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed,’

**9. WHOSE LIFE?**

Gal 2:20 ‘crucified with Christ

no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me

the life I now live I live by faith in (the faith) the Son of God’

Is Christ actually my life by union with him through the Spirit?

Or, does faith make this to be true?

Is my spirituality (faith, commitment) the basis of my assurance, or is Jesus the basis?

<b>The Security of Jesus and Christian Security</b>	
<b>Jesus’ Place in the Godhead.</b>	<b>Our Place in God’s Family.</b>
He is the eternal Son of God. (John 17:5; Gal 4:4)	We were chosen in the Son in eternity. (Eph 1:4-6)
God has complete love for and pleasure in his Son. (Matt 3:17)	God loves us exactly as he loves his Son. (John 17:23)
Jesus is the firstborn of many brothers. (Rom 8:29)	We are the brothers of Jesus. (Heb 2:11)
He is the heir of all the promises of God (2 Cor 1:20)	We are heirs with Christ. (Rom 8:17; Gal 4:7)

Do we really believe that salvation is sharing in God’s nature (2 Pet 1:4 cf. 1 Pet 1:23; 1 John 3:6,9; 5:4-5, 18)

## 10. THE EXPERIENCE OF ASSURANCE OF FINAL SALVATION

1. Classical Roman Catholicism restricted this to a special revelation from God to the Saints.
2. The Reformers located this (especially Calvin), in the Spirit sealing on the heart, especially the conscience, that we are truly united to Christ, and so all his benefits.
3. Later Calvinism (Puritanism) tied assurance to practical holiness.
4. Arminians generally restrict this to a moment by moment experience.
5. John Wesley taught an experience of complete sanctification, a life lived without voluntary sin. Through the witness of the Holy Spirit assurance was conveyed.
6. In practice, many believers seek assurance in special or “higher” experiences.
7. Significant biblical texts include: Rom 8:15-17; 8:38-39; Gal 4:6; Phil 1:6; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 John 4:13; 5:10, 13.

## 11. CONCLUSION.

‘Considered from the divine side, God, preserves to the end those chosen for salvation. From the human side, elect believers persevere in faith and love... We know that we are in the faith only as we stand firm in Christ to the very end.’ (Demarest)

## GLORIFICATION

‘Beloved, we are God’s children now, what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this : when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is’ (1John 3:2)

### 1. NATURE

Glorification is the final stage of salvation, it is the perfection of sanctification God’s achievement in us of the goal he purposed for us in Christ from before the foundation of the world. It is the point at which soteriology and eschatology overlap, for the glorification of the children of God cannot be divorced from the transformation of the whole creation.

### 2. TERMS AND CONCEPTS

O.T.

kabod - splendor, pomp, wealth of men, root idea ‘heaviness’, ‘weight’, so ‘worthiness’

- of God, the greatness of his whole nature e.g. Ps. 24:7-10

N.T.

Doxa - secular Greek = opinion reputation

- L.X.X. & N.T. - brightness, splendor, magnificence

The glory of God is the self - manifestation (revelation, illumination) of God i.e. his person and nature which he is pleased to give to his creatures.

### **3. GLORY AND JESUS CHRIST.**

- (1) The actual glory of humans is indistinguishable from the person of Jesus Christ. The gospel brings 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (2Cor. 4:6).
- (2) The glory of Jesus is the glory of the Son who, as Son, is fully obedient to the Father. This is the main theme of John's Gospel e.g. 1:14-15 ; 5:50, 54 ; 11:4, 40 ; 13:31-32 ; 17:1-5.
- (3) Most centrally it is the Son's glory, and so the Father's, that he dies on the cross. (John 12:27-32; 13:31-32; 17:1 ff)
- (4) The purpose is to 'bring many sons to glory' (Heb. 2:9-10).
- (5) A theology of salvation is therefore a theology of glory viz. the restoration of the glory of humanity and God lost through sin (Rom. 3:23).
- (6) This should however not be equated with what was lost through Adam, for the resurrection glory of Christ exceeds the glory of Adam as heaven exceeds the earth (dust) 1Cor. 15:42-49.

### **4. THE SUBJECTS OF GLORIFICATION**

Even though all people will be resurrected, the Bible never refers to unbelievers receiving either immortality or glorification. Their state is the "second death" (Rev 2:11 etc).

### **5. THE CONTENT OF GLORIFICATION**

In simplest terms this must be the sharing with us of all Christ is, and is for us : 'we shall be like him' . Erickson (C.T. pp. 1010-1013) makes the following points. Glorification will include :

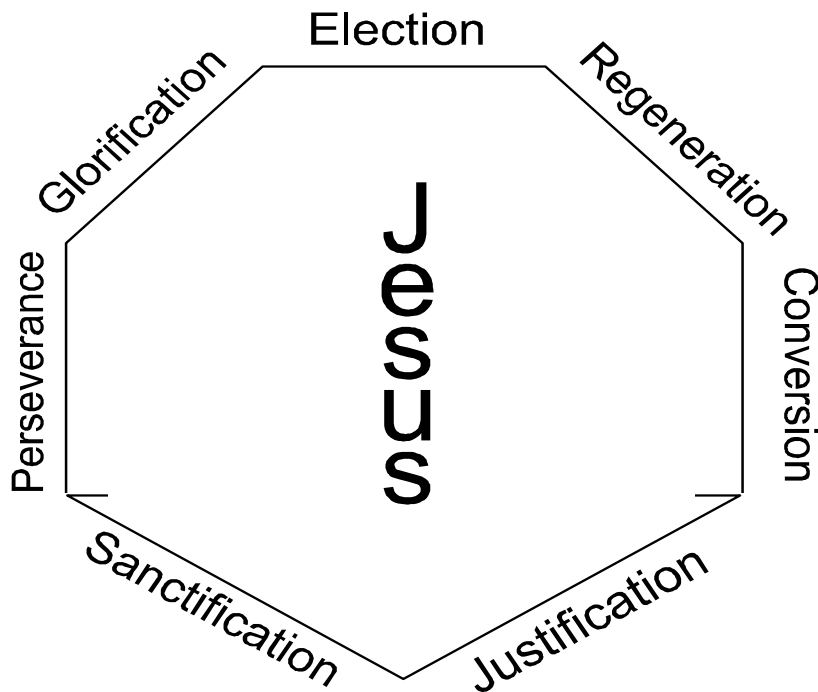
1. The glory of the public vindication of the believer at the Last Judgment  
(Rom. 5:9-10; Matt 25:31-46)  
N.B. Justification is the re-instatement of glory.
2. The moral and spiritual perfection of the believer 'holy and blameless' (Col. 1:22 cf. Eph. 1:4 ; Jude 24 ; 1 Cor. 1:8 ; Phil. 1:9-11)
3. The fulness of the knowledge of God (1Cor. 13:12) N.B. as reflected or responsive glory, the glory of a creature and a son, the glory of humanity and of God must coincide.
4. The glorification of the body (Phil. 3:20-21 ; 2 Cor. 5:1-5 ; 1 Cor. 15:38-50)  
- incorruptibility, power, spiritual.
5. Sharing in the glory of the new creation (Rev. 21:1 ff)

### **6. PREPARATION FOR GLORIFICATION**

1. God prepares glory for us (1 Cor 2:9).
2. God prepares us for glory (Rom 9:23).
3. Glory is the inheritance of God's children (Rom 8:17).
4. Glorification should be sought (Rom 2:7), and it will be wrought in us as it was wrought in Christ, by suffering and affliction (Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 4:17; 2 Tim 2:10-11).

# SALVATION SUMMARY

The life of Christ is the content of our salvation



DIMENSION OF SALVATION	LIFE OF JESUS	LIFE OF CHRISTIAN
ELECTION	Chosen before creation (1Pet 1:20 etc)	Chosen 'in Christ' (Eph 1:4)
REGENERATION	Incarnate by Spirit (Luke 1:35)	New life in Christ (Jn 1:12, 3:3ff)
CONVERSION	Baptism : identifies with sinners (Mt 3:15)	Faith - Repentance to him (Acts 2:36 16:33),
JUSTIFICATION	Resurrection (1 Tim 3:16)	Christian beginning (Rom.4:25, 5:1)
SANCTIFICATION	Cross (John 17:17-19)	Event & process in him
PERSEVERANCE	Indestructible life(Heb 7:16,25)	Endure to end through him (Mt 10:22)
GLORIFICATION	Return to Father (Phil 2:10-11)	Our resurrection with him (Col.3:4)



## LECTURE TOPIC 20: THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

### 1. The Nature of the Church : Terminology

#### 1.1 The Term “ Church “ in the New Testament

1. The English “church” is a translation of the Greek *ekklesia* .
2. This term appears 114 times in the New Testament, mainly in Paul, Acts and Revelation.

#### 1.2 The Old Testament Background to “ Church ”

1. The people of God in the Old Testament assembly in relation to law and cult.
2. Two main words are used for this:
  - a. *qahal* : this means “ assembly” or the act of assembling for a special purpose
  - b. *edah*: this means the congregation or the whole nation of Israel, whether assembled or not
3. The Greek translation of the Old Testament never uses the word *ekklesia* for *edah*, but uses it exclusively for *qahal*.
4. Of major interest are those places where *ekklesia* is used to translate *qahal* to denote the congregation of Israel when it is assembled to hear the Word of God at Mt. Sinai or later at Mt. Zion where it was required to gather three times a year.  
(Deut 4:10;9:10;18:16;23:1 – 3;31:30; Judges 20:2, etc.)
5. This means that the term *ekklesia* does not denote an organisation or society but a gathering (community).

#### 1.3 The Uses of *ekklesia* in the New Testament.

##### 1. Of local churches

- a. mentioned by name  
(Rom 16:1; 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:2; Rev 2 – 3 ,etc.)
- b. not mentioned by name  
(Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 6:4; 15:4,5,12,23; 3 John 9,10; etc)
- c. in the plural  
(Gal :1:22; cf. 1 Thess 2:14; Rev 1:4; 22:16, etc)
- d. most of these are references to the churches of a region.
- e. there are wider expressions; especially “ all the churches of the Gentiles “  
(Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 7:17; 11:16;; 14:33, etc.)
- f. the use of the plural in this way suggests that there is no notion of a collective regional or national church.  
(Gal 1:13 refers to the whole church as it first existed only in Jerusalem, or of persecuted believers *as* they assembled.)
- g. this is due to the fact that such an entity does not gather together
- h. the focus on meeting is particularly clear in 1 Corinthians  
(1 Cor 11:18;14:35)

## 2. Of the entire church

- a. this appears to be Paul's use in Ephesians ( 1:22,23; 3:10,21;5:23,25,27,29,32) and Colossians (1:18, 24)
- b. this could refer to the whole body of Christ scattered throughout the world: the universal church
- c. alternatively the context in these two letters is the heavenly sphere where Christ is raised and the church is with him  
(Eph 1:3, 2:5 – 6; Col 1:15 – 20, 3:1 – 3)
- d. this finds support from other places in the New Testament
  - i. the children of the “ heavenly Jerusalem” (Gal 4:25 – 27)
  - ii. the membership of the heavenly community (Phil 3:20)
  - iii. the assembly of the “ heavenly Jerusalem” (Heb 12:18 – 24)

## 3. Of house churches

- a. these are mentioned in a number of locations  
(Rom 16:5; 1Cor 16:19;Col 4:15;Philemon 2)
- b. on occasion this seems to be the complete church in the city
- c. in the case of Romans 16:13 the qualification “whole church “ implies that smaller gatherings of believers existed cf. 1 Cor 14:23
- d. this could be thought of as *part* of the church in a place , so that the whole church is formed when the different household units come together
- e. no text refers to the “churches “ of a certain city
- f. in line with the above points however:
  - i. if church **is** assembly, then the house churches are fully churches
  - ii. each of the churches is an earthly manifestation of the eternal and heavenly church which gathers around Christ
  - iii. there is no such a thing as the church *of* Ephesus or the church *of* Rome, the church is not constituted by a place but by the people who gather in a place. It is not the case of the church in one place as distinct from the church in another, but of the one church present in both places. Cf. The church *in* Ephesus or *in* Rome.

## 2. The Nature of the Church: Oneness and Unity

### 2.1 The Biblical Witness

1. The use of the term “church” is inconsistent with a plurality of separate churches.
2. Jesus prayed for the church to be one (John 17:20 –23)
  - a. all the prayers of Jesus to the Father are efficacious (John 11:41 - 42)
  - b. the oneness of the church is of the same order as that between the Father and the Son, this means that it is *essentially* one
3. Paul speaks of the church as being one by nature (Eph 4:4 –6)

## 2.2 Gathered around Christ

- a. Jesus taught that he would gather the flock of God to himself (John 10:16)
- b. this is Paul's perspective in Ephesians and Colossians (see above), it is also that of the letter to the Hebrews (Heb 12:18 – 24)
- c. the Apocalypse conceives of a heavenly assembly around the exalted Lamb (Rev 5; 7:9ff; 14:1 –5)
- d. these teach us that the unity of the church is not a property it possesses in its own right but is something which is realised through the saving relationship which she enjoys with Jesus. He is the origin and reality of her oneness.
- e. since the whole Jesus meets with each local assembly, the fullness of what it means to be the one church is present in every place

## 2.3 Divisions in the Church

- a. as noted above, the only basis in the New Testament for the differentiation between churches is locality
- b. grounds of ethnicity, culture, class, age, education etc. are nowhere regarded as reasons for Christian gatherings
- c. to make these a basis for unity would be to deny the reconciliation and the new humanity which has been effected in Christ (Eph 2:14ff)
- d. the unity which the church enjoys is one of participation in Christ's relationship with the Father, as such it is an eschatological unity of the new creation (2 Cor 5:17) where all divisive elements have been taken away.
- e. the universal church does not constitute a structure over and above the local churches, nor does the presence of house churches in a city imply separation in a locality, the distinct meetings are only for purposes of practicality, the gathering of the whole church images and actualises the communion of all Christians in a city.
- f. it is impossible to conceive of the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, the temple of God and so on in the plural

## 2.4 Visible and Invisible

1. This distinction is introduced in order to emphasise that the church is not identical with any visible organisation, such as the Roman Catholic Church.
2. The invisible or spiritual dimension of the church refers to the church's relationship with God through Christ in the Spirit. Here it is completely one.
3. The visible aspect is the church as it is open to human investigation.
4. The two aspects are not identical, but this does not imply that there are "two churches".
5. The emphasis on the distinction is to keep in mind that not all those which claim to be part of the true church are so.
  - a. Jesus examines the church as well as individuals (1Thess 2:4; Rev 2:23)
  - b. there may be those inside the assembly who do not really belong to it (1 Cor 5:13; 2 Tim 2:20; 1 John 2:19)
6. There may be unrecognised true believers (1 Ki 19:18)
7. There are degrees of purity in the church.

## 2.5 Recognition of the True Church

1. The classic Protestant approach is that of Luther: the church is found where there is a proper preaching of the gospel and a proper administration of the sacraments.
2. The classic Roman Catholic position is that of the 4 notes of the church in the Nicene Creed: the church is “one, holy, catholic and apostolic”.
3. These 2 positions can in fact be combined in terms of the presence of Christ in the Word:
  - a. Jesus gathers the church to himself through the spoken word and the gospel sacraments/ordinances.
  - b. The church is one because Jesus is one and he is the content of the gospel (Rom 1:3 – 4; 15:19; 1 Cor 9:12; 15:3 – 8; 2 Cor 2:12; 9:13; 10:14 etc.).
  - c. The church is holy because through the gospel it is one with the holiness of Christ and will be presented holy and blameless before him (John 13:10; 15:3; 1 Cor 1:30; 6:11; Eph 5:25 – 26; Col 1:22; 1 Thess 3:13).
  - d. The church is catholic because it proclaims the saving message for all humanity which knows no boundaries of race, gender, class etc. (Rom 1:15-16; Gal 3:28) and the gospel is eternal (Rev 14:6).
  - e. The church is apostolic because it is built on the foundation of the gospel revealed and proclaimed by apostles and prophets (Rom 1:1ff; 15:16ff; 1 Cor 1:17; 15:1ff; Gal 2:7; Eph 2:20 etc.).

## 2.6 Denominations

1. There are arguments for the view that denominations should be accepted as regular forms of “ church”
  - a. The Spirit is free to raise up structures as he wills.
  - b. The differences between denominations are not matters of indifference. Christians must be free to worship according to their conscience as shaped by the Bible.
  - c. The origin of denominations is a godly response to sin in preexisting church institutions. Denominations are not sects but by their very name “denomination” indicated that the true church of God was wider than themselves.
  - d. Since no church has a complete grasp of divine truth, the true church of Christ cannot be fully represented by any single ecclesiastical institution.
  - e. The history of denominations shows that they can be an effective sign of Christ’s presence.
  - f. The denominations provide a vehicle whereby Christians divided by location, language and other differences may cooperate.
  - g. Paul can speak of “the churches of the Gentiles” (Rom 16:4; cf. 16:16; 1 Cor 14:33).

This wider usage makes it possible to speak, by analogy, of Christians united together by a common heritage and doctrinal confession as a distinct Christian community, that is a church.

- h. Even if we do not find something corresponding to denominations in the New Testament, we find supra –congregational links, like that between Paul and his congregations, the work of Timothy and Titus, and the council of Jerusalem (Acts 15) as precursors of such structures.
  - i. Differences of opinion regarding the outward form of the church are inevitable. We cannot hope for complete reconciliation within the church until the time of eschatological fulfillment.
2. There are reasons to dispute the above arguments.
- a. In scripture, any sort of division is regarded negatively (1 Cor 1: 10ff.; Eph 4:4 –6; cf. 1 Cor 3:3 –4; Gal 5:19 – 20; Jude 19).
  - c. There are no examples in the New Testament of true believers separating on the grounds of doctrine; heretics are excluded as they do not belong to the body at all, and relational ruptures within a congregation are to be dealt with by discipline.
  - d. Christians are always exhorted to manifest the maximum cooperation and unity (Eph 4:1,3; Phil 2:1f.).
  - e. This is based on the grounds of the very nature of the gospel and of Christ himself: Paul’s ultimate retort runs “ is Christ divided? ” (1 Cor 1:13). The image conveyed by denominations is that the church is divided, if so, then Jesus cannot be persuasively communicated as the one sent by the Father (John 17:20 – 23). The call to manifest Christian unity is not a tactical maneuver but part of the salvation – history plan of God.
  - f. If the church by its essential nature partakes of the heavenly and eschatological reality of the reconciliation and new creation of all things in Christ (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 3:28; Eph 1:20; 2:11 – 22 etc.), then it is called upon to image something of the End in the present. That is, full and complete unity.
  - g. The oneness of the church is unrelated to any structure or ecclesiastical organisation as such , the “ one world church “ already exists and is a reality in its *communion* with Christ. The basis of oneness can not be some external reality but mutual participation in the life of God.
  - h. The local churches of the New Testament cooperate and help one another (Acts 11:28 – 30; Rom 15:25- 29; 16:1; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Cor 8:1 – 14; 13:13; Phil 4:22; 1 Thess 2:14). The council of Jerusalem is not a precedent for denominations but a matter which had to be dealt with at Jerusalem because the false teaching arose there (Acts 15:2, 24) and threatened the whole mission and express identity of the church.
  - i. There can only be one bride, one body, one temple, one flock and so on. No one would seriously speak of many brides etc, but by misuse the expression “churches “ has become acceptable !!

### 3. The Nature of the Church: Trinitarian Dimensions

#### 3.1 Methodology in Ecclesiology

1. The common method in approaching the doctrine of the church by Protestants is as a separate item from the doctrine of God and Christology. (In some ways this is a reaction to the Roman Catholic habit of identifying a visible institution as the

- extension of the incarnation, so that outside of its boundaries there could be no salvation.)
2. This method implies that the essential nature of the church is in some way disconnected from the reality of God and the incarnation. The necessary result of this is individualism and fragmentation in Christian circles.
  3. An alternative approach is to begin with the reality of the trinity as a community of Persons:
    - a. The nature of the Persons is such that their very being is constituted by their communion.
    - b. To be a Person is to be entirely inclusive. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit completely interpenetrate each other, they possess exhaustive relational knowledge in this communion of perfect love.
    - c. This interpenetration is distinct for each of the Persons, they do not relate in identical ways but in the manner of who they are as Father, Son and Spirit.
    - d. The entirety or complex of the relations makes up “ God “.
  4. This is then connected to Christology and Soteriology:
    - a. Jesus comes that we may share in his relationship with the Father (sonship) in the Spirit.
    - b. Incarnation and atonement are inclusive acts whereby through being “ in Christ “ we are one with God and partakers of the divine nature (John 15:1ff; 17:20 – 23; 2 Peter 1:4).
    - c. The essential nature of the Church is therefore relational – communion of the most inclusive possible kind, the one new humanity in Christ (Eph 2:15) is a new and corporate person. As such, the church must be by nature as one, holy and catholic (complete) as God, a reality communicated through the apostolic gospel.
  5. This has a number of profound implications as to the form or shape of the church:
    - a. Communal rather than individualistic.
    - b. Ecumenical rather than isolated.
    - c. Egalitarian rather than hierarchical.
    - d. Gender inclusive.
  6. This trinitarian reality is communicated by the dominant images of the church in the New Testament.

### 3.2 The People/Household of God.

1. It has a rich Old Testament background (Ex 15:13,16; Num 14:8, Deut 32:9 –10; Isa 62:4; Jer 12: 7 – 10; Hos 1:9 – 10; 2:23 etc.)
2. It is a common expression in the New Testament where it takes up a fuller meaning than in the Old and is expressly connected to the Fatherhood of God as revealed in Jesus. The church is “ the household of God ”(Acts 15:7 –11, 14- 18; Rom 9:24 – 26; 2 Cor 6:14 – 7:1; Gal 3:26 –29; 6:10; Eph 1:3 –7; 2:14 –22; 1 Tim 3:15; Heb 3:6; 10:21; 1 Pet 2:5,9 )

3. This implies sharing in all that Jesus knows of the Father, an internal relationship (Col 3:1ff) which ensures access to God (Eph 2:18) and makes the church the dwelling of God (2 Cor 6;16; Eph 2:22 etc). (See also the material on the temple below)
4. It is reflected in the familial language Christians use of one another: “brothers”, “sisters”, “fathers” etc.

### 3.3 The Body of Christ.

1. This has no obvious Old Testament analogies.
2. It is a dominant feature of Paul’s ecclesiology (1 Cor 12:12 – 27; Eph 1:22- 23; 4:15 – 16; Col 1:18; 2:19).
3. In 1 Corinthians the unity in diversity of the church is emphasised, with mutual dependence and interconnectedness. Christ is not viewed as the head of the body.
4. In the Ephesian and Colossians passages, which refer to the universal church, Jesus is the head and the church is like the rest of the body. This implies rule, as the head (Jesus) rules over all (Col 2:9 – 10). The church exists to do the will of Christ and to be his presence in the world. The church as the body of Christ cannot be an invisible or mystical reality but must reveal in concrete form and behaviour the character of her head.
5. The reasons for the “use” of the body image appear to be as follows:
  - a. The church participates in the life of Christ. To be “the body of Christ” is to be taken up into the eschatological character of the Christ event. In the new reality constituted by the humiliation and exaltation of Christ a depth of relatedness impossible for the old people of God is actualised, this is communicated by the “body” language of the New Testament.
  - b. As the church cannot be without Christ, so Christ cannot be without the church. Jesus is the Christ not by being in communion with the Father alone, but because in the plan of God he is intrinsically related to the church in the Spirit. Christ is a relational reality who exists “for us”. To think of Jesus as a reality separate from his body the church would be to conceive of him as an individual and not as a person. (This is also taken up in the “bride” metaphor in the New Testament.)
  - c. It is because Christ is the Saviour of the church that it is his body (Eph 5:25 – 30). The new humanity of the second Adam is so centred, dependent and subjugated to him through his saving acts that it may be called his “body”. (Note the analogies to Eve being of the body of Adam, his unfaithfulness to her in the Garden of Eden and her disobedience to the Word of God she had heard from him.)

### 3.4 The Temple of the Spirit

1. The temple image has its origins in the Old Testament. The purpose of a temple in the ancient world was to be a place where the divine being would be worshipped and where he would dwell. (The temple is God’s house, 2 Chron 6:1- 2; 7:16 etc.)
2. In the New Testament the church is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16 – 17; 6:19 – 20; Eph 2:19 – 22; 1 Peter 2:5).
3. It is the nature of the Spirit to immerse believers in the Father - Son relationship. He constitutes us in this way, as baptised members of the body (1 Cor 12:13), to be the children of God and brothers and sisters, first of Christ, and then of one another (Rom 8:29; Heb 2: 11- 12,17).

4. The Spirit does this because as the one who empowered Christ to go to the cross (Heb 9:14) and who raised him from the dead (Rom 1:4; 8:11; 2 Tim 3:16) he is the actualiser of the eschatological age (for in his bringing Christ for us history becomes eschatology). It is into this reality that the church is baptised in the Spirit (Acts 2:17).
5. The nature of the communion of the church with Christ in the Spirit is such that no relational distance exists, to be bridged by grace or something thought of as external to the life of God himself.
6. To be indwelt by the Holy Spirit means that the body of Christ is called to live in a holy way both in the world and in relation to each other, this is the context of the temple passages in 1 Corinthians and the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22- 23.
7. The Spirit's presence unites us to Jesus the one true worshipper of the Father, so that together we worship him " in Spirit and in truth " (John 4:23- 24).

### 3.5 The Church and the Fullness of God

1. The distinctions drawn above in terms of the nature of the church as the people/household of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Spirit are not divergent realities but cohere in terms of the purpose of the church to image the totality of the divine nature. Since the divine nature exists in the perfect complementarity of the diverse properties of the three Persons expressed in love, the love of God (God) cannot be expressed on the earth as it is in heaven (eschatologically) other than by these distinct realities. ( Household : Father; Body : Son; Temple : Spirit. )
2. This means that where any of the three relations is neglected or expressed in a manner which does not include the others, the revelation of God, which is the content of the gospel of salvation, will be impaired.
3. Only by living faithfully as the children of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, can each of the three Persons be imaged, the fullness of Father (Eph 3:19) Son (Eph 1:23; 4:10, 13; Col 2:9 –10) and Holy Spirit (Acts 2:11; 4:31; Eph 5:18- 19).

### 4. The Nature of the Church: The Kingdom of God

#### 4.1 The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament.

1. The primary term is *malak*, which means " to be king" or " to rule ". It has several cognates.
2. *Melukah* refers to " kingship" or the quality of ruling. This is referred to Yahweh twice (Ps 22:28; Obad 21).
3. *Malcuth* means " royal honour," " power," "dominion," in the early books of the Old Testament it refers to the rule of the king, in the later parts, where most of the occurrences are, it moves in meaning to the concept of realm. It is used for Yahweh's universal (Ps 103:19) and eternal dominion (Ps 145:13).
4. *Mamlakah* is the most common cognate. It means "right to rule " and " realm ruled ". God rules by right over Israel (2 Chron 13:8) and over the world (1 Chron 29:11).
5. The right to rule and realm ruled are two poles of the one basic concept. Israel is of central significance to God's kingdom, but one day all the nations will confess God as King (Zech 14:9,16).



## 4.2 Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

1. The main term in the New Testament is *basileia*, it means the state of being king, the nature of kingship. It thus refers to “dignity “ or “ power “.
2. Eighty per cent of the uses are in the Synoptic Gospels, particularly in the phrase *basileia tou theou/ton ouranon*. This was the topic of Jesus’ preaching (Mark 1:15).
3. In the teaching of Jesus the kingdom of God is both a present eschatological reality (Matt 11:2 – 26; Mark 1:14 – 15; Luke 4:21; 17:20) and a future event (Luke 21:31).
4. The kingdom is both a realm over which God reigns and the active ruling of God in power.
5. The latter is especially related to the overthrow of the power of the devil (Matt 12:28 – 29; Luke 10:9,18,20).
6. It is an urgent matter of radical decision that people enter the kingdom (Mark 9:47; Matt 21:31 – 32).

## 4.3 The Relationship between the Church and the Kingdom of God.

1. The church is not the kingdom. Jesus and the apostles preached the kingdom and not the church (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23,31). It would not make sense to pray “your church come “. The kingdom however encompasses all over which God rules, not just those who recognise his authority.
2. The kingdom power of God creates the church, for as people enter into the kingdom by new birth they enter into the fellowship of the church. The church is the product of the kingdom.
3. The church witnesses to the kingdom by preaching the gospel. (See under “1. “ above and Matt 24:14).
4. The church is the instrument of the kingdom as the followers of Jesus preach the good news , cast out demons, heal the sick, care for the poor and so on (Matt 10:8; Luke 10:17 etc.). As it lives out the life of Christ the church is the sign and anticipation of the kingdom on earth.
5. The church is the custodian of the kingdom, as it has been given the keys of the kingdom (Matt 16:19).
6. Both kingdom and church are eschatological realities. In its participation “ in Christ “ the church shares in the fullness of the reality of the End which has already come in Jesus. This is manifested by the transformation of human lives. Now this happens in a real but partial way (Matt 25:34; 1 Cor 6:9 -10), when Jesus returns for the church this will be complete (1 Cor 15:24 -28). (“Already” and “ not yet “.)
7. The mystery of the kingdom of which Jesus spoke (Mark 4:11) is revealed in the manifestation of the gospel as the mystery of God’s plan in Christ (Rom 16:25 – 26; Eph 3:3 –6; Col 2:2). Since Jesus is the King (Matt 25:34; Luke 1:33; Rev 17:14; 19:16) he is the full and final key to the kingdom rule of God which has been completely exerted in his saving work. This is why the apostles preach Christ (rather than the kingdom or the church), for he is the reality of both.

#### 4.5 Implications:

1. No particular ecclesiastical reality can be identified with the kingdom of God. This is true both for the claims of the Roman Catholic Church and various sectarian groups.
2. All forms of the church must be partial, temporal and culturally conditioned, for the kingdom has not yet come.
3. This encourages humility in the place of triumphalism which is the temptation where the church is confused with the kingdom.
4. The church is a dynamic and pioneering reality, drawing its life from eternity, unable to be constrained by any earthly structure.

#### 5. The Nature of the Church: The Church and Israel

1. This will be dealt with more fully in the section on eschatology. The following points need to be made here.
2. Israel understood her life to be constituted by the covenantal relationship instituted by God. This relates back to God's promises to Abraham, and not to the covenant at Sinai. The Law and the cult were introduced to regulate the already existing relationship.
3. Jesus' institution of the new covenant is the fulfilment and not the abrogation or replacement of the Old Testament promises to Israel (Luke 22:20; Heb 8:8 – 10).
4. Jesus is the heir of all God's promises. He is the Son of the woman (Gen 3:15), the "Seed of Abraham" (Gen 12:1 – 3), and the "Son of David" (2 Sam 7:12 – 16).
5. The gift of the Spirit ushers in participation in the life of Christ through the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. This was an eschatological reality which could not exist until Jesus had:
  - a. Fulfilled the law by his perfect obedience and faith (Rom 10:4; Heb 12:1).
  - b. Taken away the curse of the law by bearing its penalty for all (Gal 3:13).
  - c. Risen to new life in glory.
6. Pentecost was not the beginning of an entirely new phase of salvation but the renewal of the people of God.
7. Those who are in union with Jesus comprise the new Israel of God (Gal 3:29; 4:21; Rom 15:8). This is a relational reality that exists for all who have been inwardly circumcised (Rom 2:28 -29) and thus share the faith of Abraham (Rom 4:11 –12; 9:6 - 8), inheritance is by promise and not ethnic descent (Rom 9:25).
8. Believing Jews and Gentiles together make up the new humanity which exists only "in Christ" (Eph 2:11 –19).

## 6. The Purpose of the Church

### 6.1 The Functional Approach.

1. This emphasises the activities of the church.
2. These are usually designated in the following way:
  - a. Worship: ministry to God
  - b. Fellowship: ministry to one another
  - c. Discipleship: ministry to one another
  - d. Evangelism: ministry to the world
  - e. Social concern: ministry to the world
3. Scriptural support and explanation is then supplied for each area.
4. This is a valid approach, its danger is that these activities can obscure the essential nature of the church and lead to pragmatism.

### 6.2 The Ontological Approach.

1. This emphasises the nature of the church as a supernatural and eschatological reality.
2. The church does not merely engage in the various activities indicated above, but is constituted by them. It does not preexist these expressions.
3. The body of Christ is constituted by the Spirit as he apportions the *charismata* in terms of the diversity of the working of the Word (1 Cor 12 –14).
4. The partnership, or perfect union of Word and Spirit, is the means by which the church is united to the oneness of God. This trinitarian reality is found throughout the New Testament descriptions of the functioning of the church (John 4:24 [n.b. Jesus is the word of truth 14:6; 17:17]; Eph 5:16 – 19; Col 3:16 –17; Rev 1:1 – 2; 10 -11).
5. In the presence of the Father the Word is applied by the power of the Spirit so that the reality of the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Spirit is actualised in communion again and again as the assembly of God takes place. The church is lifted up by the Spirit to where Christ is in the very presence of God, this is the place from which she draws her life. (See later also, especially on the Lord's Supper.)
6. In this way the church manifests Christ, it is the fullness of Christ in corporate expression (Eph 1:22- 23; 2:19 –22; 3:8 – 13; 4:8 –16; 5:23-32). The church exists to be the full orbed testimony of Jesus (Rev 1:2,9; 12:11,17; 19:10).
7. The life of the church on earth is a preparation for her reign with Christ as his Bride in eternity (Dan 7:22; Luke 22:30; Rom 5:17; 1 Cor 6:2; Rev 5:10; 20:4 etc.).
8. The danger of this view is that the church becomes “other - worldly”, neglecting the historical reality of life in the world.

## LECTURE TOPIC 23: THE DOCTRINE OF MINISTRY

### 1. The Nature of Ministry

1. The Nature of Ministry: Biblical Terminology
2. The dominant New Testament terms to do with ministry (diakoneo, leitourgeo, doulos), simply imply 'service'.
3. The Nature of Ministry: Trinitarian Dimensions
4. The essential nature of ministry is the giving of life. The life of the trinity consists of mutual self – giving love. The Father, Son and Spirit give of all they have to one another, the outflowing of this giving will form the essence of ministry.
5. The Nature of Ministry: Creation and Preservation
6. According to Paul, God is the one who “gives all people life and breath and everything.” (Acts 17:28). The Father provides every good gift (James 1:17) to righteous and unrighteous alike (Matt 5:45), all blessedness comes from God (Acts 14:17). It is not too much to say that God makes himself the servant of humanity.
7. The Nature of Ministry: Sin
8. Being made, together, in the image of God, Adam and Eve had opportunity to serve one another in love. They were called to minister together as priests in creation by tending the earth, their rule over it would have reflected the kingdom of God and their faithfulness to the Word of God would have actualised their prophetic ministry.

Since sin is essentially a denial of God's Fatherly goodness, the result of “ the knowledge of good and evil “ is to turn humans into individuals who are basically centred on self -advancement. With the loss of true personhood, that is, true reflection of the communal nature of God, ministry was abandoned.

### 2. The Nature of Ministry: The Redeeming Ministries of the Old Testament

1. The history of covenant is the history of God calling humanity into partnership with himself in all areas of existence. God serves Abraham and his seed through covenant, so that they in turn, as servants of God, become the agents of universal blessing (Genesis 12:1 – 3).
2. Israel, if true to her calling, will be a kingdom of priests, mediating the knowledge of God in priestly service as a light to the world (Ex 19:5 – 6; Isa 60:1; 62:2).
3. In practice, under the Mosaic dispensation, ministry in the old covenant is focussed on prophets, priests and kings.
4. In the end time this will undergo a radical alteration, for all of God's people will be taken into ministry, the key to this is the internalisation of the knowledge of God and the outpouring of the Spirit (Jer 31:31 –34; Joel 2:28 – 32; Acts 2:12ff).
5. Alongside these expectations is the prophetic testimony to the coming of the complete minister, Messiah, in whom the Spirit will express the fullness of God (Isa 9:6 –9; 11:2).

6. In Second Isaiah are found the so called Servant Songs which express this from another angle:
  - a. The Servant Songs : Isaiah 42:1-7; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13 – 53:12
  - b. The Servant is :
    1. Called by God – Isa 42:1; 49:1, 5  
 cf. Jesus – Mt 3:16-17; 17:5; 12:18-20; Mt 1:20  
 Paul – Gal 1:15.
    2. Anointed of God for service – Isa 42:1b  
 cf. Jesus – Mt 2:16; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38  
 Christians – Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8; 1 John 2:20, 27
    3. Given words by God – Isa 49:2; 50:4  
 cf. Jesus – Rev 1:16, 2:12; 19:5; John 3:34; 14:10, 24; 17:8  
 Christians – Luke 21:15; 2 Tim 4:17
    4. Lays down his life for others – Isa 50:6; 52:13 – 53:12  
 cf. Jesus – Mt 26:67; Luke 22:63; numerous allusions,  
 e.g. Mt 8:17; John 10:14-18  
 Christians – Phil 2:17; 2 Tim 4:6; 1 John 3:16 etc
    5. Receives the fruit of his labour – Isa 42:7; 49:4-6; 53:12  
 cf. Jesus – Luke 4:18; Acts 13:47; 26:23 etc  
 Christians – 1 Cor 15:58; Gal 6:9; Heb 6:10.
3. The Nature of Ministry: Incarnation
  1. Jesus is the One Sent by the Father  
 This is the source of Jesus' authority in ministry. He is conscious of being sent by the Father (John 4:34; 5:23,30; 6:29,38; 7:16; 9:4 etc.), as such he is the life of the Father (John 14:6) and the gift of the Father (John 4:10). He is the one through whom the Father will include men and women in his own life and love.
  2. Jesus is the Reality of the Covenant  
 (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2; 89; 110; Isa 42:6; 49:8; Matt 26:28; Heb 7:22; 8:6; 9:15 12:24; 13:20 - 21)
  3. Jesus is the True Prophet, Priest and King (See lecture topic 9.)
  4. Jesus is the Servant of the Lord  
 Jesus is the Servant of the Lord whose entire life work is a matter of service. It is in terms of service that he expresses his self-understanding of his coming (Luke 4:16-21; Mark 10:45).  
  
 He is marked out in the role of Yahweh's Servant by God's own testimony (Mark 1:11; John 1:29,36), a subject which is consistently on his mind (Mark 9:31; 10:33,45; 14:21,24,41) especially as he approaches death (Luke 22:37; John 13:4ff; Mt 26:28).  
  
 The authors of the New Testament all emphasize the nature of Jesus' servanthood (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30; 8:32-33; Phil 2:6-11; 1 Peter 2:21ff).

## 5. Jesus is Filled with the Spirit

(Matt 11:20-33; 13,54,58; Mark 6:2-5; Luke 4:18 –21,36; 5:17; 6:19; 10:13; 19:37; Acts 10:38 etc.)

The purpose of the presence of the Spirit in the life of Jesus is that he may accomplish the life – giving purposes of the Father.

## 6. Jesus is the Reality of all Ministries

Jesus contains in himself the fullness of the new covenant ministries. He is the apostle (Heb 3:1), prophet (Luke 13:33), evangelist (Mark 1:15), pastor (John 10:11; 1 Pet 2:25; 5:4; Heb 13:20) and teacher (Mark 1:27). Likewise he is called ‘slave’ (Phil.2:7), ‘deacon’ (Rom 15:8 etc), ‘priest’ (Heb 5:5; 8:1) and ‘overseer/bishop’ (1 Peter 2:25). This means that all New Testament ministries are essentially of the same order, that is, as sharing in the ministry of Christ they are non hierarchical.

## 4. The Nature of Ministry: Participation in the Ministry of Christ

### 1. Christ Appoints the Ministers of the New Covenant

- a. As the ascended Lord, Jesus gives the ‘5-fold’ ministry gifts for the good of the whole Church (Acts 2:33; Eph 4:7-11).
- b. This is repeatedly stated in terms of the life of New Testament ministers: Paul (Acts 9:15f; 26:15ff., Rom 1:1, 1 Cor 1:1, etc.), Peter (1 Peter 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1), James (1:1), Jude (1:1) and John (Rev 1:1).

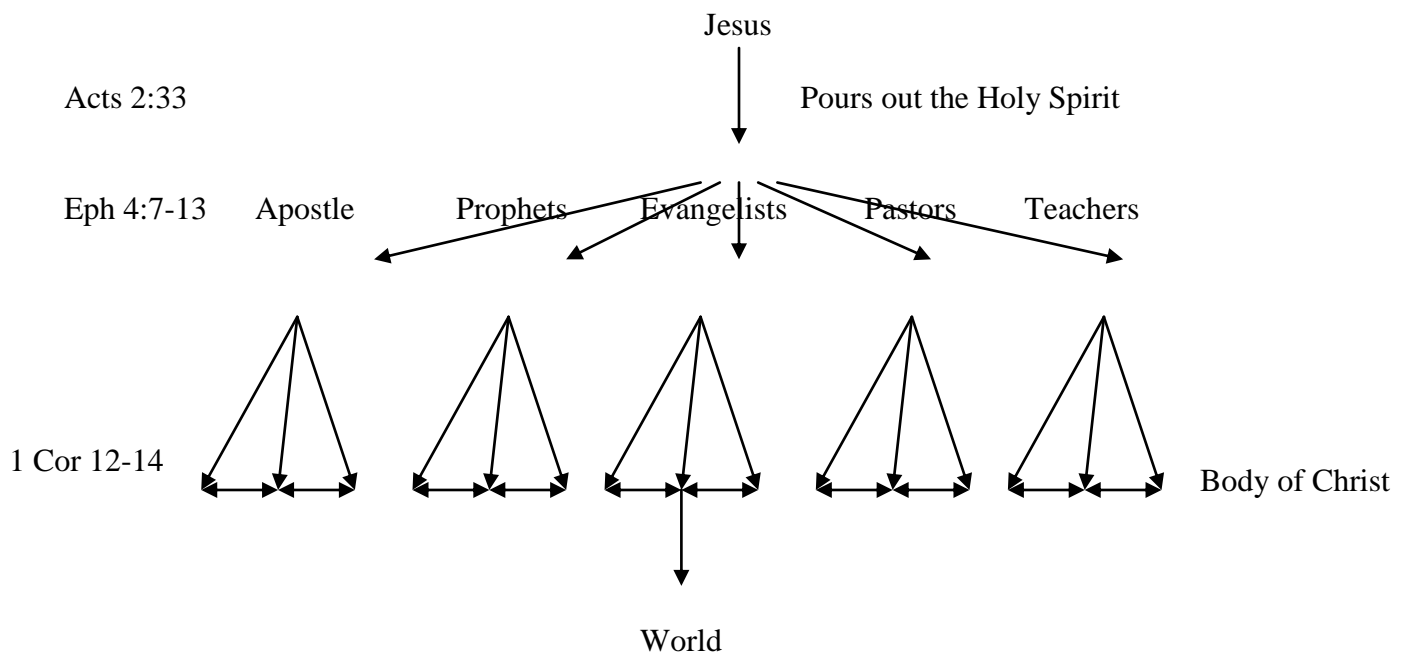
### 2. Jesus Shares his Ministry through the Spirit

- a. The gift of the Spirit means that the eschatological age of the new covenant has arrived, Jesus imparts the knowledge of the Father’s love through the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:17ff).
- b. The connection between the Spirit and ministry, e.g. Acts 8:29;13:1ff; 2 Cor 3:4ff ; is not external but the way in which we are included in the expression of the life of God.

### 3. Jesus Shares himself as the Gift of the Life of the Father

- a. Jesus does not stand to Christian ministry as an historical example to a present imitation, but the life of Christ is the content of Christian ministry. Jesus seeks to serve his Bride through the power of the Holy Spirit by the gifts he gives in the Body.

Having ascended to the Father’s right hand where he has received the promise of the Spirit, the reigning Lord loves the Church through the Spirit as the content of his glorious life (Acts 2:33). This glorious ministry of the Spirit, is, in Paul’s words, ‘the ministry of justification’ (2 Cor.3:9). Justification, as the verdict first passed on Christ (Rom 1:4; 1 Tim 3:16) and then on the believer (Rom 5:1), sums up the entire content of the new covenant benefits (cf. 2 Cor 3:6). Here as in all ministry the pattern is : Christ receives from the Father, believers receive from Christ, believers pass on what they have received from Christ.



- b. From another angle, this is ‘the ministry of reconciliation’ (2 Cor 5:18). God, having reconciled the world to himself in Christ (2 Cor 5:19); Rom 5:10; Col 1:20), now draws us covenantally into relationship with himself so that we become his fellow workers (1 Cor 3:9) in the service of the gospel for the salvation of the world.

#### 4. Servants of One Another in Love.

As Christ has commanded us to serve each other (Luke 22:26; John 13:15-17), we must identify ourselves as servants of God (Acts 20:19; Rom 12:11; 1 Peter 2:16; Rev 1:1), and all acts of ministry as acts of service (Acts 6:1, 4; 19:22; 20:24; 1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 4:5; Phm 13).

### 2. Models of Ministry in the Local Church

#### 1. The Traditional Model (R.C., Orthodox, Anglican, etc)

1. Hierarchical – emphasis on ordination, office
2. Focus on authority as inherent right to command
3. Separates clergy and laity – clericalism
4. Based on a patriarchal view of the Trinity

(Monarchy of the Father, implicit differentiation of the essence of God with the Son and the Spirit essentially subordinated to the Father)

#### 2. The Democratic Model (Baptist, Congregational, etc.)

1. Non-hierarchical
2. Authority found in majority – democratic, political
3. Clergy are employees of laity – commercial
4. Based on an implicit denial of distinctions in the Trinity (Modalistic?)

3. The Community Model (Non - denominational, House Church etc.)
  1. Order without hierarchy
  2. Authority found in unity – ability to express love
  3. Clergy as laity gifted in particular ways for tasks, or no clergy at all
  4. Based on a view of the Trinity which emphasizes the Trinity as a voluntary community. Social Trinity.

### 3. The Nature of Ministerial Authority

#### 1. Authority as Institutional

The right to require obedience is referred back to a place in a chain of command. Essentially, the levels of authority constitute the institution, which may be ecclesiastical, e.g. Roman Catholicism, doctrinal, e.g. conservative Evangelicalism, or charismatic, e.g. Pentecostalism.

Not to obey is represented as unfaithfulness to ‘mother Church’, or ‘the Bible’, or a rejection of God’s ‘anointed leader’. There is an implicit identification between the ‘officers’, ‘orders’ or ‘ministries’ of the Church and the authority of God.

#### 2. Authority as Pragmatic

This operates in terms of a functional approach to life and ministry. In practice the pastor is respected to the degree that he ‘gets results’. This may be defined in terms of church attendance, numbers of converts, teaching ability, prophetic revelation and so on.

In practice, where institutional authority leads to clerical control, this position leads to control by strong-minded people in the congregation. (Or, perhaps, elders versus pastors.)

#### 3. Authority as Relational

Whereas the institutional position thinks of authority as inhering in persons per se, and the pragmatic position views authority as existing only in the operation of a gift, this position understands the Scripture to teach that authority inheres in gifted persons as they relate to others in service.

##### a. The corporate nature of authority

As the Spirit and the Son exist in communion with the Father, the gifts which they bring can only properly exist in the fellowship of the household of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of ministry exist within the sphere of the Spirit as the bond of love between Christ and the church. Where this love is not acknowledged there can only be disorder and abuse.

##### b. The priority of service

###### (i) Authority as gracious gift

The pattern of authority and submission revealed in the relationship between Jesus and the Father is the true content of all human authority.

The most ultimate statement that Jesus makes in this regard is that he ‘lives’ because of the Father (John 5:26; 6:57). Jesus is both Son of God and Son of Man because of the eternal initiating love of the Father. Although not representing an event in time, the Son is the gift of the Father. (The Holy Spirit the gift of Father and Son). The complete obedience of Jesus to the Father (John 5:30) is a response to this gift of life. Submission then is a voluntary recognition (gratitude) of the exercise of a life-giving capacity, and



authority is the ability to give for the good of another in love. The greater the capacity to give, the greater the authority. Likewise, the more one receives, the greater the mediated authority to give.

It follows then that Jesus, who gives his life freely for all in love for God and all of humanity (Mark 10:45; John 10:17-18), receives universal authority from the Father (John 17:2; Mt 28:19).

This is the authority of the mediator of eternal life (1 Tim 2:5), that resurrection life and glory imparted to the Son by the Father in virtue of his obedient suffering death (Phil 2:5-11).

(ii) Authority relates to suffering

The authority of Christ to bring salvation surpasses that of both the authority of God in creation and the redemption available under the old covenant. The new covenant effected in Christ's blood (Matt 26:28) issues in the Kingdom of God in the power of the new creation. This is a whole new order (2 Cor.5:17) of an eschatological kind (end-time, ultimate) impossible before the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The unsurpassable nature of this new reality in Christ came into existence only through his bearing away of sin, wrath, death, guilt and Satanic oppression in the cross, e.g., John 1:29; Rom 3:21ff; Col 2:15 f. It is the voluntary suffering of Christ in obedience to the Father, in love for the fallen creation, which constitutes the inner reality of his authority to bring in the new creation.

As a Son, he was perfected in his character, and so ability to receive from the Father, by his suffering (Heb 2:10; 5:8-9). This is a principle which relates to all the acts of the sons of God – the greater the suffering the greater the glory (Rom 8:17).

Paul constantly reminds his churches that his suffering is for their glory (Eph 3:13). As he fills up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of the Church the body of Christ is edified (Col 1:24). The pattern of the death and resurrection of Christ is repeated in the life of the apostle, as through his ministry he imparts eternal life to the Body of believers. ‘..always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be visible in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you’ (2 Cor 4:10-12 cf. 2 Cor 1:8-9). This principle of suffering for the good of others is the essential component of all authentic Christian ministry.

c. Submission relates to grace.

All ministry exists to build up the whole Church into ‘the measure of the full stature of Christ’ (Eph 4:13). This means that submission is not institutional nor functional but consists in a willingness to receive the grace of Christ (Christ) through the mediation of a human minister. The goal and the manifestation of this are one, Christ-likeness (Rom 8:28; 2 Cor 11:2). The richer the expression of the grace of God in the gospel, the greater the authority of the minister and the deeper the submission required and evoked. Gratitude for grace issues in love and obedience.

#### 4. Some Key Leadership Verses in the New Testament

##### 1. The absence of lordship

Mt 23:8 – “all brothers and sisters”

Mark 10:42-43 – “their rulers lord it over them ... But it is not so among you ...

the first among you must be the slave of all”.

2 Cor 1:24 - “I do not mean to imply that we lord it over your faith”

1 Peter 5:3 - “Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock”.

##### 2. Texts to do with obedience

Hebrews 13:17 - “Obey your leaders and submit to them ...”

Greek: peitho ‘to be persuaded’, and so to follow

##### 3. Texts to do with rule

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 - ‘respect those who labour among you and are

over you in the Lord...’

1 Timothy 5:17 - ‘Let the elders who rule well ...’

Greek: proistemi, can mean ‘to care for’

Arguably this is the true tense as in another passage

(1 Tim 3:4-5) the synonym used for this word (v5b)

certainly means “care for”.

## LECTURE TOPIC 24: THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE

### 1. Issues of Terminology: Sacrament or Ordinance?

1. The Meaning of “ Sacrament “
  - a. In Eastern theology the rites of the Christian church were called a *mysterion*. This is based on a Greek word found in several places in the New Testament (Eph 3: 2 – 3 etc.)
  - b. The Latin speaking western church translated *mysterion* as *sacramentum*, a term derived from an oath taken as a pledge of fidelity and obedience to a superior officer upon enlistment in an army.
  - c. The word “ sacrament “ is therefore not inappropriate, but it is never used of sacred rites in the New Testament, where the *mysterion* is always Christ in the gospel (Romans 16:25; Eph 3: 2 – 3; Col 1: 26 – 27).
  - d. There is then no intrinsic relationship between the terms *mysterion*, *sacramentum* and the rites of the church.
  - e. In the history of the church, especially in its western expression, the term “ sacrament “ became embedded in a ecclesiastical – soteriological complex with a range of associations which could not be supported by the Bible.
  - f. Most significantly, the efficacy of the sacraments depended primarily upon the dispensing agent, so that the faith of the recipient became a secondary issue.

### 2. The Notion of “ Ordinance”

- a. The Reformers, whilst abandoning or modifying the theology of the sacraments, retained sacramental language and some ideas which were unacceptable to the more radical elements of the Reformation.
- b. The term “ ordinance “ came to be favoured. Derived from the verb “ to ordain “, it is simply a practice that Christ has ordained.
- c. Ordinances, as acts of commitment, are signs of personal obedience. They are means for us to declare our loyalty to Jesus as Lord.
- d. Rather than being divine acts they are basically human, occasions when the participants can bear witness to the spiritual truths conveyed by the rite.

### 3. The “Sacramental Principle”

1. The basic concept is that created things function under divine grace as the vehicle of spiritual reality.
2. This principle is essential to the notion of general revelation (Ps 19, Rom 1:18ff etc.). In some sense, all created reality must bear witness to the Creator.
3. Humanity, as the pinnacle of the created order and the image of God, must be the ultimate sacrament.
4. Each of the major covenantal acts in the Old Testament is accompanied by a physical means of communication: the tree of life, the rainbow, circumcision, the Passover Feast, the stone tablets, the ark of the covenant and so on.
5. These physical realities are not arbitrary nor self – initiated but ordained by God.
6. They do not work automatically nor in some magical way. When they become idols they do not cease to be signs appointed by the covenant God, but become signs of judgement (Jer 7; Mic 3:11 –12).

#### **4. Christ the Sacrament / One Ordained by the Father**

- a. The incarnation resolves the implicit dualism in the “ sacrament “/ “ ordinance “ debate.
- b. Jesus is at one and the same time, and to a perfect degree, both the complete divine and gracious initiative and the free act of human responsiveness and obedience to the Father.
- c. The unity of the two natures in Christ is the basis and the reality of the possibility of sacraments or ordinances. The affirmation of this union prevents a polarisation between the material and the spiritual. The flesh of the Word prohibits a world denying Docetism that leads to insularity, withdrawal and the abandoning of spheres of life to the demonic. On the other hand, since the Word is more than flesh, not everything in the created sphere can be unambiguously affirmed. Compromise with the “ worldly “ must be rejected.
- d. Jesus is the reality of all that is communicated in general revelation. He is the ontological Word of God who has always been communicating the nature of the Father through the things that God has made through him (John 1:1ff; 1 Cor 8:6; Heb 1:1ff etc.).
- e. The physical signs of the Old Testament prefigure the New Covenant reality which comes in Christ (tree of life). True life is found in him (John 14:6), the taking away of final judgement (rainbow) is accomplished by his cross (1 Peter 18ff), his body sloughed off in death is the antitype of circumcision (Col 2:11- 12), the Passover finds its fulfillment in his passion.(1 Cor 5:7) etc.

#### **5. The Nature of Sacraments / Ordinances**

1. Sacraments/ Ordinances as Visible Words.
  - a. Both audible words and visible signs from God are gracious acts and are therefore not essentially dissimilar in nature.
  - b. It is therefore possible to consider sacraments/ ordinances as visible words.
  - c. From the beginning however God has always used his spoken word to interpret the meaning of the physical world, including those things that he has specifically ordained. Material realities are not self - explanatory.
2. Sacraments/ Ordinances as Signs and Seals of Promise
  1. All sacraments / ordinances are related to an antecedent promise of God.
  2. Their power does not originate in either the faith of the recipient or the operation of a performance, but to the fact that God has established a connection between them as signs and that to which they point (signify).
  3. As such they are, in the graciousness of God, “effective signs” or “seals “ (Rom 4:11). They confirm and guarantee to faith the promise of God.
  4. Faith expresses itself in the enactment of these God – ordained rites, and it is this relational element which is pleasing to God (Heb 11:6).
  5. The initiative belongs with God the Father, who is the origin of the promises, they are realised in the life of Christ, revelation of these realities comes only by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.
  6. Sacraments and ordinances are therefore not primarily objective nor subjective but a place of personal connection with the trinity.

## **6. Sacraments/ Ordinances of the Gospel**

1. Since all the promises of God are realised in Christ (2 Cor 1: 21 –22), all that God has ever pledged sacramentally is now expressed in the good news of Christ.
2. Sacraments / ordinances cannot therefore be separated from the gospel. They are visible and tangible expressions of what is conveyed audibly in proclamation. Their only difference from the spoken gospel is their form.
3. Nevertheless, the Word preached and spoken has a priority, it interprets the signs of God and explains their meaning for us. Without this form of the Word the sacraments / ordinances lack a meaning context.
4. Sacraments / ordinances stir up faith not by pointing to themselves, either in some magical way or as an expression of commitment, but by pointing to Jesus who is the content of the promises.

## **7. The Gospel and the Number of Sacraments / Ordinances**

1. There has been much debate over the number of sacraments / ordinances. The Roman Catholic church adheres to seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, confession / reconciliation, holy communion, ordination, marriage, and the anointing of the sick (last rites).
2. The Reformers and Protestants generally have limited the number of ordinances to two, baptism and the Lord's Supper.
3. Some Protestant groups have included other rites, particularly footwashing.
4. Given the principle expressed above however, there is an essential connection between baptism and the Lord's Supper and the gospel which is not found in the other acts. They alone express the central saving events of the life of Christ, his death and resurrection.
5. It is clear from the New Testament that both of these rituals were performed in the early church (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41; 8:36; 10:47 – 48; 1 Cor 11:17 –34).

## **8. Baptism**

### **1. Meaning**

1. The central association with baptism in the New Testament is that it is a sign of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom 6:1- 4; Col 2:11- 13). The immersion and re -emerging in the rite dramatically convey participation in the death and resurrection of Christ.
2. Baptism is the initiatory rite of the new covenant, and as such is the covenant sign and seal of the inner transformatory work of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 12:13). It is the consecration of Christians as temples in which the glory – Spirit dwells.
3. On our side, submission to baptism pledges our acceptance of the grace of God in Christ (1Peter 3:21).
4. It is strongly linked to the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 10:43 – 48; 1 Peter 3:21), the symbolism of washing is prominent.
5. Baptism is a mirror to Christ before it is a mirror to personal faith and commitment.
6. In baptism, the Father proclaims to the newly adopted member of his family “you are my beloved son” and pours out his Spirit.

2. Mode
  1. The arguments for full immersion as the only valid form of baptism are:
    - a. This corresponds to the meaning of the Greek *baptizo* : “ to plunge “ , “immerse “ , or “ dip “ .
    - b. The symbolism of dying and rising with Christ is only adequately conveyed by immersion.
  3. Arguments for sprinkling or pouring include:
    - a. Practical issues of application due to numbers or climate.
    - b. The use of other symbols, like sprinkling and washing to do with salvation in the New Testament (Titus 3:5; Heb 10:25; 1 Pet 1:2 etc.).
    - c. Accepting that while the symbol of immersion may be preferable it is only a sign to faith and not the reality itself (cf. Unleavened bread and wine).
  4. The Baptismal Formula
    - a. In Matt 28:19 the formula is Trinitarian, “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
    - b. This has been the traditional formula used in the church.
    - c. In Acts however, the formula used seems to be, “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5).
    - d. The material in Acts is possibly not a formula but a reference to the authority by which baptism was practiced i.e. the authority represented by the name of Jesus (4:7-10, 17- 18; 5:28, 40; 8:12; 9:27 -28; 16:18).
4. Subjects
  1. Arguments that the only proper recipients of baptism are believing adults include:
    - a. The only explicit examples of baptism in the Bible are of people who have personally responded to the gospel. It is a sign of the conscious beginning of a saving relationship with God.
    - b. Faith relates to promise, where there is no faith the application of water is meaningless. No one can enter the kingdom of God, of which baptism is a sign, without faith.
    - c. There is no evidence of subjects other than adults until late in the second century.
  5. Arguments that infants are proper recipients of baptism include:
    - a. The possibility that the household baptisms of Acts included infants (Acts 10:24; 16:15, 31 – 34; 18:18; 1 Cor 1:16).
    - b. That the electing purpose of God reaches out to include the children of believers in the covenant. This is argued by analogy with circumcision in the Old Testament and the nature of justification by grace alone. Salvation is primarily an objective affair.
    - c. Faith is needed for baptism to be effective, but this may come after the ritual.
  6. Effect
    1. Roman Catholics insist on the necessity of baptism for salvation. It is the means of regeneration.

2. Some Protestant groups point to Mark 16:16 as evidence that baptism is essential for salvation.
3. These views effectively deny that salvation is by grace alone through faith. Examples in the New Testament make it plain that faith is sufficient for salvation (Luke 23:43 etc.).

## **9. The Lord's Supper**

### **1. Meaning**

1. Unlike the rite of baptism, the Lord's Supper is a repeated event in the life of the church. As such it is an act affirming our continuance in the faith.
2. The presence of the bread and the wine are vivid reminders from God to the reality of the redemption effected through Jesus' passion and death (Matt 26:28). The Lord's Supper is a visible proclamation (gospel) of the efficacy of the saving work of Christ (1 Cor 11:26).
3. In taking the eucharist we actually share in the life of Christ by faith (Matt 26:26; 1 Cor 10:16).
4. The Lord's Supper is a family meal. The eschatological community of God's people is gathered around Christ as head and celebrates in an anticipatory way the joy of heaven (Matt 26:29).
5. The unity of all believers is signified by the common loaf in which they partake. All share in the one saving life of Christ.
6. The form of remembrance is not a simple mental and intellectual exercise of recollection, if we remember Christ it is not because he is absent, but because God has not forgotten us. God is remembering us in enabling us to remember him. This is what the sacrament / ordinance of the gospel proclaims.
7. If the communion is a covenant act then it is neither predominantly divine (Roman Catholicism) nor predominantly human (Protestantism) but a partnership.

## **10. The Nature of the Presence of Christ**

1. The Roman Catholic Position: Transubstantiation
  - a. The words of institution are taken literally.
  - b. The bread and the wine actually become substantially the body and blood of Christ.
  - c. Christ, through the words of institution spoken by the priest, is objectively present in the elements.
2. The Lutheran Position: Consubstantiation
  - a. The words of institution are also taken literally.
  - b. Luther taught that the elements do not "become" the body and blood of Christ but the body and blood are "in", "with" and "under" the bread and the wine.
3. The Zwinglian Position: No Special Presence
  - a. The words of institution are to be taken metaphorically or symbolically.
  - b. Christ is present in no different way than from other times. He is present spiritually.
  - c. His presence is to be located in the community of believers and in the faith of the individual.
  - d. Our personal remembrance is the key to the efficacy of the Supper.

4. The Reformed Position: Christ Present in the Spirit
  - a. The body of Christ remains in heaven, this is a function of the reality of his humanity.
  - b. The Zwinglian view is rejected as being subjective and one sided.
  - c. Christ is objectively present in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This is however realised only by faith union.
  - d. The bond which links the heavenly Christ and his people on earth is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit lifts us up to where Christ is, he is the bond of our participation in Christ.
5. Participants
  1. There is general agreement that those who have been baptised are the normal participants in the Supper.
  2. For some churches this will be restricted to adult membership. In other cases those who have been baptised as infants will be admitted.
6. Effects
  1. The Lord's Supper is not essential to salvation. It operates within an already existing saving relationship.
  2. If the Lord's Supper is thought of as a covenant meal it impacts both sides of the covenant relationship in terms of mutual promises and obligations:
    - a. God is stirred up in terms of his own gospel promises to do good to his people in forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life.
    - b. The human participants pledge their covenant loyalty and obedience and are confirmed in their faith by the witness of the Spirit to God's grace in Christ.
7. Abuse of the Supper leads to it being turned into a sign of judgement (1 Cor 11:27 – 30).



## LECTURE TOPIC 25: INTRODUCTION TO ESCHATOLOGY

### 1. INTRODUCTION TO ESCHATOLOGY

#### 1.1 The Nature of Eschatology

(a) Literally ‘the doctrine of the last things’

**eschata** = last things

**eschaton** = the end.

(b) Deals with questions concerning the completion of God’s work in the world.

(c) Can be regarded as the completion of the doctrine of the person and work of Christ.  
Focus on Jesus’ liberating kingly rule.

(d) This leads on to the thesis that eschatology is not an attempted description or theological science relating to some future period of time, but stages in the life of the person of Jesus Christ. the “last one” (*eschatos*, Rev 1:7; 2:8; 22:13).

(e) From a perspective ‘in Christ’ the end of the world is not a far off distant time

#### 1.2 Eschatology as Goal Directed Christology

##### 1.2.1 Jesus as the Goal of Creation

Jesus is the “Alpha and Omega” (Rev. 1: 8; 21: 6; 22: 13), the “beginning and the end” (Rev. 22: 13), the “first and last” (Rev. 1: 17; 2: 8; 22: 13). As the “beginning of God’s creation” he is its starting point, and as the “end” he is its goal. In the purpose of the Father creation moves from Christ to Christ,” all things have been created through him and for him” (Col. 1:16).

Since the beginning and end of creation is a **person** then the coming of this last one means that the last days have come. This is to note that the New Testament nowhere uses such expressions as “last days” and “end of the ages” to refer to some indefinitely future period.

See, for example, Acts 2: 17; Heb. 1: 2; 9: 26; James 5: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 20; 2 Pet. 2: 3. According to 1 John 2: 18 this is already “the last hour”.

##### 1.2.2 Jesus as the Content of Eschatology

Eschatology can be described in terms of three moments in the life of one person, Jesus Christ

- 1) The first of these is Christ **for us**. The cry: “It is finished.” (John 19:30) means a real transformation of all things in Christ.
- 2) The second stage consists of Christ being **in us** by his Spirit applying to us what has already been achieved in him
- 3) Finally, Jesus will come again **with us** at the End. This stage will be reached **through** Jesus as he brings to fulfilment all of God’s covenant purposes for creation. At this point the Church will be perfected, Jesus will complete in us what is complete in him and has been in process in us. This will not require any activity on our part.

#### 1.3 The Dimensions of Eschatology

1. Present and future - the ages overlap cf. time and eternity. (Gal 1:4).
2. Individual and cosmic

3. This worldly and other worldly - the kingdom of God is a reality now and must impact all dimensions of human existence, e.g., social justice.
4. The Church and the world - the hope held out in the Gospel of the Kingdom is offered to all people. The Church exists for the Kingdom and is the vehicle of this hope.
5. Natural and supernatural - the coming of the kingdom of God cannot be realised by any immanent process of social reform but only by the supernatural operation of God's Spirit.
6. Jews and Gentiles-the Jewish people have a unique status and place in God's plan.

## 2. REVELATION

### 2.1 Principles of Interpretation

#### 2.1.1 The Centrality of Christ

The title of the book, 'the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass...', indicates that the central theme is the person of Christ as he reveals the future

Revelation is primarily a revelation *of Jesus* (1:1). This book gives us the most complete picture of who Jesus is following His resurrection and ascension. He is revealed as God 1:8 cf 1:17, glorious 1:14-16, the Lion and the Lamb 5:5-6, still human 1:13, having great authority 2:26-27, and the mighty conqueror 17:14. The secondary purpose of Revelation is to bring encouragement by outlining things which were soon to take place (1:1). This outline is given as visions, encoded in rich symbolism, which we must seek to decode or interpret.

#### 2.1.2 Parallelism

1. The book of Revelation consists of seven sections. They are parallel and each spans the entire new dispensation, from the first to the second coming of Christ.
2. The seven sections may be grouped into two major divisions. The first major division (ch 1-11) consists of three sections. The second major division (ch 12-22) consists of four sections.
3. The seven sections of the Apocalypse are arranged in an ascending, climatic order. The final judgement is first **announced**, then **introduced**, and finally **described**.
4. In the seven seals we see things from the perspective of the suffering church. In the seven trumpets we see things from the perspective of the world under judgement. In the seven bowls we see things from the perspective of the temple, from the throne of God.

#### 2.1.3 Literalism

1. If the literal meaning of any word or expression makes good sense in its connections it is literal; but if the literal meaning does not make good sense, it is figurative.
2. Since the literal is the most usual signification of a word, and therefore occurs much more frequently than the figurative, any term will be regarded as literal until there is good reason for a different understanding.
3. The problem with this approach seems to be that it ignores the literary genre of the Apocalypse, which is highly symbolic.

## 2.2 Symbolism

### 2.2.1 Symbolism and prophecy

1. Approach symbolism with humility.
2. Recognise the primacy of imagination over reason. (Learn to see the pictures before you try to analyse them.)
3. Find the meaning in context.
4. Look for the prophet's pastoral concern.
5. Look for the main point.

### 2.2.2 The Symbolism of Revelation

Apocalyptic literature is distinguished by the use of conventional symbols

Practical reasons existed for the book of Revelation to be written in a sort of code language. This decreased the likelihood of Roman authorities recognising the seditious nature of the book.

### 2.2.3 Symbols of the Book of Revelation

#### **Colours**

White is the symbol of victory; Red is the colour of aggression; Black indicates famine or starvation; Pale Grey is the colour of death.

#### **Numbers**

4 is the number of the created world, indicating the four points of the compass.

7 is the number of completion, often referring specifically to the work of God.

10 is the round number, meaning the generalization 'all of...'.  
 12 is the number of the people of God. It probably retains this meaning even when John's source indicates the 12 signs of the zodiac.

6, just short of 7 is the number of man, meaning 'imperfect'.

3 1/2, half of 7 means 'definitely limited'.

24, double 12 means both the Old and New Covenant people of God.

The meaning of a number is intensified when it is squared or cubed.

The meaning of a number is intensified when it is squared or cubed.

When one number is multiplied by another, both meanings are included.

#### **Visual Symbols**

Lampstands, or candelabra, are symbols of gathered churches.

A book or scroll indicates the heavenly record. The concept behind the symbol is that everything which is to happen on earth has already been recorded in the eternal sphere. It is almost an astrological concept.

A seal sets something apart as private property of the one who does the sealing. When a record is sealed, it is closed off from human consideration.

A trumpet announces an event.

Eyes indicate knowledge; horns represent power; heads mean rulers.

Incense is the symbol of prayer.

A bowl carries some aspect of heaven to earth, or earth to heaven.

The sea represents evil human government, the land represents organised religion, distinct from the Christian faith.

Harlotry or fornication means idolatry, falsifying the truth of God.

Jewels represent glory.

Flowing water indicates life or truth.

The master symbols of the book i.e., seals, trumpets, bowls do not refer to specific events or details in history alone, but to principles that are operating throughout the history of the new dispensation.

- (a) The events initiated cover vast areas of the earth e.g., the fourth part of the sea.
- (b) Vast multitudes of people are involved e.g., 9:20 'the rest of mankind' cf. 16:16.
- (c) The symbols usually come in groups of seven, which indicates completeness.

## 2.3 Schools of Interpretation

### 2.3.1 Praeterist

Latin : **praeterire** = 'to go by', i.e., the events of Revelation have already passed by.

#### (a) Outline

Revelation produced by a church fearful of Roman persecution. The beast is the Roman Emperor, the false prophet is the cult of emperor worship etc. Though great martyrdom may ensue, Christ will shortly return, destroy Rome and set up his kingdom on the earth.

#### (b) Evaluation

- (i) Positively - roots the book in its historical context.
- (ii) Negatively - ignores the prophetic claim, treats the book like Jewish apocalyptic, implicit denial of inspiration, book is mainly irrelevant.

### 2.3.2 Historicist

#### (a) Outline

The book is an historical overview of history from Christ's first coming up to his second. Specific events, nations, persons, etc., are sought in history that fit the seals, bowls, trumpets etc. The 7 churches of Rev 2-3 represent the 7 ages of the church. The beast and the false prophet represent political and religious aspects of the Papacy (Luther etc.).

#### (b) Evaluation

- (i) Positively - makes at least part of the book relevant to all generations, and strengthens faith in that the whole of history is seen to be under the control of God.
- (ii) Negatively- most of the letter becomes irrelevant to the original recipients.
  - confusion over time line and which events are covered in the book; this makes the book pointless.
  - tends to focus on events in the writers sphere of interest e.g., W. Europe, N. America.
  - each author tries to work out a scheme that finishes in their own day.
  - depends on historical knowledge not available to all believers.

### 2.3.3. Futurist

#### A. Moderate Futurism

##### (a) Outline

The seven letters are to seven real churches, but these are representative of the entire church (not symbolic of such). The seven sealed scroll contains God's inheritance for his people founded on Christ's death. The kingdom of God comes through judgement on evil. The first five seals (conquest, war, famine, death, martyrdom) are agencies of God preceding the end. The sixth seal brings us to the end of the age, the coming of the great day of the Lord and the wrath of the Lamb (6:16-17). The seventh seal is not accompanied by a woe, from 8:1 on the contents of the scroll are revealed. This describes the judicial and redemptive events that constitute the future consummation.

##### (b) Evaluation

- (i) Positively - makes dimensions of the book relevant to every generation.
- (ii) Negatively - could lead to indifference about the time of the end e.g., in a 'Christian' civilization.

#### B. Extreme Futurism (Dispensationalism)

##### (a) Outline

Chapter 2 and 3 represent seven periods of church history leading up to the rapture of the church (4:1). The rest of the book deals with events approaching the Second Coming. The events described by the bowls, trumpets and seals belong to the time of 'Jacob's trouble' (Jer 30:7) i.e., the great tribulation. The people of God on earth are converted Jews (144,000) who evangelise the nations. They are persecuted by the head of a restored Roman Empire (Beast). The conflict is between Anti-Christ and Israel. (All this is tied to the numbers in Daniel.)

##### (b) Evaluation

- (i) Positively - creates expectation.
- (ii) Negatively - makes most of Revelation irrelevant to all but the last generation, and to Jews. makes many exegetical assumptions.

### 2.3.4 Idealist (Symbolic or Poetical)

##### (a) Outline

Abandons historical and prophetic elements. Book sets out in poetic form certain basic theological conceptions, the principles by which God acts throughout human history. The symbols represent spiritual powers at work in the world. The emphasis is on the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

##### (b) Evaluation

- (i) Positively - assures the suffering believers of each age of God's final victory for them.
- (ii) Negatively - encourages subjective interpretation.  
- apocalyptic symbols refer to real historical events.

### 2.3.5 Conclusion

No single view is completely satisfying. Elements from all the schools of interpretation need to be combined.

### 2.3.6 Summary.

#### INTERPRETATIONS OF REVELATION

Revelation	1-3	4-19	20-22
Preterist	Historic Churches	Symbolic of Contemporary Conditions	Symbolic of Heaven and Victory
Idealist	Historic Churches	Symbolic of Conflict of Good and Evil	Victory of Good
Historicist	Literal Historic Churches	Symbolic of Events of History: Fall of Rome, Mohammedanism, Papacy, Reformation	Final Judgement Millennium (?) Eternal State
Futurist	Seven Stages Of Church History	Future Tribulation Concentrated Judgements on Apostate Church And on Antichrist Coming of Christ	Millennial Kingdom Judgement of Wicked Dead Eternal State

### 3. INDIVIDUAL ESCHATOLOGY

#### 3.1 Death

##### 3.1.1 The Origin of Death

Its origin lies in God's judgement upon sin (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:21).

##### 3.1.2 Death is a sign of condemnation (Rom 6:23).

##### 3.1.3 Death is an experience of God's wrath (Ps 90:5-7; Rom 1:32; 5:16; Gal 3:13.)

##### 3.1.4 Death holds man in bondage to Satan through fear (Heb 2:14-15).

##### 3.1.5 The potency of death is sin.

'The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law' (1Cor 15:56).

##### 3.1.6 The full meaning of death is revealed in the Cross.

##### 3.1.7 A Christian need not fear death.

A Christian has died already with Christ and risen with Christ (Rom 6:1ff). Death now means an entry into eternal glory (Phil 1:20-23; Acts 7:56 ff.).

### 3.2 The Intermediate State

This deals with the state of the human person between physical death and the resurrection of the body. The following elements need to be considered:

#### 3.2.1 The Old Testament

The Old Testament expectation of life after death is limited.

1. The older material suggests a shadowy life in **sheol** separated from the historical healings of Yahweh. All persons descend to the same place e.g., Num. 16:30; Ps 49:15-16; 88:3; Isa 5:14.
2. Other texts suggest a place of order and relative vitality e.g., Isa. 14:9-20; Ezek 32:18-32.
3. The doctrine of the resurrection emerged only late in the Old Testament period i.e., Ps 16:10; Isa 26:19; Dan 12:2.

#### 3.2.2 The New Testament

The New Testament is not concerned to teach directly on the intermediate state.

1. The singular expectation of the New Testament falls upon the Second Coming of Jesus and the resurrection.
2. The New Testament teaches that at death people pass to **hades** or paradise.
  - (a) It is a prison or underground keeping place for the ungodly (Rev 20:2,3,7; cf. 2Pet 2:4; Jude 6). A state of torment (Luke 16:19-31; 2Pet 2:9).
  - (b) Other passages suggest that the godly are located in a heavenly paradise in close proximity to God (Luke 16:9; 23:43; Heb 12:22, Rev 6:9, 7:9, 14:3). A state of blessedness.
3. The material in Paul is the clearest and most comprehensive.
  - (a) Phil 1:21-23 - 'to die is gain' for it is to be 'with Christ'.
  - (b) 2Cor 5:1-10

#### 3.2.3 Soul Sleep.

1. In various places the New Testament speaks of Christians 'falling asleep' or of those who have 'fallen asleep' (John 11:11; Acts 7:60; 1Cor 7:39; 11:30; 15:6,18,20; 1 Thess 4:14-15).
2. However:
  - (a) 'Sleep' was a popular euphemism for death in Greek literature and the L.X.X. (1King 1:21; 2:10).
  - (b) Nothing in these passages implies death and unconsciousness.
  - (c) All of these uses refer to the death of believers, because the power of death has been abolished by Christ.

#### 3.2.4 Purgatory

1. Those who are in a state of grace but imperfect need to go to a place of cleansing to be freed from their sins. This is purgatory. Here souls fully pay the satisfaction due for their sins - this they do by passive suffering.

2. Texts cited include 2 Maccabees 12:43-45; Matt 12:32 (taken to imply that some sins can be forgiven in the world to come) and 1 Cor 3:15 'if any man's work is burned up...'

2 Maccabees has no force as it is not canonical. Matt 12:32 does not relate to sin in the age to come. 1 Cor 3:15 refers to a fire which attacks works and not persons; the fire is not to be literalised, the loss is a loss of reward at the Last Judgement.

The doctrine of purgatory denies the complete nature of Christ's atoning sacrifice and the reality of justification.



## LECTURE TOPIC 26: THE SECOND COMING

### 4. THE SECOND COMING (PAROUSIA)

It has been estimated that one in nine New Testament verses refers to the return of Christ. It is therefore a major item in Christian theology.

#### 4.1 Events Attending the Parousia

4.1.1 The parousia is necessarily impending.

1. Jesus urged his disciples to be ready (Matt 24-25).
  - redemption is 'near'. (Luke 21: 28).
  - the end is 'soon'. (Rom. 13: 20; 1 Cor. 7: 29; Heb. 10: 37).
  - the end is 'at hand'. 1 Pet. 4: 7).
  - the Judge is 'at the door'. (James 5: 8-9).
  - Rev. 1: 1 'shortly'; 3: 11 'coming soon' cf. 22: 7, 12, 20.
  - Rev. 1: 3 'near'.
2. The New Testament emphasises eager expectation (Rom 8:19-25; 1 Cor 1:7; Phil 4:5 etc.). The return of Jesus is unexpected. (Mark 13: 33; Matt. 24: 4; 1Thess. 5: 2ff; 2 Pet. 3:10). We are to await our blessed hope, the coming of the Lord (Tit 2:13).

4.1.2 The calling of the Gentiles.

1. The Gospel must be 'preached to all nations' 'as a witness' (Matt 24:14; Mark 13:10; Rom 11:26) The New Testament considers this to be fulfilled.(Rom. 15: 19, 23; Col. 1: 16, 23; 2 Tim. 4: 7).
2. i.e., to all people groups in such a way that they have opportunity to accept it

4.1.3 The conversion of the fulness of Israel.

1. Zech 12:10; 13:1; 2 Cor 3:15-16; Rom 11:25-29.
2. This will be dealt with in detail later.

4.1.4 The great apostasy and the great tribulation.

1. Matt 24:9-12,21-24; Matt 13:9-22; Luke 21:22-24; 2 Thess 2:3; 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1-5; Rev 6:9; 7:13-14.
2. Futurists see this as a literal seven years preceding the parousia (Matt 24:21,29; Dan 9:26,27).
3. This overlooks the context of the Jewish War of A.D. 66 –70. (Luke 21:23).
4. This ignores the ongoing suffering of God's children (John 15:18 f, 2 Tim 3:12; Rev 7:14 ff; Rev 13:10), i.e. persecutions are fulfilled. cf. 1 Cor. 7: 26; Rev. 1: 9; 2: 9-10; 3: 10.
5. It ignores that in Revelation seven equals complete and so three and a half limited.

4.1.5 Signs of the End

1. Wars, famines, earthquakes (Luke 21:10-11; Lev 6:12; 18:8).
2. False prophets and false Christs, who will show great wonders and signs to lead many astray, if possible, even the elect (Matt 24:10-11,24; 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 4:3-4; 2 Thess 2:3,9).

3. Fearful astronomical portents involving sun, moon, stars and the shaking of heavenly powers (Matt 24:29-30; Mark 13:14-25; Luke 21:25-26). N.B. Acts 2:18-20 fulfilled.
4. A revival of the occult (1 John 2:18; 1 Tim 4:1; Matt 24).
5. An unprecedented increase in lawlessness (Matt 24:12; Luke 21:9).

#### 4.2 The Time of the Second Coming

1. Jesus explicitly taught that the precise time of his return would be unknown (Mark 13:32-33; Matt 24:36-44).
2. Mark 13:30 “this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place” refers to the generation which will witness the signs (vv5-23) of the coming of Christ with power to judge. In context, “these things” refer back to 13:4 (“this generation” refers to the generation of Jesus’ time: Mark 8:12, 38; 9:19, not a future generation); “these things” does not refer to the return of Jesus himself. The second coming is “near” from the first century on.
3. All attempts to calculate the time have failed.

#### 4.3 The Character of the Coming

1. Personal - Acts 1:11; 1 Thess 4:16 etc., i.e., Jesus will return in person, not as some life-force or cosmic principle.
2. Physical - Acts 1:11; 3:20-21; Heb 9:29; Rev 1:7. A visible bodily return is indicated. The parousia is public.
3. Unexpected - it will take people by surprise (Matt 24:37-44; 25:1-12; Mark 13:33-37; 1 Thess 5:2-3; Rev 3:3; 16:15). This is because it is the return of someone who is known by faith through love.
4. Cosmic in scope – earthquakes, celestial bodies, heavens.  
(Matt. 24: 7, 29; 2 Pet. 3: 10ff; Rev. 6: 12-17, 8: 5).
5. Glorious and triumphant - it is the final stage of Jesus’ exaltation. (Matt 24:30 1 Thess 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7; 1 Thess 3:13; 2 Thess 1:10; 1 Cor 15:25; Matt 25:31-46; Rev 19:11-16).

#### 4.4 The Unity of the Second Coming (The Rapture)

Latin: **rapere** = ‘to snatch’ or to seize i.e., the taking away of believers from the earth at the return of the Lord.

1. All Christians believe in a rapture e.g., Matt 24:31; 1 Thess 4:17.
2. Futurists of a dispensational sort teach a ‘secret rapture’ either seven years or three and a half years before the parousia. There is an invisible rapture ‘for’ saints (Matt. 24: 40; Luke 17: 34; John 14: 3; 1 Thess. 4: 15-17; Heb. 9: 28) prior to the visible Parousia ‘with’ the saints (Matt. 24: 30; Luke 17: 24; 1 Thess. 3: 13; 2 Thess. 1: 7-8; Rev. 1: 7). All the believers will suddenly be snatched up to heaven unexpectedly. Appeal is made to Matt 24:36-41 where ‘one will be taken and another left’. When Jesus returns he will bring **back** with him his resurrected and glorified Church (1 Thess 3:13; 4:14). In this way the Church is removed from the world before the ‘wrath to come’ (1 Thess 1:10; Eph 2:1ff), i.e., the time of the Antichrist and the great tribulation.

3. The texts used by dispensationalists do not support their position:
  - a) The sequence is not biblical – in Matt.24: 29-44 the “rapture” is mentioned **after** the Second Advent. There is only one event described. Verses 29-31, 36 describe the Parousia, verses 42-44 refer back to verse 36. In Luke 17: 34 the “rapture” follows the visible descent of v. 30.
  - b) Matt 24:36-41 - unbelievers are taken **in judgement** at the coming of the Lord. cf. Matt 13:30,40ff. Matt. 24: 45- 25: 13 refers to a visible separation at the judgment.
  - c) The ‘wrath to come’ is not temporal suffering but the Last Judgement 2 Thess 1:7-9).
  - d) It is the New Testament expectation that Christians will experience the days of distress (Matt 24:22) and the time of Antichrist (2 Thess 2:15).
  - e) The vocabulary of the New Testament does not allow for a secret parousia in contrast to a visible **apokalypsis** and **epiphaneia**.
    - (i) The parousia of 1 Thess 4:15-17 is hardly hidden ‘...a loud command ...the voice of an archangel...the trumpet call of God’, i.e., the **last** trumpet (1 Cor 15:52) after which no further display of God’s power will occur.
    - (ii) The parousia, Jesus said, will be as visible as lightning (Matt 24:27).
    - (iii) Christians are to set their hope for glory return of Christ (1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:6-7; Tit 2:13 etc). 1 Thessalonians 4:14 focuses on the return with Jesus of those who have already **died** cf. been ‘raptured’ as believers.

#### 4.5 The Identity of the Antichrist

1. **antichristos** (1 John 2:18,22; 4:3; 2 John 7) but also equated with the ‘man of lawlessness’ (2 Thess 2:3ff) and the beast (Rev 13:1ff).

##### **anti**

(a) ‘instead of’; ‘in place of’. He brings the Adamic claim to be equal to God to its peak by imitating Christ.

(b) ‘against’; ‘opposed to’.

Since he is a satanic substitute for Christ he is ‘against’ Christ.

2. Idealists and others deny the individual identity of the Antichrist. The figures in Scripture are descriptions of the ungodly and anti-Christian principles which manifest themselves in the opposition of the world to God and his kingdom. This opposition varies throughout history, but intensifies towards the end of time.
3. A majority view is that ‘Antichrist’ denotes an eschatological person, who will be the incarnation of all wickedness and therefore represents a spirit which is always more or less present in the world. Evidence for this includes:
  - (a) The delineation of Antichrist in Daniel 11 is more or less personal, and seems to refer to a definite person as a type of Antichrist (Antiochus Epiphanes).
  - (b) Paul calls Antichrist ‘the man of lawlessness’ and ‘the son of destruction’ (2 Thess 2:3).

- (c) His actions e.g., going into the temple of God and proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thess 2:4) are personal.
  - (d) John can use 'Antichrist' in the singular (1 John 2:18) referring to a future coming, or in the plural (1 John 2: 18, 23; 2 John 7).
  - (e) In Revelation the Antichrist has personal properties e.g., Rev 19:20 he is cast into the lake of fire.
  - (f) Since Christ is a person, but of a representative and inclusive sort, it is best to think of Antichrist in these terms.
4. There have been various figures in the course of history who have been identified with the Antichrist. These include Nero, The Pope, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Jimmy Carter, Henry Kissinger; Bill Gates and so on.
  5. 'The mark of the beast and the number of his name' (Rev 13:16-17).
    - Most likely represents an attempt to control human employment (hand) and human thought (forehead). The followers of Jesus have his name on their foreheads in heaven (Rev 14:1;22:4), and this is hardly to be taken literally.

The number 666 is literally translated as 'the number of man'. As the numerical value of the digits in the name 'Jesus' comes to 888, each digit being one more than the number of perfection, so the digits 666 yield the opposite phenomenon. They represent a persistent (triple) falling short, which is the essential characteristic of evil. The beast can never complete his attempts to image God and exalt himself above God.

## LECTURE 27: ISRAEL, RESURRECTION, MILLENNIUM

### 5. ISRAEL

5.1 Is the return of the Jews to Palestine the fulfilment of biblical prophecy?

5.1.1 Arguments in favour of this conclusion

1. God promised the land to Abraham and his posterity:  
‘the whole land of Canaan will belong to your descendants forever’. (Genesis 17:8)
2. The promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1) and Daniel (2 Sam 7:4-17) are unconditional.
3. These promises are not yet fully realised in perpetuity, therefore they must be in some future time yet.
4. The prophets predict a return from an exile among the **nations**. e.g. Isa.11:12; Ezek. 11:16-17; 12: 14; 17: 21.
5. This is distinct from the restoration from exile in the **nation** of Babylon. e.g. Jer. 29:10; Ezek. 37: 11f; Zech. 8: 1-9.
6. The nature of the return from exile under Cyrus’s decree of 539 B.C. is a poor imitation of the glory described in the prophetic predictions. e.g. Isaiah 40-55 cf. Neh.1. (Only a minority return, there is poverty, Gentile rule, no glory in the temple, there is no Jewish feast to commemorate this event etc.) The fulfilment of these words must yet be to come.
7. The conditions under which the modern nation-state of Israel was formed, and how it has been preserved, are nothing short of miraculous.

5.1.2 Arguments against this conclusion

1. The promises to Abraham hinge upon his obedience to the divine command to depart Haran (Gen 12:1), walk blamelessly before God and undergo circumcision (Gen 17:1-14). This is confirmed by his faithfulness over the sacrifice of Israel (Gen 22).
2. This relational expectation continues into God’s covenant with the nation of Israel.(Deut 7:10 - 11 etc).
3. Although God’s covenant with David seems unconditional (2 Sam 7:1-17), David interprets the fulfilment of God’s promises in terms of obedience (1 Kings 2:1-4; 2 Chron 7:17-22). This is the way in which God himself addresses Solomon (1 Kings 9:6-9). Israel will be cut off from land and temple, if unfaithful.
4. Exile to Babylon **is** exile to the nations e.g. Ps. 44: 12; Jer. 30: 10f; 31:10; 46: 27f; .Ezek 20: 34; 36: 19-20.
5. The New Testament applies the prophecies of a return to the building up of the church. i.e. the gathering of all nations to Jesus as Messiah. See Acts 15: 16-17 interpreting Amos 9: 11-12.
6. Old Testament terms applied to Israel are transferred to the church. For example, Peter says that believing Jews and Gentiles are ‘being built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ’ (1 Peter 2: 5). He goes on to use the nation forming language of God at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19: 5-6) ‘you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people...’ (1 Pet. 2: 9). ) The fulfilment of Ezekiel’s temple (Ezek. 40-48) is found in the church. Finally he applies Hosea’s words of Israel (2: 23) to the new situation: “At one time you were not God’s people, but now you are his people, at one time you did not know God’s mercy, but now you have received mercy.” (1 Pet. 2: 10).

Paul follows this course. Words addressed to Israel in the Old Testament are cited to Christians (2 Cor. 6: 2). Believers are the 'true circumcision' (Phil. 3: 3) who are inwardly Jews by the circumcision of the heart (Rom. 2: 29) through the Spirit (Acts 15: 9; 2 Cor. 3: 3). Abraham is their spiritual father (Rom. 4: 11) so that which was promised to him is pledged to them (Gal. 3: 24-29).

7. Old Testament restoration centres on recognition of the Messiah, something the modern secular state of Israel refuses to do. Only responsible covenant behaviour, that is, faith in Jesus, can ensure inheritance of the blessing of God.
8. The promises concerning the inheritance of Abraham (Genesis 17:8) are transferred to the Christian community. Peter takes the word 'inheritance', which generally in the Old Testament referred to the promised land (e.g. Psalm 105: 11), and uses it to refer to the Christian's inheritance in heaven (1 Peter 1: 3-5). The writer to the Hebrews speaks about the 'rest' which had been promised to Israel when they settled in the promised land under Joshua, but for him the 'rest' means all that Christians are invited to enjoy in their present experience and in heaven (Hebrews 3-4). Even for Abraham the promised land was only a symbol of the 'better country', the heavenly country which is God's ultimate goal for his people (Hebrews 11: 8-16). Paul says as much when he declares that God promised to Abraham and his descendants not 'the land' but 'the world' (Rom. 4: 13).

## 5.2 Jesus is the true Israel

1. He fulfils the prophecies spoken to Israel in the Old Testament. For example, he receives the gifts of Gentiles (Matt. 2: 11) predicted to Zion (Isa. 60: 1-6), and he is the one called out of Egypt (Matt. 2: 15 = Hos. 11: 1).
2. He applies to himself Old Testament texts related to Israel. For example, his (faithful) use of Deuteronomy 6-8 in Matthew 4: 1-11 and his use of Israel's national lament (Matt. 27: 46 cf. Ps.22: 1).
3. Jesus and the Gospel writers appropriate to him titles used of Israel. He is Isaiah's Servant (Matt.12:15-21 cf. Isa. 42:1-4), Daniel's Son of Man (Matt.26:64; cf. Dan.7:13), and the rejected stone that becomes foundational (Matt.21:42; cf. Ps.118:22).
4. He performs functions associated with Israel. The gathering from east and west (Matt.8:11-12), and of the elect (Matt.24:31) is exclusively in relation to himself.
5. He fulfils the destiny of Israel in himself. Israel's rejection of Jesus is anticipated (Matt.23:29-32) and means the formation of a new people of God (Matt.21:23-22:14). Yet it is through this rejection by old Israel as true Israel that Jesus dies as rebellious Israel, the covenant curses fall on him (Gal.3:13; 2 Cor.8:9; Isa 53:8; Dan.9:26). (This means disinheritance). He thus atones for Israel as the Servant of the Lord. By dying as Israel he dies representatively for the world, whom Israel had represented by her call (cf. Gen.12:2-3; Exodus 19:5-6). His resurrection reconstitutes Israel, he is the new Temple (Matt.26:61; John 2:19; 4:24-26) where true worship is offered (Hebrews 12:18-24).
6. Jesus is the one who fulfils the mandate given to Adam and Eve as the sons of God to rule the earth on his behalf. (Gen.1:26-28; Luke 3:38). He is the true seed of Abraham (Gal.3:16), the heir of all things (Heb.1:2; 2:5ff). As the Messianic King (Ps.2:7; Matt.3:17) all the promises of God find their "Yes!" in him (2 Cor.1:20). He is now heir of heaven and earth (Matt.28:18ff; 1 Cor 15:24; Heb.2:6ff) set over every rival power (Eph.1:20ff).

## 6. THE GENERAL RESURRECTION

### 6.1 The Biblical Material

#### 6.1.1 The Old Testament

1. Not an early doctrine e.g., not in Pentateuch.
2. Image of national resurrection e.g., Ezek 37
3. The problem of the suffering of the righteous provoked the expectation of other worldly recompense e.g., Job 19:25-27; Ps 49:15; 73:24-25; Prov 23:14.
4. It is clearly taught in the prophets, Isaiah 26:19, and especially Daniel 12:1- 2. This speaks of a resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous issuing in a judgement with eternal consequences.

#### 6.1.2 The New Testament

1. The doctrine had become highly developed in the intertestamental period, becoming one of the distinguishing features of Pharisaism.
2. Jesus accepted and taught the resurrection (Matt 22:23-33; John 5:25-29; 6:39-40,44,54; 11:24-25; 14:3; 17:24.)
3. Other important passages are 1 Cor 15; 2 Cor 5:1-10; 1 Thess 4:13-16; Rev 20:4-6,13.

### 6.2. The Nature of the Resurrection

#### 6.2.1 It is the Work of the Trinity

1. God raises the dead (Matt 22:29; 2 Cor 1:9).
2. The Son raises the dead (John 5:21,25,28-29; 6:38-40; 44,54; 1 Thess 4:16). This is an authority which the Father has given to the Son (Matt.28:19; John 17:2).
3. The Holy Spirit gives life to mortal bodies (Rom:8:11).  
N.B. parallel with resurrection of Jesus.

#### 6.2.2 It is a Physical or Bodily Resurrection

1. It is not a spiritual resurrection (2 Tim 2:18).
2. It is patterned after the bodily resurrection of Jesus, who is the 'first fruits' of the resurrection (1 Cor 15:20,23) and the 'first born' of the dead (Col 1:18).
3. Redemption must include the body (Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 6:13-20). This is implicit in the incarnation, effected in the resurrection of Jesus, and incorporated in the notion that salvation is a perfection or recreation of fallen nature.
4. It is literally stated in Rom 8:11.
5. Resurrection **means** 'a standing up again' (**anastasis**).

#### 6.2.3 It is a Glorified Body

1. The terms 'incorruption', 'immortality', 'power', 'glory', 'spiritual' all relate to the elevation of the body by the power of God beyond decay and dissolution.
2. We must suppose that only in such a body can human beings stand before the glory of God and live.

#### 6.2.4 It is a Resurrection of both the Righteous and the Wicked

1. This is clearly taught in Scripture (Dan 12:1-2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rev 20:13-15).

2. The biblical focus is on the resurrection of the just, for this alone is saving.

## 7. MILLENNIAL VIEWS

Millennium : the 1000 year reign of Christ upon the earth in the future.

### 7.1 Postmillennialism

#### 7.1.1 The Nature of the Millennium

1. The millennium will be an extended period, but not necessarily a literal 1000 years.
2. Christ returns **after** the millennium.
3. Postmillennialism is based less on Revelation 20 (the only place in scripture which speaks of a 'millennium') than on other parts of the Bible.

#### 7.1.2 Features of Postmillennialism

- 1 Postmillennialism is an optimistic view of history which has flourished in times of rapid church growth and revival
- 2 The major tenet of postmillennialism is the successful spread of the Gospel. Satan is bound during the period of the spread of the Gospel, so that he cannot deceive the nations.
- 3 The gospel will be so successful that the world will be converted. When the reign of Christ is complete and universal peace will prevail and evil will be virtually banished.
4. The Antichrist will appear towards the end of the millennium, but his time is short because the parousia is imminent. At the end of the millennium Satan therefore stirs up trouble, but is then permanently subdued.
5. Then when the Gospel has fully taken effect, Christ will return, that is **after** the millennium.

#### 7.1.3 Scriptural support

1. Ezek 36:27ff proclaims the transformation of society through inner spiritual renewal. Ps 47,72,100; Isaiah 45:22-25, Hosea 2:23 say that all nations will come to know God. Jesus taught that the Gospel must be taught in all nations before the end (Matt 24:14).
2. The parables of the kingdom (Mark 13) emphasise intensive and extensive growth.
3. Even where there are temporary setbacks and crises the Gospel will eventually triumph

#### 7.1.4 Weaknesses in Postmillennialism

1. The kingdom does not come by human effort or gradual evolution but by the unaided power of God.
2. The parables of the kingdom do not teach a total transformation of human history under the present conditions of existence.
3. The New Testament describes an increase in apostasy and tribulation before the coming of Christ, this is nowhere minimised e.g., Matt 24:6-14; 21,22; Luke 18:8; 21:25-28; 1 Thess 2:3-12; 2 Tim 3:1-6; Rev 13.
4. The Bible teaches that the end of the age will come suddenly, supernaturally, miraculously, catastrophically (Matt 19:28; 24:29-31; 35-44; Heb 12:26-27; 2 Pet 3:10-13).
5. It undermines the urgency of expectation of Christ's return.



## 7.2 Premillennialism

### 7.2.1 The Nature of the Millennium

1. The millennium comes **after** the return of Christ.
2. Jesus will reign on earth by a physical presence for 1000 years. Therefore the millennium lies in the future.

### 7.2.2 Features of Premillennialism

1. Premillennialists envision a sudden, cataclysmic event initiating the millennium. The rule of Jesus will be complete from the start of this period.
2. The conditions of the millennium will be radically different from anything we know in this age. There will be universal peace, extending even throughout the natural world (Isa 11:6-7). The saints will rule with Christ during this period (Rev 19).
3. Dispensationalists read the Old Testament prophecies concerning the restoration of the nation of Israel literally. Jesus will reign from David's throne in Jerusalem. The temple will be rebuilt, sacrifices will be restored (Ezek 45:17), the nations will travel up to keep the feasts (Zech 14:16). Israel will be converted in large numbers during the millennium.
4. Nondispensationalists do not accept many of these features. Israel's special place, being spiritual in nature, will be found within the church.
5. At the end of the millennium Satan and his forces are loosed from their bondages. A universal conflict occurs involving earthly nations. The forces of evil are destroyed. The final judgement takes place before the great white throne.

### 1.2.3 Scriptural support

1. The key passage for premillennialism is Rev 20:1-6.
2. This seems to teach a 1000 year rule of Christ separated by two resurrections. Since the same verb (**edzesan**) is used of both resurrections they must both be physical. Nothing in the context suggests a shift of meaning.
3. Those who participate in the first resurrection are not involved in the second. Only the first are said to be blessed and holy. Only believers share in the earthly reign of Christ.
4. This interpretation of Revelation 20 is supported by those passages in the New Testament where the Greek term **eita** is used in a temporal sequence to do with events at the end. **Eita** usually means "after that", so that when Paul says that "the end" is **eita** in relation to the return of Christ (1 Cor 15:23 – 25) he means a temporal sequence intervenes between them. This is the millennium.

### 10.2.4 Weaknesses of Premillennialism

1. The kingdom of God is made into an earthly and national kingdom, rather than a spiritual and universal one.
2. The Bible brackets the resurrection of the righteous and unrighteous (Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; 11:24).
3. The Bible does not separate the last judgement from the parousia (Matt 16:27; 25:31-32; Jude 14-15; 2 Thess 1:7-10; Rev 22:12).
4. Dispensationalism ignores the fulfilment of the prophetic promises in the person of Jesus, and the place of the Church as the true Israel (Rom 9:6; Gal 6:16).

5. Some premillennialists picture a mingling of glorified saints with humans in natural bodies on the earth - this is a mythological view of paradise
6. Even if **eita** does indicate temporal progression, the notion that unaided it indicates a break of one thousand years, or a major era in salvation history, is unlikely.
7. Rev 20:1-6 is capable of different interpretation:
  - (a) The book is highly symbolised. Nowhere else are its numbers to be literalised.
  - (b) The rest of the New Testament is read in the light of this difficult passage, not vice-versa.
  - (c) The whole passage is not taken literally e.g., the chain in v.1, the souls in v.4.
  - (d) The martyrs are not strictly speaking said to be resurrected, but that their coming to life and reigning with Christ is a resurrection.
  - (e) The text does not mention an earthly reign.
  - (f) No mention is made of Israel, the temple etc.

### 7.3 Amillennialism

#### 7.3.1 The Nature of the Millennium

1. Literally, 'amillennial' means no millennium i.e., no earthly reign of Christ. The final judgement immediately follows the Second Coming of Christ and issues directly in the final states of the wicked and righteous.
2. The millennium is the **present** reign of Christ with his saints from heaven.

#### 7.3.2 Features of Amillennialism

1. Amillennialism shares common views with postmillennialism. Satan is presently bound (Matt 12:29; John 12:31-32; Col 2:15). This does not necessitate a complete cessation of activity, as for example in 2 Thess 2: 6 – 7. Amillennialists also agree with (classic) premillennialists concerning the nature of the events which will precede the coming of Christ. There will be a great period of persecution and apostasy followed by the radical supernatural inbreaking of the kingdom of God.
2. Amillennialists differ from premillennialists, especially dispensationalists, in their interpretation of Old Testament prophecy. As a general rule prophecies find their fulfilment in Jesus and through him in the Church.
3. "Thus the binding of Satan, the resurrection of the saints, and the thousand year reign are metaphors for the present situation of Christians. As expected, the day of the Lord has quelled all opposition and brought peace for believers." Dumbrell, W. J. 1994: 342 *The search for order*. Grand Rapids : Baker. The Christian sabbath begun.

#### 7.3.3 Weakness of Amillennialism

1. It has a difficulty maintaining a consistent exegesis of Rev 20. The key problem for amillennialists is how to deal with the two resurrections of Rev 20:4-6. The most common interpretation is that the first resurrection is spiritual and the second is physical. The first resurrection is to be taken symbolically, it is regeneration, the second resurrection is to be taken literally i.e., physically. All those who share in the first resurrection share in the second, but not vice-versa.
2. It tends to be based on dogmatic rather than exegetical concerns.

3. It tends toward an identification between the kingdom of Christ and the visible Church.
4. It tends to focus on the kingdom as an other-worldly spiritual reality (in heaven).
5. It tends to take away the urgency of the return of Christ (realised, in part, by the gift of the Spirit to the Church).

## **LECTURE TOPIC 28: THE FINAL STATE**

### **8. THE LAST JUDGEMENT**

#### **8.1 The Nature of the Judgement**

1. It is visible.
2. It is public.
3. It is forensic i.e., in relation to the revealed will or law of God.
4. It is declarative. It is not an investigative judgement in order to determine the status of men and women before God, this has already been established by virtue of their response to the Gospel. (John 3:18, 36; 1 John 5:12)..
5. It is final i.e., eternal.

See Matt 25:31-46; John 5:27-29; Acts 24:25; Rom 2:5-11; Heb 9:27; 10:27; 2 Pet 3:7; Rev 20:11-15.

#### **8.2 The Judge and his Assistants**

##### **8.2.1 Christ is the Judge**

That Jesus is Judge comforts those who have accepted him and convicts those who have rejected him.

1. That Jesus is the Judge is taught in Scripture: Matt 25:31-32; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Phil 2:10; 2 Tim 4:1.
2. This is an honour conferred on the Son by the Father as a reward for his atoning work (Matt 28:18; John 5:27; Phil 2:9-10). It is the last stage of his exaltation.

##### **8.2.2 The Angels assist Jesus**

1. Matt 13:41-42; 24:31; 25:31.
2. They would seem to do this as agents.

##### **8.2.3 The Saints will Sit and Judge with Christ**

1. Ps 149:5-9; 1 Cor 6:2-3; Rev 20:4.
2. They will do this in their union with Christ.

#### **8.3 The Parties that will be Judged**

1. Fallen angels - Matt 8:29; 1 Cor 6:3; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6.
2. All people - Ps 50:4-6; Matt 12:36-37; 25:32; Rom 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 20:12. The sins of believers will be revealed as **pardoned** sins cf. John 5:24.

#### **8.4 The time of the Judgement**

1. At the end of history (Matt 13:40-43; 2 Pet 3:7).
2. It will be a fruit of the coming of Jesus (Matt 25:19-46; 2 Thess 1:7-10; 2 Pet 3:9-10).
3. It will immediately follow the resurrection (Dan 12:2; John 5:28-29; Rev 20:12-13).

## 8.5 The Standard of Judgement

1. This is the revealed will of God.
2. Gentiles who have not heard the Gospel will be judged by the law of nature inscribed on their hearts (Rom 2:12-16).
3. Israelites before Christ will be judged in terms of the Old Testament revelation.
4. Those who have heard the Gospel will be judged by their response to the Gospel.
5. Christians will be judged according to their manner of life as believers (Rom.14:10ff; 1 Cor.3:5ff; 4:4ff; 2 Cor.5:10).
6. There will be different degrees of retribution and reward according to the deeds done in the body (Matt 11:22,24; Luke 12:47,48; 20:47; Dan 12:3; 2 Cor 9:6).

## 8.6 The Comprehensiveness of the Judgement

1. It will take into account the secret thoughts and intentions of the heart.
  - (a) As the heart is the source of motivation (1 Sam 16:7 cf. Rom 8:27; 1 Thess 2:4) it must be judged by God (1 Cor 4:5 cf. Matt 5:21,27,33).
  - (b) This involves supraindividual guilt, or what it means to be fallen .
2. It will render to every person according to their works.
  - (a) This is clearly taught in the New Testament e.g., Matt 5:11f; 10:32f; 10:41f; Rom 2:5-10; 2 Cor 5:10.
  - (b) The motive of good works is not the reward but devoted and humble service to God (Luke 17:10 etc).
  - (c) The reward is a sign of God's good pleasure (Matt 25:21,23,28ff).
  - (d) The reward is God Himself (1 Cor 13:12; 2 Cor 5:7).
  - (e) This reveals that Gospel pardon is a miracle we could never naturally anticipate.
3. It will involve a pronouncement of sentence.
  - (a) It is a revelation of God's righteous judgement before his tribunal and all creation (Rom 2:5; 2 Cor 5:10).
  - (b) It is the public vindication of God and the glory of his grace.
  - (c) It will be a public pronouncement.
4. It will involve an execution of sentence.
  - (a) The righteous to everlasting blessedness: this honours the saints before angels, humanity and their enemies, "come you blessed of my Father.....".
  - (b) The wicked to everlasting misery: "depart". (Matt 25:32ff.)
5. It is final
  - (a) God is supreme Judge – there is no court of appeal
  - (b) God is omnipotent – it is vain to resist
  - (c) God's decree is inexorable – it is vain to entreaty (Isa.1:5; Ezek.8:18)
  - (d) The time for mercy is past (Rev.14:10). (Jonathon Edwards).

## 9. HEAVEN AND HELL

### 9.1 Heaven

#### 9.1.1 The Term 'Heaven'

1. Heaven can mean a place (Gen 1:1, Matt 5:18 etc) 'Heaven and earth' constitute the universe.
2. Heaven is a virtual synonym for God (Luke 5:18,21; Matt 21:25; John 3:27). This is clear in the Synoptic Gospels where Matthews uses 'kingdom of heaven' and Luke 'kingdom of God'.
3. Heaven is the abode of God. (Matt 6:9, 7:11, 21; 10:32 etc).
4. Heaven is the home of the angels who are God's servants (Mark 13:32; Matt 18:10; Luke 2:13 etc).
5. Heaven is the place from which Christ shall be revealed (1 Thess 1:10; 4:16; 2 Thess 1:7).6.
6. Heaven is the place where believers will be for all eternity (Matt 6:19-20; Col 1:5; Eph 1:10; 1 Pet 1:4-5 etc).
7. Heaven is the true home of believers. They are renewed, but the earth is not, therefore they experience alienation (Heb.11:13ff; 1 Pet.2:11; Phil.3:20-21; Col.3:2; 1Jn.5:19)

#### 9.1.2 The Location of Heaven

1. Heaven must be a place as well as a state.
2. The scriptures speak of a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1), of a regenerated universe (2 Pet 3:10-13 – this parallels the Flood, so it is not annihilation.). The new Jerusalem descends from heaven to earth (Rev 21). After Rev.21:1 there is no reference to heaven, for God is now on the earth (21:4ff).
3. What holds this all together is the person of Christ. Since the Father and the Spirit are pure spirit (John 4:24) the location of heaven as such can only be defined in terms of the 'whereabouts' of Jesus' resurrection body.
4. Jesus heads up all 'things in heaven and things on earth' (Eph 1:9-10). All things have been reconciled by the blood of the cross (Col 1:20). He ascended that he might fill all things (Eph 4:10). Where Christ is fully present there heaven is.

#### 9.1.3 The Nature of Heaven

1. Heaven is the fulfilment of God's original intention to dwell with men and women in the most intimate fellowship (Rev 21:3). N.B. this surpasses Eden – a city rather than a Garden, God lives there.
2. This fellowship must be understood Christocentrically. Jesus promised that he would reveal his glory to his disciples, and that they would share in his oneness with the Father (John 17). This means participation in the fellowship of the Father and the Son in the power of the Spirit. Enjoyment of the complete harmony of Father and Son; "God-Lamb" are bracketed in Revelation and equal in function (1:8; 4:11; 5:13; 7:9-10; 21:1, 6, 22, 23; 22:3, 13).
3. It involves perfect knowledge of God (1 Cor 13:9-12; 1 John 3:2).  
"And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love".

- 4 It includes the destruction of all sin and evil (Rev 20:10; 21:4). No sea means no chaos.
5. It is a place of great glory. The glory of the heavenly city is the glory of God (Rev 21:23; 22:5).
6. The thought of heaven should stimulate holiness (2 Pet.3:11, 14; 1Jn.3:2-3) bring consolation (Rev.21-22) and open us to admonition (Rev.21:8, 27: 22:3, 11, 14, 15) and warning (Rev.21:27; 22:14)..

#### 9.1.4 Heaven and Reward

(a) There are eternal distinctions in heaven.

1. Scripture teaches different rewards in heaven (Dan 12:3; Luke 19:11-17; 1 Cor 3:14-15 etc).
2. This apparently involves continuity with faithfulness in this life i.e., the greater the degree of obedience to God the greater the reward.
3. This is an inducement to present holiness of life.
4. These differences vindicate present (hidden) faithfulness.
5. As the reward of heaven and in heaven is participation in the life of God himself it may suggest that sanctification is a preparation for glorification. Sanctification in the present determines the degree to which we will be able to receive what God has in store for us in eternity.
6. Differences in reward may be both objective and subjective, involving degrees of authority and levels of appreciation of the presence of God.
7. This does not necessarily mean these differences are registered in experience, all will be equally happy.
8. Even if these distinctions are recognised, they will be accepted as fully just.

(b) There are no eternal distinctions in heaven.

1. Passages to do with “crowns” simply refer to eternal life itself (1 Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19; 2 Tim 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Pet 5:4).
2. 1 Cor 3:11-15 says nothing about the distinctions among believer’s experiences persisting beyond judgement day (cf. the shame of 1 John 2:28).
3. 2 Cor 5:10 refers back to 1 Cor 3; it does not carry the point of judgement beyond the day of reckoning.
4. The parables of the talents (Matt 25:14-30) and the pounds (Luke 19:11-27) have one main point, to distinguish between the faithful and unfaithful. (What would “ruling over cities” mean in heaven?)
5. The parable of the workers in the vineyard teaches an equality of reward due to grace alone (Matt 20:1 –16).
6. Some scriptures do teach a different experience at the judgement (1 Cor 3:11-15; 4:5; 2 Cor 5:10). Presumably the reward of the Christian is: “Well done ... enter into the joy of your master.” (Matt 25:21, 23).

7. To teach otherwise implies:
  - a. this worldly differences continue into the “new” creation e.g. hierarchy.
  - b. some of the “old things” are remembered (Isa 65:17), this implies eternal regret (Rev 21:4)
  - c. there are degrees of participation in the life of Christ in eternity. salvation is a gift of grace, rewards are earned or merited. that infinite rewards can in some way be correlated with finite works
8. Welcome at the judgement, combined with love and gratitude, are adequate motives for Christian living.

## 9.2 Hell

### 9.2.1 The Meaning of ‘Hell’

1. In the oldest strata of the Old Testament there is no place of eternal punishment (Job 7:21; 10:21-22; 17:26; Prov 7:27; Ps 139; Ezek 26:20).
2. Later in the Old Testament a doctrine of final judgement and permanent punishment is developed (Isa 24:21-22; 66:24; Dan 12:2).
3. By the time of Jesus the Pharisees accepted a doctrine of eternal punishment. Jesus spoke of ‘hell’ as **Gehenna** i.e., the valley of Hinnom, where a perpetually smouldering rubbish dump consumed the waste of Jerusalem (Mark 9:43-48 etc).
4. Elsewhere this is referred to as a ‘furnace of fire’ (Matt 13:42) and a ‘lake of fire’ (Rev 20:14-15).
5. It would appear that hell is a place as well as a state.

### 9.2.2 The Origin of Hell

1. According to Jesus hell was a place ‘prepared for the devil and his angels’ (Matt 25:41).
2. From this we may infer that hell had no place in God’s original purpose for humanity.
3. “I would comment further that hell is not the location of evil (not the realm of the devil) in the biblical view, but the place of righteousness vindicated, holiness glorified, rebels reconciled in the sense of Col 1:20. Evil owns no place at all.”  
(H. Blocher)

### 9.2.3 The Suffering of Hell

1. The teaching of Jesus indicates degrees of punishment in hell (Matt 11:21-24; Luke 12:47-48).
2. The principle here is that responsibility is in direct proportion of knowledge.
3. It involves exclusion from the presence of God (Matt 7:23; 25: 10 – 13, 30, 41; 2 Thess 1:9; Rev 22:15). This must be taken to mean complete loss of the favour of God. The inhabitants of hell are outside of the heart of God.
4. The agonies of hell are described in physical terms: ‘men will weep and gnash their teeth’ (Matt 8:12; 13:42; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30). Presumably this is an example of hyperbole cf. Jude 7, 13.
5. Hell is spoken of as “outer darkness” (Matt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30) eternal fire (Matt 18:8; 25:31; Jude 7), eternal punishment (Matt 25:46) and the second death (Rev 21:8). This must mean the total absence of participation in the glory of God.

6. Subjective elements of hell would include despair, guilt, hopelessness, remorse, loss of meaning, a sense of complete failure etc. Absolute anonymity. As the pleasure of the Father – Creator in the present world order no longer will exist, there is no possible consolation or satisfaction other than in God, who has been rejected.
7. Presumably, the deepest pain of hell is moral.

### **9.3 Universalism**

#### **9.3.1 The Doctrine**

1. This is a belief in universal salvation, that in the end all human beings will attain to heaven.
2. The negative reasons upholding this view include:
  - a) an eternal punishment of retribution is incompatible with a loving God.
  - b) it makes God's purposes out as failed. It denies the sovereign freedom of God to bring all persons to himself.
  - c) the images of hell are not literal but symbolic. They are designed to shock us into repentance now.
  - d) the bliss of the saints is incompatible with their knowledge of an eternal hell.
3. The positive reasons advanced for this view include:
  - a) the eternal presence of the love of God will subdue all human resistance.
  - b) a universal atonement means universal reconciliation (Eph 1:9-10; Col 1:20; Phil 2:10,11).

#### **9.3.2 A Reply**

1. God's wrath is the expression of his holy love, not in opposition to it.
2. It is not God but people who fail to reach their goal. God will still have a family.
3. The scriptures speak of an eternal separation from God, even if the language used of hell is pictorial (Matt 25:41, cf. Luke 16:19-31).
4. It denies the total bias the human heart has against God (Jer 17:9).
5. No purpose exists in shocking language if nothing corresponds to it.
6. The universal texts of the New Testament speak of a universal subjugation to the rule of Christ that may in some cases have to be brought about by force.