

The Unanswerable Question!

Can you be Christian
And Believe in Reincarnation?

--- or ---

Can you be a Genuine follower of
Yeshua/Jesus
and
Not Believe in Reincarnation!

Many Christians today will regard these questions as an enigma! They will reason to themselves: What can the belief in reincarnation possibly have in common with Jesus, Christianity, and its doctrine of heaven, hell and the resurrection? If man is saved by faith apart from works -- i.e., the blood of the Lamb of God -- what part would reincarnation play in the life of Christians? Non-Christians? Further, how can a belief such as reincarnation -- a belief that is considered by many Christians to be a mere fable, devoid of all truth -- a doctrine that on the surface appears to be so foreign to Christianity -- be called it's key? The answer to this question, though simple once understood, will be disturbing to many uninformed believers today.

The Answer: Without comprehending the Divine Pattern and Path of the soul within the teachings of Messiah/Christ pertaining to the Prodigal Son/Daughter, the level of spiritual maturity of Christians of the simple faith who fail to understand how the wheel of rebirth and reincarnation affects them, can be likened to a fetus in relation to a mature adult. They remain carnal and of a temporal mind, and cannot embrace the fullness of the teachings of TheWay and move on to Spiritual Maturity and dwell in the Kingdom of Origination.

Yeshua/Jesus taught the reality of the pre-existent soul that fulfills the mandate of perfection at Matt 5:48 over the course of many lifetimes. Grace, being saved by the blood of the Lamb, and the resurrection which is a central theme in Christianity today, is not for either the non-believer, cultural quasi-Christians, or those who claim to believe with their lips but are unfaithful in their manner of living -- the resurrection is only for those who pick up their cross and follow the Master of TheWay into the Inner Kingdom (Luke 17:20-21). Thus, those who walk the "*narrow path*" and enter into Life, are the ones who are saved. Those who walk what Yeshua/Jesus referred to as the "*Broad-way*" of destruction, return again to reap what they have sown. The domains of what Yeshua/Jesus called the "*outer darkness... hell... prison... and the place of*



judgment", all represent the reality of each one of us inheriting our own works! While this aspect of Yeshua/Jesus' teachings was more clear prior to the fourth-century Church of Constantine's editing of the scriptures, it remains true that once the doctrine of preordination is properly understood, the teaching of reincarnation is the most prevalent in the Bible. Without understanding the process of how the soul evolves to a perfected state as the prodigal son returns to the Kingdom of Origination, it is impossible for the believers of the simple faith to advance past the stage of entry-level people-in-training to be Christians. A Genuine Christian is a Nazirene Disciple of TheWay who is of an Anointed (Messiah/Christ) Mind -- and therefore being Illumed by the Holy Spirit, possesses the Divine Knowledge that is referred to throughout the scriptures as the Mysteries of God.

Do Christians derive their doctrines of belief from the Bible? Many would like to think so -- but under close examination we begin to see that the beliefs of the average Christian is in fact diametrically opposed to what the Bible actually teaches. The problem is that the Bible, as well as the essence of the teachings of TheWay, exist as a paradoxical enigma to modern Christianity -- a paradoxical enigma that causes an uncountable number of conflicting doctrines and sects to continue to arise -- and this paradoxical enigma will continue to envelop the modern Church under a cloud of spiritual ignorance, until which time Christians are prepared to seek the essence and roots of the teachings of Jesus -- a system of revelation that is spiritual, and has little in common with the multitude of doctrines proclaimed by the Church today.

How can this be? That the teachings of TheWay is paradoxical, is easily demonstrated in the words of the Rev. Charles Spurgeon where he confided to his readers in his autobiography: *"The system of truth revealed in the Scriptures is not simply one straight line, but two; and no man will ever get a right view of the gospel until he knows how to look at the two lines at once. For instance, I read in one Book of the Bible, The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him who hears say, Come. And let him who is athirst, Come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely [Rev. 22:17]. Yet I am taught, in another part of the same inspired Word, that it is not of he who wills, nor of he who runs, but of God Who shows mercy [Rom 9:16]. I see, in one place, God in providence presiding over all, and yet I see, and I cannot help seeing, that man acts as he pleases, and that God has left his actions, in a great measure, to his own free-will. Now, if I were to declare that man was so free to act that there was no control of God over his actions, I should be driven very near to atheism; and if, on the other hand, I should declare that God so over-rules all things that man is not free enough to be responsible, I should be driven at once into Antinomianism or fatalism. That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory, but they are not. The fault is in our weak judgment. Two truths cannot be contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is fore-ordained, that is true; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other"* (Charles H. Spurgeon, *Autobiography Vol. 1: The Early Years*. pp. 173, 174).



Do we have free will? In many places of the scriptures it appears to suggest that we do. And yet, in many other places the Bible reveals that Divine Providence -- which is the Will of God -- totally rules over every aspect of our lives. If, therefore, we profess to believe in the Bible, and we desire to embrace the Light, it is a fatal flaw when we embrace the manmade doctrines of the Church and accept one of these paradoxical realities while rejecting the other. If we are to fulfill the role as a genuine and mature follower of Jesus, we must move beyond the limited vision of the modern Church that clings to one truth while rejecting the other -- and we must instead embrace the premises that both are equally true.

How can we be responsible for what God Preordains? A most important question that Christians today are incapable of answering! In what is perhaps the most difficult concept for the average Christian to understand, is the fact that the Bible clearly teaches that we are responsible for the Divine Will that God exerts in our life. Moreover, from our limited perspective, we have done absolutely nothing to cause God to choose for us the life that we are presently living! And yet, somehow, the Church would have us believe that we are responsible for the choices that God makes for us. In the words of Jesus: *“Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!”* (Matt 18:7 NIV). Why must they come? Because God has willed it. Again we must admit what the Apostle tells us at Romans 11:32 as seen in the commentary Barnes' Notes which writes of the word that we translate concluded, shut up, bound, committed and consigned: *“It is properly used in reference to those who are shut up in prison”*. Only when we begin to accept the fact that the life we are presently living has been individually designed to meet our personal needs, and it is as if we have been imprisoned by a Higher Spiritual Power to live out the circumstances and events in our life, are we able to get a sense of the purpose of life itself.

Is Jesus All-Inclusive? In the same way that *“Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him...”*, we can progress no further in our own walk in TheWay until we first understand why these people did not believe in Jesus, as seen in the words: *“For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ‘He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts’”* (John 12:37-40 NIV). Contrary to what we want to believe, it is important for us to realize what the Bible actually states -- i.e., that the people who did not accept Jesus did not reject him of their own accord, but because God did not permit them to believe in Jesus. The problem is that, from a church perspective, when we acknowledge this very clearly defined biblical fact, we not only undermine the whole political structure of the church because what the Bible is actually confirming is that man not only does not possess the freewill that gives him the ability to choose to come to Jesus, but we further destroy the popular idea that Jesus was the all-inclusive savior that modern Christianity portrays him to be.

How can Jesus be all-inclusive, when the Bible itself clearly teaches that only those who were pre-selected will not only believe in the Son of God, but will inherit the promise of salvation in the scriptures? Using the Jews as an example: From a biblical perspective, it is of the utmost importance that we begin to recognize the reason why



there was a pre-existent basis that caused the Hand of God to harden the hearts and minds of the Jews, and not permit them to believe in Jesus. Moreover, if what the Bible states is true, and it was the Hand of God that hardened the hearts and minds of the Jews, then how can the Bible be correct in its assertion that it was the Jewish people themselves who were ultimately responsible for the conditions that God brought about in their lives with respect to the rejection of Christ? It is important, because these same conditions exist in our own lives as a paramount truth that we must come to terms with if we are to continue our walk in The Way. If, therefore, God forces each of us into a certain role that causes us to either sin or embrace the Light, we must ask the question as to what was the cause that is/was responsible for these events?

In answering these profound biblical questions we must steer clear of the pitfall of traditional church thinking, and insure that we do not make the mistake of adopting one biblical truth over the other. In this respect, we must refrain from asking which is true -- and instead open our minds to the higher understanding that merges the two truths into harmony. The answer cannot be found until we realize that we must not choose one truth over the other -- and, in the words of Spurgeon: *"it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other"*.

We must begin the process of embracing the Higher Truth by taking the words of Spurgeon to heart, and recognize that the fault in our failure to understand is of our own doing. What this means is that if we are to find the answer to the dilemma, we must refrain from questioning which passages of scripture is correct. Do we have free will? Or, is the Apostle Paul correct when he states: *"For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.'" -- wherein the Apostle then explains that "It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy"* (Rom 9:15-16 NIV)?

Truth can never oppose Truth! I acknowledge that it is a difficult task, but in order to begin to embrace the Mysteries and Higher Wisdom of God which the scriptures speak of, we must come to realize that one biblical truth does not negate the other. Paramount to understanding the Mysteries of God is the absolute need to further realize that our present-day doctrine that Jesus was all-inclusive in his revelation of the Good News, is fundamentally flawed and defective. Jesus was not all-inclusive! He taught the multitudes in parables which each hearer interpreted in accordance with their own understanding! Reserving his instruction of the Mysteries of God for those who were pre-selected as being worthy of receiving their revelation! If we, therefore, truly desire to be one of the few who are chosen to receive the Mysteries of the Gospel, then it is paramount that we first understand why the multitudes were rejected, and only certain pre-selected individuals were chosen for this purpose.

In the words of the Rev. Spurgeon, we must open our minds and learn to grasp the two lines of truth simultaneously. Though we may not initially understand it, we must begin to recognize that all things are preordained -- and even though our lives are preordained, we are responsible for not only the result, but also the very events that the Hand of God has brought about in our daily lives. Further, we must acknowledge the truth of those biblical verses that teach that some people do not possess free will at all -- that what appears to be choices for others are actually foreordained -- and that these people are also ultimately responsible for what God has brought into their lives. In

order to accomplish this, we are going to have to open our minds to concepts that far eclipses present-day human comprehension with respect to everything that we think we know about life.

I understand full well that these spiritual concepts are not in accordance with our perception of an all-inclusive Gospel that was, and is, made available for all people to believe and be saved. While it is true that God is all-inclusive, the paradox to the equation is that He is not all-inclusive in the manner that we think. In the same way that our system of public education is all-inclusive -- in that, everyone has an absolute right to access the system -- it is also true that everyone does not have the right to access the system at any level of instruction they choose. Thus, each of us is entitled to access the system only at the appropriate level that is determined by our own level of maturity and achievement. We would no sooner permit a kindergarten student to attend college, than we would provide a graduate level curriculum to an elementary school level of education.

If we truly desire to move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and *“go on to maturity”* (Heb 6:1 NIV), we must begin to acknowledge that this is exactly what the Bible states. The Mysteries and Spiritual Gospel of Christ was only revealed selectively to a chosen group of people who were predestined to be taught what was concealed from the eyes and understanding of the majority of people who listened to Jesus teach. When we begin to acknowledge this biblical fact, only then can we begin to understand the criteria that was used to select these few from among the many. Ultimately, only when we comprehend the criteria which the Lord uses, are we able to move ourselves in that direction, and become the chosen who is deserving to receive the Spiritual Gospel of the Light.

Did the Jews Kill Christ? For nineteen hundred years many Christians have condemned the Jews for *“killing Christ”*. Yet Peter states to the leaders of the Jews regarding Jesus that: *“this Man delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death”* (Acts 2:23 NAS). The word *“predetermined”* as used in this instance, should invoke a great many questions in the minds of Christians. Did the Jews and Romans crucify Christ? Commenting on this verse, Barnes' Notes states: *“The fact, moreover, that this was predicted, shows that it was fixed or resolved on. No event can be foretold, evidently, unless it be certain that it will take place. The event, therefore, must in some way be fixed or resolved on beforehand”*.

Speaking about the Hand of God upon the hearts and minds of the people, Peter and John said: *“Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen”* (Acts 4:27-28 NIV). What the two disciples are conveying to the reader is that every event that took place at the crucifixion was directly brought about by the Hand of God acting upon the hearts and minds of the people. Regardless of whether we understand it, in or to begin the journey of walking in The Way, it is imperative for us to acknowledge the validity of this biblical statement. Moreover, if this is true, we must ask ourselves the question: How can man resist the *“power and will”* of what God *“decided beforehand should happen”*? How could the Jews resist the Will of God?





What is clearly conveyed to the reader is that the biblical teaching regarding the crucifixion was a pre-planned drama that God brought about by imposing His supernatural and all-pervasive Will upon a group of people who were little more than puppets on God's stage of life. Unless Christians are ready to adopt the doctrine that man is more powerful than the Will of God, then they must be ready to acknowledge the fact that those who brought about the events which culminated in the crucifixion, had little to no choice in what transpired.

This biblical fact is seen quite clearly documented in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia under the heading of Foreknow, where it writes: *“Thus, in Peter's speeches in Acts the predestination which finds expression in (Acts 4:28) is practically identified with the term prognosis in (2:23). Everything which happened to Jesus took place in accordance with ‘the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,’ so that **nothing happened except that which God had foreordained**”.*

Who killed Christ? *“God had willed the death of Jesus (John 3:16) and the death of Judas (Acts 1:16)”*, writes Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament, and then adds: *“but that fact did not absolve Judas from his responsibility and guilt (Luke 22:22)”*.

If Judas was one of the instruments by which God carried out what God Himself predestined -- and the scriptures tell us that both God and Satan (Lk 22:3) worked in concert by using their supernatural powers to induce Judas to betray Jesus -- and Judas was predestined for the purpose that he performed -- it is imperative that we ask the question as to **how can Judas be held responsible for what God brought about?**

For over a thousand years of Christian history it was unlawful to publish or reveal the Bible to the people. When it eventually was, and the reformers in the Middle Ages were called upon to explain its paradoxes and inconsistencies, they could not. Why? Because they did not possess the same mindset as did the authors of the scriptures. In reaction to the many paradoxical truths that they were unable to explain, the doctrine which was adopted by Luther and the reformers is seen embodied in Luther's words: *“Reason, is the greatest enemy that faith has; it never comes to the aid of spiritual things, but - more frequently than not - struggles against the divine Word, treating with contempt all that emanates from God”*. Why? Because Luther himself was a priest in the Roman Church, and the very foundation of their system of belief was carnal, and was devoid of the understanding needed to synthesize and harmonize the paradoxes of the Bible. While it can be said that they did the best they could under the conditions of the time in which they lived, that Luther never progressed beyond a very elementary understanding of the scriptures has continued to plague believers to this very day.

The great error upon which Luther and the other reformers founded the Protestant Church can only be seen when we relate the problem that they saw in the scriptures with respect to man's other areas of life. When confronted with a difficulty, the solution is not to surrender one's power of mind -- but rather, to re-examine the manner in which one is thinking.

How can Judas be held accountable for what God brings about on both His own, and in conjunction with Satan -- and if God and Satan are eternal opponents, what caused the



two opposite powers to act in concert in order to move Judas to betray Christ? We could speculate and say that Judas was an evil man who would have perhaps done this misdeed anyway -- but so long as God's hand was upon him, and Satan and God acted together to bring about these events, the final choice was simply not his to make. Moreover, if we are to even begin to comprehend the powerful supernatural influences that effect the manner in which we think and live our lives, we must also ask the question: How did God induce Satan to move in accordance with what was preordained, unless God also maintains control over Satan? Without the understanding of these questions, it is impossible for us to ever begin to comprehend the true spiritual message of the scriptures.

The problem is brought into a more clear focus in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia where it is written: *“It is remarkable that Peter in one and the same sentence speaks of the death of Christ from two quite distinct points of view. (1) From the historical standpoint, it was a crime perpetrated by men who were morally responsible for their deed ('him... ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay'). (2) From the standpoint of Divine teleology, it was part of an eternal plan ('by the determinate,' etc.). No effort is made to demonstrate the logical consistency of the two ideas”*. From the perception of the carnal mind of man, there can be no consistency of the two ideas -- but if the believer is to obtain the salvation they desire, it is absolutely necessary that they are able to merge these two contradictory facts into one abiding truth.

Once it is realized that generation upon generation of Gentile believers has, for the most part, skimmed over these many verses without so much as a question of how these biblical concepts -- the working alliance of God and Satan, and the preordination and predestination of the events in the life of man -- effects their own life, it is easy to understand why the masses of believers never progress beyond the superficial *“milk”* doctrines of the Bible. Moreover, because believers reject the counsel of the Lord, and turn instead to other men to teach them -- and embrace concepts that their teachers themselves are incapable of understanding -- the Bible and its many paradoxes will continue to remain a great enigma. The result is that the flock of believers are held captive in a pasture of spiritual stagnation by the very shepherds they look to for guidance.

If man is to even begin to understand both the scriptures and the life he is presently living, it is absolutely necessary to comprehend how man can be held responsible for what God has brought about? Quoting the Adam Clark Commentary: *“...neither the Jews nor Romans had any power here, but what was given to them from above”*. How could the Jews and Romans have killed Christ, if neither *“had any power”* over their actions, because the event was brought about by the power of God? When Peter said: *“Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus”* (Acts 1:16 NAS); Peter is stating that all of the people who were involved were mere pawns in the hand of God -- who had hardened the hearts of the Jews and Romans in order to fulfill what the Holy Spirit had predicted in the scriptures.

These *“two lines”* spoken of by Rev. Spurgeon, is again seen in the words of Jesus when he warned: *“For the Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to*



that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born” (Mark 14:21 NAS). How can God, the Higher and Controlling Power, force men to perform a series of events under His direct control, and then hold the people who God forced into the role they played on the stage of life be held responsible for what God brought about? Thus, we must answer the proverbial question which the Bible itself asks: *“Then why does God still blame us? For who resists his will?”* (Rom 9:19 NIV). Not one of us is able to resist His will -- and because we fail to understand this great truth, and condemn the manifest Will of God that we observe in others, we make ourselves apostates to the New Covenant -- calling upon the name of the Lord in vain.

The inability of those we look to as religious authorities to comprehend these fundamental conditions of life, as well as an uncountable number of other biblical paradoxes, is further expounded upon in the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary on Romans 9:22, where it is written with regard to the Apostle's words Fitted to destruction: *“It is well remarked by Stuart, that the difficulties which such statements involve are not to be gotten rid of by softening the language of one text, while so many others meet us which are of the same tenor; and even if we give up the Bible itself, so long as we acknowledge an omnipotent and omniscient God, we cannot abate in the least degree from any of the difficulties which such texts make. Be it observed, however, that if God, as the apostle teaches, expressly designed to manifest His wrath, and to make His power (in the way of wrath) known, it could only be by punishing some, while He pardons others; and if the choice between the two classes was not to be founded, as our apostle also teaches, on their own doings, but on God's good pleasure, the decision behooved ultimately to rest with God”*.

Do we have free will and choice? Because it is impossible for our present-day religious authorities to explain the relationship of these two biblical doctrines, many Christian preachers and theologians are of the opinion that the biblical concepts of predestination and Divine Providence should not be taught to the multitude of believers. Their theology is that you don't preach what you do not possess the means to understand. Yet, the ever looming problem goes far beyond the fact that it is not only confusing, but instead is based upon the fact that the church itself does not have an answer that can satisfactorily explain what the church itself cannot comprehend.

How can modern Christians be comfortable with the idea that God said of Pharaoh: *“For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth”* (Rom 9:17 NAS). The Bible teaches that even after Pharaoh told Moses to go, God's hand again came upon Pharaoh and continued to harden Pharaoh's heart. Why? So God could persist in bringing plagues upon the Egyptian people. Further, Pharaoh had already told Moses to take the children of Israel and go, when God once again continued to harden Pharaoh's heart. Why? The Bible teaches that God did not want Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, until God first demonstrated His power by killing all their first-born sons. In view of the fact that God raised up Pharaoh for this purpose, and then hardened his heart so as to make it appear that it was Pharaoh who opposed the Israelites, it is imperative that we ask: Is this the loving and merciful God that Christians proclaim?

People of faith are not prepared to gaze into the reality of the Old Testament. Like



Luther, the people of the simple faith are unable to think along any other line of thought than they have been instructed by their leaders to follow. It is comforting for them to believe that they have made wise choices in their life by accepting Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour. Yet the Bible teaches that their status as Christians -- and even believers -- was not of their own choosing. Few Christians can find solace in the biblical teaching that they believe, only because God has permitted them to believe -- while others do not believe, because God does not want them to believe. They instead envision an all-inclusive God who desires all people to believe.

Most Christians have a loved one -- a child, spouse, a family member, or a friend -- that has not come to Christ -- and by their manner of thinking is not saved. They would do anything to save this person that is dear to them. Yet, according to Christian doctrine, in the hereafter, these people will not only be barred from the Kingdom that is to come, but might possibly be confined to the regions of hell. Why? According to the Bible, because God has not chosen to bestow His blessings on these people. Christians, who want everyone to be saved, cannot perceive the sense of the idea the Apostle put forth when he wrote: ***“So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires”*** (Rom 9:18 NAS).

From a Christian doctrinal perspective, life is like a sinking ship where all people are equally sinners -- or drowning -- and all people are in need of being redeemed or saved. God is there -- He has the power to save all of the people -- but He chooses not to. Instead of saving everyone, He selectively chooses from among the drowning people an exclusive few who are to be saved -- not based upon their works or deeds, or even their faith -- but as the Apostle states, God chooses indiscriminately, ***“that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth”*** (Rom 9:11 KJV). Some will of course argue that people are saved by faith -- but the Bible clearly states that even faith is a gift from God that is not given to all people.

Innately, all of creation desires to be saved. In the same way that no one wants to drown, neither would anyone choose to be thrown into the ***“lake of fire”*** (Rev 20: 14-15). Yet, according to the Apostle, because of the sin of Adam and Eve -- a sin that God Himself ordained and brought about -- all people deserve to be thrown into the ***“lake of fire”***, and God chooses to save some, while ignoring others.

Perhaps the finest example of God's indiscriminate intervention into some people's lives is best demonstrated in the example of the Apostle Paul himself. Paul -- who was known as Saul prior to his conversion -- was not only a great persecutor of the first Christians, but Saul/Paul was a leader among those who stoned Stephen (Acts 7:57-60). So vehemently did Saul/Paul oppose Christ and the church, that it is written that ***“Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem”*** (Acts 9:1-2 KJV).

In Saul/Paul we see a man who was a killer and a persecutor of Christ and the church -- until God directly intervened into his life, converted him, and supposedly made him an apostle. Setting aside for the moment the fact that there are many people who, from a biblical perspective, will be thrown into the lake of fire, even though they are in no way



guilty of the evil of Saul/Paul prior to his conversion, it could easily be said that the most fervent Atheist and non-believer would be immediately converted if they were subjected to the same experience as Saul/Paul, where it is written: *“As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? Who are you, Lord? Saul asked. I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting, he replied. Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do... Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing... For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything”* (Acts 9:3-9 NIV).

When we start to delve into these many biblical stories, we begin to get a better perspective of why Luther condemned the use of reason among the body of Christian believers. Does it mean anything that Saul/Paul served Christ after such an experience? Was Saul/Paul who called himself a Jew among Jews, and a Pharisee, any different than those who crucified Christ? If God had not Himself hardened the hearts of the Jews, and opened their perception and understanding in the manner that He did to Saul/Paul, wouldn't all the Jews have been converted? And even today, would not all of mankind immediately repent, and be faithful to Christ, if they too were subjected to an experience similar to that experienced by Paul? And does it mean anything that Paul changed his ways after this rather extreme intervention in his life?

Isn't this in fact the cry of the agnostic who proclaims: Show me a sign, so that I might believe! Isn't the agnostic asking for nothing more than the same treatment that was extended to Saul/Paul? And are we to believe that the agnostic who has lived a good life -- a person who of their own conscience had not embraced the evil of a man such as Paul -- that such a person will be condemned to the lake of fire, while Paul is permitted to go free?

One of the paramount elements of such words as goodness and righteousness, is that one conducts themselves in a fair and evenhanded manner. If the scriptures are correct in those many places where it states that *“The LORD detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please him”* (Prov 20:23 NIV), wouldn't the Lord himself treat all men with the same fairness? Innately, Christians believe that God is fair and impartial -- but from a biblical perspective, doctrinally they cannot demonstrate the validity of their beliefs.

One of the fundamental doctrines found throughout almost every book of the Bible is that the person you are today was predetermined by God -- not merely at a time before you came into this life -- but at a time prior to creation and the formation of the earth. If the person you are today was predetermined by God prior to even the first act of Creation, you must then ask how much of your own life is of your own choosing?

For those who believe that they have made wise choices in their lives, in the Calvinistic and Augustinian doctrine of preordination -- a doctrine which they are able to demonstrate conclusively by using the Epistles of Paul -- there is no fundamental difference between those who are doomed and those who will be saved, with the exception that God so wills their fate. *“The supreme Disposer”*, writes Calvin, *“then makes way for his own predestination, when depriving those whom he has reprobated of the communication of his light, he leaves them in blindness. Every day*

furnishes instances of the latter case, and many of them are set before us in Scripture. Among a hundred to whom the same discourse is delivered, twenty, perhaps, receive it with the prompt obedience of faith; the others set no value upon it, or deride, or spurn, or abominate it. If it is said that this diversity is owing to the malice and perversity of the latter, the answer is not satisfactory: for the same wickedness would possess the minds of the former, did not God in his goodness correct it. And hence we will always be entangled until we call in the aid of Paul's question, 'Who maketh thee to differ?' (1 Corinthians 4:7,) intimating that some excel others, not by their own virtue, but by the mere favor of God".

From a biblical perspective of what Calvin wrote, the true statement that totally escapes his reasoning would be: *"...we will always be entangled until"* we come to understand the Will of God with respect to *"who maketh thee to differ?"* What we see in Calvin's words is the manifestation of a secular, carnal religion, that bears the name of Christ, rather than a Spiritual Religion that embodies the Word of Christ. Calvin, one of the foremost authorities in the founding of the Protestant Church, did not possess the answers to the biblical paradoxes -- and accepts these mysteries as unknowable, only because he has embraced a static faith that is spiritually dead. Yet, many Christians today continue to embrace his doctrine.

With regard to the assertion of the Apostle that it is not of our own choosing that we believe in the Gospel, but God's, Barnes' Notes on this verse states: *"Had not GOD interfered and made a difference, all would have remained alike under sin. The race would have together rejected his mercy; and it is only by his distinguishing love that ANY are brought to believe and be saved"*. If we take the time to stop for a moment and think, what is being portrayed in these words is altogether profound! What they admit the Apostle's doctrine of faith ultimately means, is that ALL of mankind would reject Jesus and the gospel message and drown in the sea of inequity, if God did not throw a life-preserver to a select few. In the case of the Apostle Paul -- a murderer and persecutor of the righteous -- it would appear that sometimes God throws the life preserver to some of the most sinful and despicable among us, and yet denies this same opportunity to others who are not near as sinful.

Christian doctrine states: *"God is the foundation of all good; no man possesses any good but what he has derived from God. If any man possess that grace which saves him from scandalous enormities, let him consider that he has received it as a mere free gift from God's mercy"* (Adam Clarke Commentary on 1 Cor 4:7).

If you are a believer -- it is the position of the Apostle that your belief is the work of God manifest in your life. There is no works that you can do which will earn salvation -- you did not do anything deserving of God's blessings -- you merely inherited the promise because God indiscriminately decided that He would throw you a life preserver. The problem that arises is in the biblical fact that, if you are a non-believer, that too is the work of God -- who chooses not to throw you a life preserver.

The one who is saved is no different than the one who is not -- i.e., quoting Paul: *"As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Rom 3:10;23 NIV). Moreover, in view of the fact that God's criteria is not based upon either the works, or the moral attributes of the person -- Paul and many others being an example of this fact -- from a biblical perspective, the



one who is not saved, and destined to the sufferings of hell, may even exhibit a higher manifestation of virtue and morality than did the one who is saved. In the words of Calvin, who uses the Apostle Paul as his source of doctrine: ***“God has chosen to deprive the unbeliever of the communication of his light”***, and for no reason other than ***“He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires”*** (Rom 9:18 NAS), Calvin admits that ***“he leaves them in blindness”***.



The Bible teaches that if you are a saint, a sinner, a mass murderer, or even the likes of Hitler, your station in life is not of your own doing -- but rather, the work of the Hand of God manifest in your life. If you have not accepted Christ as your savior, it is because God has withheld His Light from you that would enable you to believe and have faith. Therefore, regardless of how good you are, or the moral code you exhibit, or how great your humanity is towards others, from the perspective of the Bible, you are destined to Hell because God has predetermined and chosen this as your fate.



In view of the fact that it has been proposed by many Christians that Hitler was merely doing the will of God by exterminating the heretic Jews -- and there is speculation that Hitler believed that he had himself been anointed by God to complete the task that Jesus never did -- Christian doctrine suggests that Hitler could be enjoying eternal bliss in heaven, while the innocent Jewish children who he tortured and burnt in his ovens -- children who never did an evil act to anyone -- are now burning in the torments of hell.



In view of this biblical fact, ask yourself this question: If you are a Christian, will you then greet Hitler when you go to glory. Imagine for a moment you and Hitler -- together in the Kingdom -- talking about how you were saved -- gazing upon the Jewish children who never even had the opportunity to do any evil as they burn in the lake of fire? Imagine you and Hitler, together, praising the glory of God in the shadow of their innocence and agony.



Many Christians today are against abortion -- calling it infanticide and murder. Yet, is this any more of an atrocity of justice than the preordination of children to live lives as ***“vessels of wrath prepared for destruction”*** (Rom 9:22)? Will these same anti-abortion people stand by and applaud the sufferings of these men, women and children who were predestined to dwell forever in the lake of fire?

If these things seem outrageous and far fetched, let us not forget the fact that when the Children of Israel were on their way to the land of Canaan, God showed his power by bringing about the unmerciful destruction of innocent people: ***“But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass through, for the LORD your God hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, that He might deliver him into your hand, as it is this day”*** (Deut 2:30 NKJ).

Did King Sihon possess free will as many of us believe today? King Sihon did not choose to block the path of the Israelites -- God ***“hardened his spirit”*** (king Sihon's) and made him do it. Why? In what modern civilized man would consider a detestable act of cruel and senseless barbarism, the God of Israel rejoiced: ***“And the LORD our God delivered him over to us; so we defeated him, his sons, and all his people. We took all his cities at that time, and we utterly destroyed the men, women, and little ones of every city; we left none remaining”*** (Deut 2:33-34 NKJ).



Are we supposed to applaud this atrocity -- this example of injustice and inhumanity? Are we to praise the Lord and acclaim His righteousness that He permitted the Jews to slaughter even the *"little ones"*? The Children of Israel were ordered to slay everything that moved and breathed: *"However, in the cities of the nations the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them -- the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites -- as the LORD your God has commanded you"* (Deut 20:16-17 NIV).

The scriptures tell us that when the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan, the hearts of the inhabitants of the land were hardened by God: *"For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses"* (Josh 11:20 NIV). The Children of Israel were again ordered to slay every man, woman and child in the land. In view of the fact that the people of Heshbon were not believers in God -- only because God Himself withheld His Light from their understanding -- the implications are horrific. By human standards, the actions of God as reported in the Old Testament are even more diabolical than Hitler's! The great question that must be posed: Is this a merciful God who celebrates the destruction of innocent children without any other reason than he enjoys watching the carnage?

When it is realized that at any time that God wanted, he could have unhardened their hearts, and permitted these people to believe, the moral and humanistic ramifications are truly astounding. Why didn't God want to convert these people? The biblical answer is because they were not of the seed of Abraham -- the person God chose -- not by works, according to the Apostle Paul, but for no reason other than *"He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires"* (Rom 9:18 NAS).

Moreover, if God didn't want the people of the Nations in the land of Canaan, He could have willed it, and they would have simply migrated from the land without the loss of one single life. If God wanted them to worship Him, and only Him, He could have willed it, and it would have been so.

From our modern perspective there is still another twist to this biblical episode: In view of the fact that God not only knew that these same Gentiles would become the chosen people of God when he caused the Jews to reject Jesus, why did he bring death and destruction to women and children whose ancestors would one day be called Christian? If the scriptures are correct, and God has the power to control every aspect of life, then a Supreme Being of Love and Mercy would have just willed them to leave, believe, or anything else He desired, and it would have been so.

If there is any doubt from the perspective of Christian doctrine that we are mere play toys in the hands of God, the proverbial question that mankind should ask his Creator is already contained in the scriptures: *"You will say to me then, Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?"* (Rom 9:19). If evil men are evil, because God, in the words of Calvin, withholds *"the communication of his light"*, and good men are good ONLY because God bestows upon them the *"communication of his light"*, then are we not as play people -- mere playthings -- in the hands of God, in much the same fashion as a child playing with his toys?

The Apostle affirms this when he states in response to the question of *"For who resists*

His will?" and writes: **"On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, Why did you make me like this, will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?"** (Rom 9:19-22 NAS).

When the question is asked: *"Who resists His will?"* It is important for us to recognize the fact that the Apostle does not reply in the manner that our present-day church authorities would, and respond that each of us has choices to make in our lives. Paul does not say this! From the mindset and perspective of the Apostle, it is easily observed that choices are not even part of the equation -- but rather: **"O man, who answers back to God?"** The Apostle then goes on to explain that, in the manner of a child playing with his toys, it is God's right to make some people **"vessels of wrath prepared for destruction"**, while He makes other people a **"vessel for honorable use"**. In other words, there are some people who were created for the express purpose of destruction -- not because they chose such a fate -- not because they had done anything wrong -- but because in God's predestination, this fate was chosen for them prior to even the creation of the world. Therefore, what the Apostle very clearly conveys to us is that the role in life they lived was not by their own choice, but was brought about solely by the Hand of God.

Regarding these very controversial verses and the teaching on predestination, the Apostle writes: **"It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy"** (Rom 9:16 NIV). If you desire Christ, it is because God has permitted you to be a believer, and has ignited within you the desire for Christ. The Bible affirms the position that the choice was not yours to make.

As an example of this Divine Providence in the life of the individual, the Apostle gives the example of Jacob and Esau, and writes: **"For though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, The older will serve the younger. Just as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated"** (Rom 9:11-13 NAS).

What the Apostle is very clearly stating is that, before either of the twins had been born, before either had **"done anything good or bad"**, God not only decided their fate in life, but for no apparent reason, He hated Esau and loved Jacob. Why? Paul offers no explanation other than God does what he wants to do -- and man does not have the right to question God's choices in these matters. This is especially seen in the words: **"Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?"** (Rom 9:21 NKJ).

In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle confirms that we are mere toys in the hands of God -- and like a child playing with his toy people -- God will have **"...mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires"** (Rom 9:18 NAS). Mankind is subject to this reality without any reason other than the fact that God wants to create and sit back and observe the dramas of life that we experience -- and ultimately, have fun with His play toys in any manner that He chooses. Moreover, it would appear that those who are destined to what has been described as the eternal sufferings and tortures

of Hell, have received such a fate only because God enjoys watching such carnage and suffering.

As toys, then, the Apostle tells us that we have no rights -- and this is confirmed in the words of the Paul when he wrote: ***“On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, Why did you make me like this, will it?”*** (Rom 9:20 NAS). Thus, the Apostle states to the believer that whether we are saved or judged to eternal damnation, it is not of our own doing -- our fate was decided prior to the creation of the world -- and we have no right to question the motives of God -- which motives include the total annihilation of innocent women and children for no other reason than God desires the carnage to come upon those who have done nothing to deserve such a fate.

From a modern Christian perspective, the doctrine of Divine Providence and predestination gets really scary when it is realized that God chose who would believe and who would disbelieve prior to the creation of the universe: ***“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will”*** (Eph 1:4-5 NIV).

What is being stated is that when God was still in the stages of contemplating Creation -- prior to what we would relate to the events written in the very first verse of Genesis 1:1 -- God decided that He would make a certain group of people who would inherit all the good that He could imagine, and another group would be plunged into eternal suffering. Why? Because God wanted all people to know that He was superior to them -- that they were weak and inferior beings -- and He wanted them to know that there was absolutely nothing they could do in order to alter their destiny. Thus, God created Satan -- a supernatural being that He (God) controlled -- as an instrument to bring about the defilement of Creation in accordance with God's plan. Why? In order that all mankind would equally be drowning in a sea of inequity. In this way God could choose from among the race of sinful man -- ***“in accordance with his pleasure and will”*** -- those who He would permit to inherit the good.

In order to demonstrate to mankind God's absolute power and authority, it is observed that God often chose the most morally degenerate men to inherit the good. King David, for example, was a murderer and an adulterer, as demonstrated by The New Unger's Bible Dictionary in their sighting under David for First Samuel 13:14: ***“How, ask some, could a man after God's own heart have murdered Uriah, seduced Bathsheba, and tortured the Ammonites? An extract from one who is not a too-indulgent critic of sacred characters expresses at once the common sense and the religious lesson of the whole matter. ‘David, the Hebrew king, had fallen into sins enough -- blackest crimes -- there was no want of sin. And, thereupon, the unbelievers sneer, and ask, ‘Is this your man according to God's heart?’”*** (Carlyle, Heroes and Hero-worship, 1:277; from New Unger's Bible Dictionary, originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (C) 1988).

It would appear that God chose David -- a true sinner -- over Saul, because Saul possessed a conscience, and did not unmercifully wipe out his enemies, as seen where it is written under the heading of Saul: ***“But he disobeyed the divine injunction by***



taking alive Agag, the king, and sparing all the best of the cattle and all that was valuable, destroying only that which was despised and worthless. Instead of pursuing the campaign and finishing the destruction of the fugitives..." (New Unger's Bible Dictionary). Thus, Saul failed in his mission -- which was to totally wipe out all the men, women, children, and everything that breathed among the enemies of Israel.

The Bible teaches that we do not choose God, but rather God chooses those among us who will be saved -- regardless of their moral standing. Thus, Jesus said to his disciples: **"You did not choose Me, but I chose you"** (John 15:16 NAS). The Bible goes on to confirm that no one can come to Jesus unless God permits them: **"All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me"** (John 6:37 NAS). On this verse Barnes' Notes writes: *"[The Father giveth me] We here learn that those who come to Christ, and who will be saved, are given to him by God... All men are sinners, and none have any claim to mercy, and he may therefore bestow salvation on whom he pleases. All people of themselves are disposed to reject the gospel, (John 5:40). God enables those who do believe to do it. He draws them to Him by His Word and Spirit; He opens their hearts to understand the Scriptures (Acts 16:14); and He grants to them repentance, (Acts 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:25)"*.

It is important to recognize the above biblical concept that **"All people of themselves are disposed to reject the gospel"**, and that only those who the Father has permitted to come to Jesus can be saved: *"that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life"* (John 17:2 NAS).

The Book of Acts goes on to confirm that the very mind of mankind is so controlled by the Hand of God, that only those who had been predestined and previously appointed to be saved are even permitted to believe: **"and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed"** (Acts 13:48 NAS). Of this word **"appointed"** or in some translations **"ordained"**, Barnes' Notes writes: *"The word is NEVER used to denote an internal disposition or inclination arising from one's own self. It does not mean that they disposed themselves to embrace eternal life... it has uniformly the notion of an ordering, disposing, or arranging from without; that is, from some other source than the individual himself; as of a soldier, who is arranged or classified according to the will of the proper officer. In relation to these persons it means, therefore, that they were disposed or inclined to this from some other source than themselves... They were then inclined by an influence from without themselves, or so disposed as to embrace eternal life. That this was done by the influence of the Holy Spirit is clear from all parts of the New Testament, (Tit. 3:5-6; John 1:13). It was not a disposition or arrangement originating with themselves, but with God. This implies the doctrine of election. It was, in fact, that doctrine expressed in an act. It was nothing but God's disposing them to embrace eternal life. And that he does this according to a plan in his own mind a plan which is unchangeable as he himself is unchangeable is clear from the Scriptures. Compare Acts 18:10; Rom. 8:28-30; 9:15-16,21,23; Eph. 1:4-5,11. The meaning may be expressed in few words -- who were THEN disposed, and in good earnest determined, to embrace eternal life, by the operation of the grace of God upon their hearts"*.

Regardless of what we have been led to believe by those we look to as religious authorities as they attempt to soften the message of the scriptures in the endeavor to



make it acceptable to a people who appear to possess more mercy and kindness than does the scriptural portrayal of God, what the Bible very clearly teaches is that the decision as to who would believe and be saved was made by God prior to even the first act of creation. With respect to the beast, the Book of Revelation states that: *“all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb”* (Rev 13:8 RSV). Thus, all mankind has been predestined to worship the beast unless their name was written in the *“book of life... before the foundation of the world”*. This is again demonstrated in the words: *“The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world”* (Rev 17:8 NAS).

According to the scriptures, all people whose name was not written in the book of life prior to the foundation of the world have already been assigned to the fires of hell, as seen in the words: *“If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire”* (Rev 20:15 NIV). With regard to the coming Kingdom it is written that *“Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life”* (Rev 21:27 NIV). What these things mean is that, prior to the creation of the world, the hand of God was upon all whose name is written in the book of life, and by virtue of God's Will -- and God's Will alone -- these chosen individuals will not be *“impure”*, and will not do anything that *“is shameful or deceitful”*. In accordance with the Will of God, those whose names are not written in the book of life will do evil, and this evil is often said to be also brought about by the Will of God. According to Jude, the brother of Jesus, even the unbelievers in the church were foreordained by God: *“For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”* (Jude 1:4 NAS).

When the Apostle Paul addressed the men of Athens he said to them that God *“made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation”* (Acts 17:26 NAS). He did not say that after giving people life He (God) permitted the people to live in accordance with their own desires. In fact, it was written in Daniel that: *“And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What hast Thou done?’”* (Dan 4:35 NAS). That all events and occurrences in this world was predetermined before the Creation is confirmed by Isaiah in the words: *“I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please”* (Isa 46:10 NIV).

If we pose the question as to what degree life on earth is predestined? It is at this point where the biblical teaching of predestination gets really frightening -- as demonstrated in Jesus' own words when he said: *“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will”* (Matt 10:29 RSV). If

a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the Will of the Father, then we have no other option than to come to terms with the biblical fact that everything in this life is directly orchestrated by God? On this verse the Adam Clark Commentary states: *“The providence of God extends to the minutest things; everything is continually under the government and care of God, and nothing occurs without his will or permission”*.

In relation to this verse under the heading of Providence in the Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary it is explained that: *“Divine government is the continued activity of God by which He directs all things to the ends He has chosen in His eternal plan... He governs insignificant things (Matt. 10:29-31), apparent accidents (Prov. 16:33), as well as man's good (Phil. 2:13) and evil deeds (Acts 14:16). God acts in accordance with the laws and principles that He has established in the world. The laws of nature are nothing more than man's description of how we perceive God at work in the world. They neither have inherent power nor do they work by themselves. Man is not free to choose and act independently from God's will and plan; he chooses and acts in accordance with them. In His sovereignty, God controls man's choices and actions (Gen. 45:5; Deut. 8:18; Prov. 21:1). God's actions, however, do not violate the reality of human choice or negate man's responsibility as a moral being”*.

This very clearly defined biblical doctrine possesses a great truth -- the ramifications of which no person who calls themselves a Christian can oppose: Ultimately, what these passages of scripture convey to us is that at any time that man judges, imprisons or executes a fellow human being, man is in essence imposing his judgment upon what could be deemed an innocent person. What the Bible states is that all sinners -- all evil people since the dawn of time to the present, have all been preordained into the life that they lived by God's all pervasive power over the mind of man. What the Bible states is that the only difference between a good and moral God-fearing man, and one who would be deemed a degenerate, is that God chose that life for each individual person.

While such a biblical concept on the surface will immediately appear to be unjust, there is yet another dimension to the problem that few Christians today have ever pondered. The question that every believer of the Gospel today should ask is this: How can the modern church lead the people, when they cannot tell you how, if **“man is not free to choose and act independently from God's will and plan”**, and can only choose and act in accordance with God's Will; and **“in His sovereignty, God controls man's choices and actions”**; how does this *“not violate the reality of human choice or negate man's responsibility as a moral being”*? The problem is that our modern churches cannot possibly answer these all-important questions. Moreover, it is because of the irreconcilable differences of these two biblical teachings -- teachings that are both fully represented throughout the scriptures -- that the Rev. Spurgeon admitted that: *“...it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other”*.

Because the modern church cannot explain it, and admittedly confesses that they do not understand it, most Christians feel they have no other recourse but to ignore what the Bible teaches with regard to predestination. Even Augustine and Calvin -- the very champions of the Christian doctrine on predestination -- admit that they do not understand why God would seemingly act in such an irrational way -- as if the world





was God's play-toys. Thus, Calvin writes: *“Now, should some Manes or Coelestinus come forward to arraign Divine Providence, I say with Paul, that no account of it can be given, because by its magnitude it far surpasses our understanding. Is there any thing strange or absurd in this? Would we have the power of God so limited as to be unable to do more than our mind can comprehend? I say with Augustine, that **the Lord has created those who, as he certainly foreknow, were to go to destruction, and he did so because he so willed. Why he willed it is not ours to ask, as we cannot comprehend, nor can it become us even to raise a controversy as to the justice of the divine will. Whenever we speak of it, we are speaking of the supreme standard of justice. (See August. Ep. 106.)”***

As can be seen, two of the most revered Christian minds -- one Protestant, the other Roman Catholic -- not only confess they do not know the Will of God, and cannot even begin to explain why God moves in the manner that He does -- but that they do not have the capacity of mind to understand the many narratives of scripture that pertains to the subject. They therefore attempt to predict who will be saved and who will not, and have faith that their prediction will be correct.

From the perspective of the modern Christian, the key word here is predict. In view of the historical evidence contained in the Bible that God brings evil upon groups of people for no reason, and God admittedly moves in a manner that even the church cannot understand, what if men such as David and Paul -- sinful men who persecute and kill innocent people -- are truly the men who hold a special place in the heart of God? What if God caused the Gentile Church to violate his covenant so he could deal with them in the manner that He did the Jews before them, and now show his wrath in the condemnation of His new chosen people, the Christians?

That the doctrine of predestination is irrational, and defies all human logic, is affirmed in Calvin's only defense that the Apostle is correct and man does not have the right to even question God, as seen when he wrote: *“But when justice clearly appears, why should we raise any question of injustice? Let us not, therefore, be ashamed to stop their mouths after the example of Paul. Whenever they presume to carp, let us begin to repeat: Who are ye, miserable men, that bring an accusation against God, and bring it because he does not adapt the greatness of his works to your meager capacity? As if every thing must be perverse that is hidden from the flesh. The immensity of the divine judgments is known to you by clear experience. You know that they are called 'a great deep', (Psalm 36:6.) Now, look at the narrowness of your own minds and say whether it can comprehend the decrees of God. Why then should you, by infatuated inquisitiveness, plunge yourselves into an abyss which reason itself tells you will prove your destruction? Why are you not deterred, in some degree at least, by what the Book of Job, as well as the Prophetical books declare concerning the incomprehensible wisdom and dreadful power of God? If your mind is troubled, decline not to embrace the counsel of Augustine, 'You a man expect an answer from me: I also am a man. Wherefore, let us both listen to him who says, O man, who art thou?' Believing ignorance is better than presumptuous knowledge. Seek merits; you will find naught but punishment. O the height! Peter denies, a thief believes. O the height! Do you ask the reason? I will tremble at the sight. Reason you, I will wonder; dispute you, I will believe. I see the height; I cannot sound the*



depth. Paul found rest, because he found wonder. He calls the judgments of God 'unsearchable;' and have you come to search them? He says that his ways are 'past finding out,' and do you seek to find them out?' (August. de Verb. Apost. Serm. 20.) We shall gain nothing by proceeding farther. For neither will the Lord satisfy the petulance of these men, nor does he need any other defense than that which he used by his Spirit, who spoke by the mouth of Paul. We unlearn the art of speaking well when we cease to speak with God”.

Again, Calvin himself admits the irrationality of the doctrine that he champions when he writes: *“The human mind, when it hears this doctrine, cannot restrain its petulance, but boils and rages as if aroused by the sound of a trumpet”*. The question must be asked as to why the *“human mind... boil and rage”*? The only answer is that our higher sense of reason cannot accept the doctrine that, without justifiable cause, a child is born into a life where their fate is predestined to destruction. Moreover, the very foundation of the faith-based church that the Middle Age Reformers created is summed up in the words: *“Believing ignorance is better than presumptuous knowledge. Seek merits; you will find nought but punishment.”* Thus, their faith is based upon un-knowledge -- anti-knowledge or even anti-Gnostic -- in view of the fact that it is their position that they cannot know why the Hand of God moves in the manner that it does. In their own words they recognize that in all things that really matter, they are ignorant. Thus, the church which they created is in fact an anti-Gnostic organization (without knowledge), based upon blind faith.

Christians may not like it, but Calvin goes on to demonstrate that this doctrine of irrationality, which by his own assertion promotes ignorance, is exactly what is contained in the scriptures when he writes: *“But were I to concede that by the different forms of expression Paul softens the harshness of the former clause, it by no means follows, that he transfers the preparation for destruction to any other cause than the secret counsel of God. This, indeed, is asserted in the preceding context, where God is said to have raised up Pharaoh, and to harden whom he will. Hence it follows, that the hidden counsel of God is the cause of hardening. I at least hold with Augustine that when God makes sheep out of wolves, he forms them again by the powerful influence of grace, that their hardness may thus be subdued, and that he does not convert the obstinate, because he does not exert that more powerful grace, a grace which he has at command, if he were disposed to use it, (August. de Praedest. Sanct., Lib. 1, c. 2.)”*.

If you are good, then you are good because, prior to the founding of the world. What this means is that before there was even an earth, sun, moon and stars as foretold in the events of creation in Genesis, God wrote your name in the book of life and decided that you would be good -- and it was so. If you are evil, mediocre, or even an average person who is just trying to live their life the best they can -- then in like manner, you are the person you are because prior to the time of creation, God decided that you would be created as a **“vessel of wrath prepared for destruction?”** (Rom 9:19-22 NAS). This determination was made at a time when you *“were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand”* (Rom 9:11).

If you are wise, it is because God has made you wise: *“and in the hearts of all that are*



wise hearted I have put wisdom" (Exod 31:6 KJV). If the scriptures make no sense to you, or to whatever degree you are permitted to understand them, this also is of the Lord: **"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures"** (Luke 24:45 KJV).

Whatever leader you are following has been decided beforehand by the Lord: **"And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched"** (1 Sam 10:26 KJV). If you are following the wrong leader, and listening to the wrong teaching, this too is of the Lord: **"And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom"** (2 Sam 17:14 RSV). Thus, the Lord hardened the hearts of the men of Israel from following the good counsel, and moved them to follow the counsel of Hushai that eventually led to their destruction -- a destruction brought about by the Hand of God.

The scriptures state that God can even control whether a man's wife is unfaithful: **"Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives..."** (2 Sam 12:11 NAS). Moreover, if, as Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament suggests, it is the Hand of God which brought about these events, and this **"fact did not absolve..."** the people from their personal **"responsibility and guilt"**, that means the wives who God forced to be unfaithful are guilty of adultery -- even though it was the Hand of God that forced them to be unfaithful. When these rather astounding statements in the Bible were presented to the Middle-age reformers, the only answer they could provide was that man's exercise of reason was detrimental to his salvation.

In our examination of the scriptures we must pose the question as to who is the author of evil? There are those who suggest the fallen Angel Satan is the author of evil. The doctrine of Original Sin states that all mankind are sinners because they share in the sin of Adam and Eve who fell from grace in the Garden of Eden. Yet the Bible also clearly teaches that all these events were predestined by God prior to even the first act of Creation. Further, the Bible not only teaches that God created what we call evil, but that all evil is under His direct control. Thus the question is posed in scripture: **"Does evil befall a city, unless the LORD has done it?"** (Amos 3:6 RSV). And what does the scriptures state is the source of darkness and evil? **"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things"** (Isa 45:7 KJV).

On the phrase, **"I form the light, and create darkness"**, Barnes' Notes writes: **"Light, in the Bible, is the emblem of knowledge, innocence, pure religion, and of prosperity in general; and darkness is the emblem of the opposite. Light here seems to be the emblem of peace and prosperity, and darkness the emblem of adversity; and the sentiment of the verse is, that all things prosperous and adverse are under the providential control and direction of God. Of light, it is literally true that God made it; and emblematically true that he is the source of knowledge, prosperity, happiness, and pure religion. Of darkness, it is literally true also that the night is formed by him; that he withdraws the light of the sun, and leaves the earth enveloped in gloomy**

shades. It is emblematically true also that calamity, ignorance, disappointment, and want of success are ordered by him; and not less true that all the moral darkness, or evil, that prevails on earth, is under the direction and ordering of his Providence”.

Ultimately, it is clear that the Bible teaches that God is the All-Pervading Power that controls every aspect of Creation -- i.e., the author of all things -- light and dark, good and bad -- and most importantly, that there is a Divine Plan as expressed in the words: ***“The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand”*** (Isa 14:24 KJV). Based upon this very clear biblical fact, we must question when our church authorities ignore what the Bible itself proclaims, and state that a man has freewill -- that each man has the power to choose good or evil -- or even that he exerts control over his own life, when the scriptures themselves pose the question: ***“A man's steps are directed by the LORD. How then can anyone understand his own way?”*** (Prov 20:24 NIV).

In our modern day the Evangelical Christians condemn the doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses -- and each of these sects condemn the doctrines of the mainline liberal churches. While Christians are forever finding fault in the system of beliefs that have been adopted by other sects, it is important for the disciple in search of truth to ask the question as to what is the source of these many doctrines of belief? The Bible teaches that even the doctrines of error, and the very limited theories of science are the result of the Lord's doing -- as it is written: ***“And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet”*** (Ezek 14:9 KJV). The Bible teaches that in many instances, spiritual powers beyond the perception of man are at work behind the scenes that are responsible for what we would call the error and misconceptions of the world -- as it is written: ***“And the LORD said, Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there? One suggested this, and another that. Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, I will entice him. By what means? the LORD asked. I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets, he said. You will succeed in enticing him, said the LORD. Go and do it. So now the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you”*** (1 King 22:20-23 NIV).

These evil spirits sent from God are well documented in the scriptures: ***“The LORD has mingled within her a spirit of confusion; and they have made Egypt stagger in all her doings as a drunken man staggers in his vomit”*** (Isa 19:14 RSV); ***“Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem”*** (Judg 9:23 KJV); ***“And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house”*** (1 Sam 18:10 KJV); ***“And the evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with javelin in his hand”*** (1 Sam 19:9 KJV) -- a javelin that, under the influence of the evil spirit of the Lord, Saul threw at David in an attempt to kill him.

Christians are often seen finding fault with leaders and governments because they are under the control of satanic forces. Yet, they condemn these often barbaric leaders of government even though the scriptures state that this too is the work of God: ***“For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God's words are fulfilled”*** (Rev 17:17 NIV). Regarding the





satanic control over the hearts of the leaders of world government which the Lord Himself has ordained and brought about, the Matthew Henry's Commentary writes: *“By the powerful influence which God hereby showed he had over the minds of great men. Their hearts were in his hand, and he turned them as he pleased; for, (1.) It was of God, and to fulfill his will, that these kings agreed to give their kingdom unto the beast; they were judicially blinded and hardened to do so. And, (2.) It was of God that afterwards their hearts were turned against the whore, to hate her, and to make her desolate and naked, and to eat her flesh, and burn her with fire”*. How, then, can fault be found with these leaders of government and their people, and be judged by the church when they were **“judicially blinded and hardened”** to do the Will of God by giving their kingdoms over to the control of the beast?

That man does not perceive and understand the forces that work upon him is clearly foretold in the scriptures: **“I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them”** (Isa 66:4 KJV). That man cannot live in accordance with the higher spiritual precepts of God that have been put forth in the scriptures is also of the Lord's doing: *“O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?”* (Isa 63:17 KJV). That man does not see and hear the true teachings of God is written in the words: *“They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand”* (Isa 44:18 KJV).

Christians claim that Jesus came to make all things plain and clear to the people that they might know the Divine Plan of God. Yet, they ignore the fact that even the New Testament warns the reader that what Jesus taught will not be clear to the multitudes, and they can never understand the true meaning of his words: *“With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which says: You shall indeed hear but never understand, and you shall indeed see but never perceive”* (Matt 13:14 RSV).

Therefore, the doctrines published by the church -- that Jesus came to save all people -- are easily seen to be defective. What the Bible states is that Jesus came to save a chosen few at the expense of the larger body of Jewish believers -- a people that God promised never to abandon.

Both Calvin and Augustine recognized that Paul saw it as a grievous sin for man to even question God's determination towards mankind in the words: *“But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why have you made me like this? Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?”* (Rom 9:20-21 NKJ).

Calvin went as far as to write that those people who even question the biblical teaching of Divine Providence and predestination are sinning: *“Therefore as those are in error who make the power of election dependent on the faith by which we perceive that we are elected, so we shall follow the best order, if, in seeking the certainty of our election, we cleave to those posterior signs which are sure attestations to it”*.

What this means is that, if you have a loved one who is destined to be thrown into the lake of fire, that you should simply accept their suffering and demise -- and even celebrate the manifestation of their destiny as an exercise of God *“in accordance with his pleasure and will”* (Eph 1:4-5 NIV). As a believer, you recognize the biblical



assertion that your loved ones are not saved because God has chosen before the foundation of the world those who would be permitted to come to Jesus: *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you”* (John 15:16 KJV). As believers, you understand that those who come to Jesus have been directed into the church by the Father: *“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me”* (John 6:45 KJV). And only those who have been predestined will be raised up: *“And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day”* (John 6:39 NIV).

As a believer church doctrine suggests that you do not have the right to question the suffering and demise of your loved ones who are not saved. Will you celebrate in heaven when you and the Apostle Paul -- a man who was a killer and persecutor of the followers of Christ -- look down into the lake of fire and gaze upon the suffering of your loved ones who were by human standards saints in comparison to Paul? Will you rejoice with St. Constantine the Great -- another despot and diabolical sinner -- that God chose to indiscriminately save some of the most evil men the world has ever known, while your loved one who tried to live a good life, but did not come to Christ, has been confined to the torments of hell f-o-r-e-v-e-r!

If Calvin is correct in his interpretation of the scriptures, then your mere questioning as to why your loved ones were not saved could in fact cause you to suffer their fate, even though you affirmed your belief in Christ. In analysis of the scriptures, Calvin states that those who question Divine Providence and the Will of God in relation to the predestination of God's chosen people, or even seek knowledge in order to understand why God chooses one and not another, are themselves doomed: *“Among the temptations with which Satan assaults believers, none is greater or more perilous, than when disquieting them with doubts as to their election, he at the same time stimulates them with a depraved desire of inquiring after it out of the proper way. (See Luther in Genes. cap. 26.) By inquiring out of the proper way, I mean when puny man endeavors to penetrate to the hidden recesses of the divine wisdom, and goes back even to the remotest eternity, in order that he may understand what final determination God has made with regard to him. In this way he plunges headlong into an immense abyss, involves himself in numberless inextricable snares, and buries himself in the thickest darkness. For it is right that the stupidity of the human mind should be punished with fearful destruction, whenever it attempts to rise in its own strength to the height of divine wisdom. And this temptation is the more fatal, that it is the temptation to which of all others almost all of us are most prone. For there is scarcely a mind in which the thought does not sometimes rise, Whence your salvation but from the election of God? But what proof have you of your election? When once this thought has taken possession of any individual, it keeps him perpetually miserable, subjects him to dire torment, or throws him into a state of complete stupor. I cannot wish a stronger proof of the depraved ideas, which men of this description form of predestination, than experience itself furnishes, since the mind cannot be infected by a more pestilential error than that which disturbs the conscience, and deprives it of peace and tranquility in regard to God. Therefore, as we dread shipwreck, we must avoid this rock, which is fatal to every one who strikes*



upon it. And though the discussion of predestination is regarded as a perilous sea, yet in sailing over it the navigation is calm and safe, nay pleasant, provided we do not voluntarily court danger. For as a fatal abyss engulfs those who, to be assured of their election, pry into the eternal counsel of God without the word, yet those who investigate it rightly, and in the order in which it is exhibited in the word, reap from it rich fruits of consolation”.

By definition what Calvin is stating would be considered the doctrine of what would be called an anti-Gnostic church: That the ways of God are unknowable, and cannot be questioned. But is Calvin, Augustine, and even Luther correct? Thus, the modern Christian dilemma: Regardless of the fact that many Christians do not like to admit it, the scriptures clearly state that everything in the life of man is predestined and controlled, and yet mankind -- not God -- is responsible for the choices that God has made for him. What we have here can in fact be somewhat compared to the thinking displayed by many rapists who reasoned when they were caught: i.e., she made me do it -- she asked for it -- it was the way she was dressed -- she said no, but I knew she didn't mean it -- it's her fault that I raped her.

Only when we begin to perceive the irrationality of these anti-Gnostic doctrines -- doctrines that remain to this day the foundation of Christian thought -- can we understand why Martin Luther distained the use of reason when it was used in analysis of what he believed, and wrote that the exercise of the mind and the use of reason is a hindrance to the believer. Thus, we must clearly understand the foundation of the Church of the Reformation in the words: ***“Reason is the greatest enemy that faith has; it never comes to the aid of spiritual things, but - more frequently than not - struggles against the divine Word, treating with contempt all that emanates from God”.*** Why did Luther make such a statement? The answer is because he did not possess the keys of knowledge that the Church of Constantine threw away, and he was only able to make vague sense of the scriptures without understanding the spiritual language and traditions they are composed in. Because of this void that was created when the Roman Government killed the spiritual Messianic Jews and Christians, it has erroneously become accepted that ***“reason is the greatest enemy that faith has”*** -- that the ways of God are beyond the understanding of man -- and that the more intricate revelations of scripture and reality cannot be comprehended.

Again to put the problem in it's proper perspective we can review the wisdom and observation of the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon when he wrote: ***“The system of truth revealed in the Scriptures is not simply one straight line, but two; and no man will ever get a right view of the gospel until he knows how to look at the two lines at once... The fault is in our weak judgment. Two truths cannot be contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is fore-ordained, that is true; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other”.***

The foundational tenet of the very anti-Gnostic modern Christian doctrine is that man cannot be certain of anything. He cannot use his mind in a rational manner. He does not even have control over the manner in which he thinks and perceives life. When confronted with evidence that manmade doctrines have infiltrated the church -- or that



the Bible has been severely altered -- the believer is required to close their hearts and minds and do not question the accepted doctrines of the church. Therefore, from this rather depressed vision of reality, it is easy to understand the doctrine that man is saved by faith alone -- and only through faith in Jesus. Yet, ultimately, from a biblical perspective, there is good reason to assert that believers today cannot be sure of anything -- including whether God will turn upon them as He did the Jews when He hardened their hearts and caused them to ultimately reject Jesus.

From a modern Christian perspective which is drawn directly from the pages of the Bible: The destiny of every person is decided before they are even conceived. God alone -- in accordance with His good pleasure -- decides who will be saved, and who will suffer eternal damnation. The saved person, who is just as much a sinner as the unsaved person, will go to glory simply because God willed it. God, who is the potter, has total power over the destiny of the clay (mankind) -- and for His own glory creates some people as vessels of honor, and others as vessels of dishonor. In view of the fact that God controls their very thinking, as well as their every footstep, what the Bible states is that the people themselves have absolutely no power over their own lives to alter their destiny.

In the words of the 19th century theologian Robert Haldane: *“For, by acting in this manner, God has clearly shown that He is the Sovereign Master in their calling and election, and of their rejection - that He chooses and rejects as seems good to Him any of the sinful race of Adam, all of whom are justly objects of His displeasure, without regarding natural qualities which distinguish them from one another”*.

Whether a man is to be saved, or condemned to eternal condemnation, or whatever other fate befalls him, is solely the will of God in accordance with His choosing.

In the Westminster Confession of Faith, which contains so scriptural a summary of Christian doctrine: *“The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in His providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering, and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to His own holy ends; yet so, as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who, being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin. The decrees of God are His eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass. God executeth His decrees in the works of creation and providence. God's works of providence are, His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions... God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by His most wise and holy providence, according to His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will, to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy... By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death”*.

In the words of Robert Haldane respecting the above Westminster Confession of Faith: *“In these articles it is asserted that God fore-ordained, decreed, and willed the*



existence of all the evil which 'comes to pass.' It is also said that God brings His decrees or His will into effect by creation and His governing providence, by which, in the exercise of His wisdom and holiness, He powerfully governs His creatures, and superintends and directs, disposes and orders, all their actions. According to the above truths, so well expressed in the Westminster Confession of Faith, to which so many profess to adhere as containing their creed, everything without exception, great and small, that has ever taken place, or shall ever take place in heaven, or on earth, or in hell has from all eternity been ordained by God, and yet so that the accountableness of the creature is not in the smallest degree removed. This is declared in the clearest manner respecting the greatest sin that ever was committed, even the crucifying of the Lord of glory. It took place according to the express ordination of God, yet the wickedness of those by whom it was perpetrated is explicitly asserted”.

Based upon Luther's doctrine of Faith, and Calvin's doctrine of Predestination, the new Christian Church that enlisted under the banner of Protestantism had become the most narrow of theologies ever known to man. Because man's works accounted for nothing, the mark of the true Christian was one who suspended their powers of mind and reason in the endeavor to believe whatever doctrines the religious authorities of the church created. They believed that to even question the will of God was a sin -- and mankind could do nothing on his own accord that could save him. Christians accepted that their lot in both life and the hereafter were totally beyond their own control. Further, even the faith that was necessary for their salvation was said to be a gift from God. Therefore, even the question of their faith was a matter of Divine Providence.

From the perspective of the emerging Protestant theology: If everything that ever happened on earth, in heaven, and in hell, was foreordained by God, then man's existence was reduced to that of a mere puppet. Hell existed at the foreordination of God. Adam fell at the foreordination of God. By virtue of original sin -- which sin was foreordained by God -- mankind was doomed because of his inherent sinful nature. From the population of doomed men, God choose certain men to be saved -- men who were in many instances themselves the most immoral examples of creation -- and they were saved even though they did nothing to deserve His grace. The Jews, who sought to live in the Light of God, were rejected -- while the diabolical heathens who rejected the Light of God, were received as God's chosen people. Mankind was reduced to nothing, and had no say whatsoever over his destiny. As stated in the Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia: Predestination **was “...God's eternal decree, by which he determined within himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others”** (Institutes 3. 21. 5).

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary quotes The Westminster Confession, which it states is *“the standard of the Church of Scotland and of the various Presbyterian churches of Europe and America”*, and writes the following: *“God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of His own free will freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established. Although God knows whatsoever*



may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions, yet hath He not decreed anything because He foresaw its future, or as that which would come to pass upon such conditions. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions or causes moving Him thereto; and all to the praise of His glorious grace. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and most free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Therefore, they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ, by His Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice”.

Unger's Bible Dictionary then goes on to conclude: *“In support of this doctrine several arguments are made by Calvinistic theologians: (1) According to the Scriptures election is not of works but of grace; and that it is not of works means that it is not what man does that determines whether he is to be one of the elect or not. For the descendants of Adam this life is not a probation. They stood their probation in Adam and do not stand each one for himself. (2) The sovereignty of God in electing men to salvation is shown by the fact that repentance and faith are gifts from God. These fruits of His Spirit are the consequences and signs of election and not its conditions. (3) The salvation that is of grace must be of grace throughout. The element of works or human merit must not be introduced at any point in the plan. And that would be the case if repentance and faith were the conditions of election. (4) The system of doctrine called Calvinistic, Augustinian, Pauline, should not be thus designated. That though taught clearly by Paul, particularly in (Rom. 8:9), it was taught also by others of the writers of sacred Scripture, and by Christ Himself. Reference is made to (Matt. 11:25-26; Luke 4:25-27; 8:10; John 6:37,39); etc. (5) That the sovereignty of God is evidenced in dispensing saving grace is illustrated also in His establishing the temporal conditions of mankind. Some are born and reared in the surroundings of civilization, others of barbarism. And precisely so some are blessed with the light of the gospel, while others, dwelling in pagan lands, are deprived of that light and consequently are not saved”.*

What the modern believer must come to understand is the fact that the foundation of Christian doctrine that emerged out of the darkness of the Middle Ages was one of



desperation. They inherited the good -- Jesus -- from a corrupt church that was overrun by a legion of despots who used the political power of Christianity to live lavish lifestyles and maintain rule over the people. For over a thousand years it had been unlawful for man to even read the Bible. Why? Because the scriptures are the sacred writings of a mystical sect of Jewish Gnostics -- writings whose very nature are intended to undermine secular establishments of institutionalized religion, and open the door to genuine spiritual religion. Jewish Gnostics have no problem with the paradoxes of life and creation. In fact, they understood that it is the contemplation of these paradoxes that develops the mind -- and by enlarging the mental facilities in conjunction with spiritual cleansing, begins to open man's innate spiritual centers which enables the disciple of the Light to draw closer to God. Because the reformers of the Middle Ages were anti-Gnostics -- and they deplored the tenets of Mysticism and Spirituality -- their only means of keeping Jesus, and appear genuine by still retaining the necessary connection to the Bible, was to outlaw the use of reason. The problem is that reason is the very soil within which Spirituality and Gnosticism flourish -- and Gnostic scriptures are totally incompatible with an anti-Gnostic church.

In view of the fact that the masses of people they were dealing with were themselves of an irrational and superstitious mindset -- i.e., the worship of nature, religious relics and images, illogical methods of warding off evil and bad luck, burning witches, killing cats because they were devils, etc. -- the doctrine of unquestionable faith in an unknowable God was easy for the people to accept -- in fact, it was a natural outgrowth of their irrational and superstitious manner of thinking.

Moreover, these mindless doctrines were very much the product of their time. The people neither thought in the manner of Hebrew mystics -- a people who rejected the rule of man in order to remain faithful to God -- a people whose writings they seized and reinterpreted in accordance with their own manner of thinking. Therefore, the people who emerged from the Dark Ages had been reared in a cultural environment where there was no such thing as freedom of thought or the exercise of the intellect. The people were not sovereign -- royal families and monarchies were the norm. Further, it was a very real fact of life that their leaders were often the most corrupt, degenerate and depraved examples of humanity that could be found.

In the same way that the people accepted religious leaders that, in Luther's words, “... *Antichrist himself, if he should come, could think of nothing to add to its wickedness*”, and the greater number of secular leaders who were themselves ordained and embraced by the church were for the most part tyrannical despots, it was normal for the people not only to accept irrationality and depravity in their leaders, but these same people easily extended this concept of irrationality to a supreme power who would affirm and approve these degenerate men who ruled over every aspect of their lives. Because the Church of the Roman Empire had plunged the western world into the Dark Ages, irrationality was the very core of their mindset and view of the world and its creator.

There were of course those who opposed the tenets of the doctrine of Predestination -- claiming that it made no sense that man was responsible for his actions unless he possessed freewill -- but that meant that they put forth their doctrine in direct contradiction to the scriptures. On what authority could they oppose the Divine Word



when the Bible itself states that even in those instances where man is permitted the freedom to choose, that this freedom was bestowed upon this select group of people only because God ordained it -- and the supposed choice they arrived at was in fact predetermined by God for that individual. Thus, the very presence of what could be called freewill, from a biblical perspective was in fact preordained by God. How could they argue and oppose what the Bible clearly declares when it can be demonstrated that man's exercise and demonstration of freewill is nothing more than the illusion of freewill ordained by God for the express purpose of making men falsely imagine that they actually possessed the ability to make choices in their life apart from what the Hand of God has brought about?

Regardless of what we choose to believe today, or what your clergy states, Calvin and Luther were not wrong in what they saw in the scriptures. The Bible really does say that all things in this life are predestined -- and to ignore this fact -- as many modern churches have done -- is to close ones eyes to the written Word.

To this great insight I would only add that from a modern day doctrinal perspective, there can be no resolution to the problem. Regardless of the fact that any student of the bible can easily go through the scriptures and point out all the many places where it appears that man has freewill and choices, this fact does not negate the numerous citations of scripture where it states that everything is brought about by Divine Providence, and man only possesses the illusion of choice. In fact, since the time of Augustine in the fourth century, the Christian world has been at an impasse with regard to the doctrines of predestination and freewill. The greatest of Christian minds have struggled with the problem, and no amount of biblical research or theological perspective can resolve this great Christian dilemma -- until now.

The majority of readers will predictably say that they don't believe in predestination. They believe that mankind has freewill, and that he is responsible for the choices he makes in life. And I will agree with this assertion -- but herein lies the problem: What the modern Christian has done is parse the scriptures in the endeavor to cling to little pieces they agree with, while ignoring the most important part of the written word they must understand in order to embrace the Spiritual Gospel of Christ.

With good reason a great many Christians today simply ignore the biblical doctrine of predestination, and believe more from an instinctual perspective than a scriptural one. They know that God is real because they can feel His presence and power in their lives. Innately they cling to the concept that *"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him"* (1 Jn 4:16 KJV). They fundamentally believe that, in the same way that *"The LORD detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please him"* (Prov 20:23 NIV), somehow there is an answer to the paradox of predestination and freewill that is not only just and right, but is rational and worthy of God's Wisdom and Ordination.

Can we simply ignore or embrace the paradoxes of the Bible? This mindset of the modern believers presents a problem that in effect brings about their own spiritual demise. The problem is that in the process of ignoring the paradoxes of the scriptures, and in not seeking to understand the spiritual meaning -- a meaning that reveals their inherent spiritual nature -- these well-meaning believers are negating the very purpose for which the Bible was created -- which is to provide man the knowledge that enables



him to open the gate to the Kingdom and draw closer to God. More importantly, though, is the fatal mindset that Christians have permitted themselves to become imbued with. They preach to others -- they condemn others -- they judge others, and find fault with others -- they point to the scriptures to prove the validity of their doctrines -- and yet, they only use these scriptures in a superficial manner, resulting in the fact that they are incapable of knowing the Will of God with respect to any event that transpires. The result is that they make themselves New Covenant apostates when they ignore their own Bibles -- Bibles which openly declare that the fault which they observe in their brothers and sisters, as well as all the other people they judge and condemn, has been brought about by the Hand of God.

While in the time of Luther and the Middle-age Reformers it was easy to close ones eyes to many of the seemingly unfair realities of life, this becomes ever more difficult in modern times. Medical science has now begun to entertain the reality that every sort of human depravity and what would be considered sinfulness has actually been brought about by genetic patterns in the life of the individual. What many experts now conclude is that freewill to choose one's path in life is largely an illusion. Thus, modern science has once more confirmed the tenets of the Bible with respect to the predestination of the individual by a power that is beyond their conscious control.

Perhaps no finer example of this emerging scientific viewpoint can be brought to light that exceeds the present-day struggle in the church than that of the plight of the homosexual to find acceptance among Christians. The homosexual contends that because they were born homosexual, and God in fact created them to be predisposed to a same sex relationship, they should therefore be accepted as normal in the church. In view of the fact that the Bible itself confirms that God preordains everything in life, the questions presented by the homosexual poses a very serious problem to the church. If all men are sinners who are equally forgiven by the blood of Jesus -- and the homosexual has been predisposed by God into a life of same sex relationships -- and man is saved by faith over works -- then the position of the homosexual would appear to be reasonable when they claim that the promise of the New Covenant applies to them as much as the heterosexual. Moreover, if it is true that the homosexual has been predisposed to the lifestyle he is living by the preordination of God, isn't it a greater sin when the heterosexual Christian judges and attempts to exclude the homosexual from full membership in the church?

The problem is seen in the fact that the modern church does not have an answer to the scriptural dilemma that the question of freewill versus preordination presents to them. In their anti-Gnostic perception of the Bible, they are therefore driven by fear -- a fear that does not permit them to question the irrationality of their beliefs or perception of God. They are unable to answer the simple question that, if man's life and destiny is preordained, how can he be blamed or faulted for what God has brought about? If there is fault, then, how can that fault be attributed solely to mankind -- the mere puppet of the Divine Will? Moreover, they fail to acknowledge that if God wanted life on earth to be different than it is -- or has been -- then He has the power to change it.

The only reasonable answer to the dilemma presented in the scriptures is that modern Christians do not know -- they know and acknowledge that they do not know -- and as a consequence, they believe that it is beyond man's ability to know. In this respect,

they condemn what they do not know! They endorse what they do not know! In not knowing the reasons why, they in essence know nothing! They proclaim that only faith in Jesus can save you -- and yet, they do not possess the wherewithal to explain why God gives some men faith, and others are denied this gift.

More importantly, from a scriptural perspective, they can never know anything, until they first come to the realization that they know absolutely nothing! And when they oppose and are offended by this statement, isn't this the same exact message that was stated by the Apostle when he warned believers: *"If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know"* (1 Cor 8:2 RSV)?

In the same way that they judge and condemn what they do not understand, the very answer to their dilemma is found in the people they condemned as heretics. In those writings known as the Clementine Homilies, which were written by Clement, the disciple of the Apostle Peter, speaking of the power of Simon Magus to manipulate and deceive the minds of the Gentile believers, Peter states to Clement: *"And with us, indeed, who have had handed down from our forefathers the worship of the God who made all things, and also the mystery of the books which are able to deceive, he will not prevail; but with those from amongst the Gentiles who have the polytheistic fancy bred in them, and who know not the falsehoods of the Scriptures, he will prevail much. And not only he; but if any other shall recount to those from among the Gentiles any vain, dreamlike, richly set out story against God, he will be believed, because from their childhood their minds are accustomed to take in things spoken against God. And few there shall be of them, as a few out of a multitude, who through ingenuousness shall not be willing so much as to hear an evil word against the God who made all things. And to these alone from amongst the Gentiles it shall be vouchsafed to be saved. Let not any one of you, therefore, altogether complain of Simon, or of any one else; for nothing happens unjustly, since even the falsehoods of Scripture are with good reason presented for a test"*.

What Peter is saying is that the Gentile mind is easily deceived and manipulated because they accept and believe evil things about God. They believe that God ordains the slaughter of innocent children. They believe that God holds all people accountable for the sin of Adam and Eve. They believe that God ordains the most degenerate examples of humanity, while condemning the innocent to the *"lake of fire"* (Rev 20: 14-15).

Moreover, Peter states regarding the scriptures: *"...but with those from amongst the Gentiles who have the polytheistic fancy bred in them, and who know not the falsehoods of the Scriptures, he will prevail much"*. What, then, we should ask, are the falsehoods of the scriptures that Peter speaks of? What Peter is stating regarding the nature of scripture is the same as was echoed twelve hundred years later by Moses Maimonides, one of the most respected Jewish theologians, historian, and Talmudist, where he writes about the nature of scripture: *"Every time that you find in our books a tale the reality of which seems impossible, a story which is repugnant to both reason and common sense, then be sure that the tale contains a profound allegory veiling a deeply mysterious truth; and the greater the absurdity of the letter, the deeper the wisdom of the spirit"*.

When Peter says that the Gentile believers are easily deceived by Simon Magus



because in their polytheistic mindset -- i.e., that they quite readily embrace the ***"falsehoods of the scriptures"***, and believe ***"an evil word against the God who made all things"*** -- perhaps the finest proof of the validity of these words is the Christian understanding of preordination and predestination. What other excuse can be given when a people blindly believe that God for no reason ordains some men to glory, and for no reason ordains others to destruction. Moreover, what can be said with respect to those who claim to believe in the revelation of the Bible, and yet choose to ignore this prevalent teaching of the scriptures -- in effect saying that they know more than the authors of the Bible -- when they promote the idea in opposition to the written word that man possesses freewill?

From the perspective of the Hebrew mystics who authored our Bible, the first and foremost principle of truth is this: God, the Creator of the Universe and all things in it, is the most rational Being in existence. The very idea that Christians will even entertain the notion that God indiscriminately bestows blessings upon one man, and deprives another, or that He raises up some for glory, while He raises up others for destruction, is simply absurd. Moreover, the idea that God ordains the destruction of innocent men, women and children, as is believed by many Christians today, is simply not worthy of belief. Further, Peter is correct in his assertion that the Gentile mind is incapable of looking beyond the biblical stories that Moses Maimonides states are ***"repugnant to both reason and common sense"***.

What is being stated here by both Peter, the man who according to Christian tradition was appointed to be the rock of the church (Mt 16:18), and one of the foremost Jewish theologians, is that there are events in the scriptures that are not historically accurate, and there are evils attributed to God that are not true. Yet we, a people who do not know either what, or why God predestines, or what choices man has in the Divine scope of reality, say that these men are in error. Foolishly, in the folly of our judgment, we fail to recognize the fact that in our inability to understand the nature and conditions of life with respect to freewill and predestination, we are incapable of explaining the relationship of the most important aspects of our religious foundation.

In the early Church there were men of great spiritual knowledge who understood the mysteries of God. These men correctly grasped the reality that the wisdom of God is so far beyond the comprehension of carnal man. These men and women of an elevated vision knew that the very idea that God moves in an irrational manner, and indiscriminately saves some, while condemning others to destruction, would be viewed as a doctrine of foolishness and ignorance. The problem is that the church which calls itself Christian, either condemned or killed these wise men who knew the secret to the dilemma that plagues the believer today. Thus, because of our inability to merge the two lines into One, we have in fact alienated ourselves from the very gospel message we claim to champion.

Everything that God does, He does for a reason -- and this reason has only one purpose -- i.e., the perfection and return of His Prodigal Sons. God is not unfair -- neither is God unjust -- He does not move indiscriminately -- there are no accidents -- neither are their victims who have not themselves invoked their own suffering. Further, if we fail to understand the reasons why everything in life is the way it is, the fault is not with God -- but rather, is the product of our own blindness and inability to understand the

laws that control this realm of existence.

The answer to the all-confining dogmatic box that the institutionalized church has imprisoned themselves within, is readily found in the writings of the first people of the New Covenant -- the Essenes -- as well as the original followers of Christ known as the Nazirene/Ebionites -- as well as the writings of the early Gentile Christian Church who, unlike the church of the middle ages, were very Gnostic in their perception of Life and Creation. Thus, all we have to do is look to the very people whom the Church of Rome condemned as heretics, and seek the answer to the dilemma from the Lord, and we will find true freedom in the illumination of the Light and the opening of the gate to the promised Kingdom.

Early Church on Predestination and Reincarnation: In the words of the third century Church Father Origen -- the man St. Gregory of Nyssa called *"the prince of Christian learning in the Third Century"*, the man condemned by the Emperor Justinian who held similar views regarding the soul of man as did Darwin: *"We have frequently shown"*, writes Origen, *"by those declarations which we were able to produce from the holy Scriptures, that God, the Creator of all things, is good, and just, and all-powerful... But since those rational creatures themselves, as we have frequently shown, and will yet show in the proper place, were endowed with the power of free-will, this freedom of will incited each one either to progress by imitation of God, or reduced him to failure through negligence... Now God, who deemed it just to arrange His creatures according to their merit, brought down these different understandings into the harmony of one world, that He might adorn, as it were, one dwelling, in which there ought to be not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay (and some indeed to honor, and others to dishonor), with those different vessels, or souls, or understandings. And these are the causes... why that world presents the aspect of diversity, while Divine Providence continues to regulate each individual according to the variety of his movements, or of his feelings and purpose. On which account the Creator will neither appear to be unjust in distributing (for the causes already mentioned) to every one according to his merits; nor will the happiness or unhappiness of each one's birth, or whatever be the condition that falls to his lot, be deemed accidental; nor will different creators, or souls of different natures, be believed to exist"* (De Principiis, Bk 2 Ch 9).

What Origen is stating is that, in the beginning, each soul was created equal and the same, and their place in life is not the result of an accident, or the indiscriminate manifestation of God's Will in the form of Divine Providence -- but rather, each soul's lot in life is the result of the exercise of their own freewill, and consequently is arranged *"according to their merit"*. This merit is not the result of some unknown condition -- but rather, is imposed upon each individual in accordance with what they have accomplished in their previous lives.

Origen then goes on to demonstrate this truth by using the very example which the Apostle Paul gave with regard to Esau and Jacob, and writes: *"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" And that he might furnish us with an opportunity of inquiring into these matters, and of ascertaining how these things do not happen without a reason, he answers himself, and says, 'God forbid.' For the same question, as it seems to me, which is raised concerning Jacob and Esau, may be*





raised regarding all celestial and terrestrial creatures, and even those of the lower world as well. And in like manner it seems to me, that as he there says, 'The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil,' so it might also be said of all other things, 'When they were not yet' created, 'neither had yet done any good or evil, that the decree of God according to election may stand,' that (as certain think) some things on the one hand were created heavenly, some on the other earthly, and others, again, beneath the earth, 'not of works' (as they think), 'but of Him who calleth,' what shall we say then, if these things are so? 'Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.' As, therefore, when the Scriptures are carefully examined regarding Jacob and Esau, it is not found to be unrighteousness with God that it should be said, before they were born, or had done anything in this life, 'the elder shall serve the younger;' and as it is found not to be unrighteousness that even in the womb Jacob supplanted his brother, if we feel that he was worthily beloved by God, according to the deserts of his previous life, so as to deserve to be preferred before his brother”.

God did not hate Esau and love Jacob for no reason! To even believe such a preposterous concept of Divine Wisdom is to affirm Peter's assertion that the Gentiles believe these absurdities because *“their minds are accustomed to take in things spoken against God.* Respecting the Divine Order of Creation, Origen then continues referring to the Paul's Epistle to the Romans and goes on to explain: *“For God must be believed to do and order all things and at all times according to His judgment. For the words which the apostle uses when he says, ‘In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor;’ and those which he adds, saying, ‘If a man purge himself, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, unto every good work,’ undoubtedly point out this, that he who shall purge himself when he is in this life, will be prepared for every good work in that which is to come; while he who does not purge himself will be, according to the amount of his impurity, a vessel unto dishonor, i.e., unworthy. It is therefore possible to understand that there have been also formerly rational vessels, whether purged or not, i.e., which either purged themselves or did not do so, and that consequently every vessel, according to the measure of its purity or impurity, received a place, or region, or condition by birth, or an office to discharge, in this world. All of which, down to the humblest, God providing for and distinguishing by the power of His wisdom, arranges all things by His controlling judgment, according to a most impartial retribution, so far as each one ought to be assisted or cared for in conformity with his deserts. In which certainly every principle of equity is shown, while the inequality of circumstances preserves the justice of a retribution according to merit. But the grounds of the merits in each individual case are only recognized truly and clearly by God Himself, along with His only-begotten Word, and His Wisdom, and the Holy Spirit”.*

Origen again demonstrates that our lot in life is the result of our own deserts, and writes: *“For God the Creator makes a certain vessel unto honor, and other vessels to dishonor; but that vessel which has cleansed itself from all impurity He makes a vessel unto honor, while that which has stained itself with the filth of vice He makes a vessel unto dishonor. The conclusion from which, accordingly, is this, that the*



cause of each one's actions is a pre-existing one; and then every one, according to his deserts, is made by God either a vessel unto honor or dishonor. Therefore every individual vessel has furnished to its Creator out of itself the causes and occasions of its being formed by Him to be either a vessel unto honor or one unto dishonor. And if the assertion appear correct, as it certainly is, and in harmony with all piety, that it is due to previous causes that every vessel be prepared by God either to honor or to dishonor, it does not appear absurd that, in discussing remoter causes in the same order, and in the same method, we should come to the same conclusion respecting the nature of souls, and (believe) that this was the reason why Jacob was beloved before he was born into this world, and Esau hated, while he still was contained in the womb of his mother”.

Everything that we know about Creation affirms to us the great reality that all things are controlled by natural laws. Whether it be the movement of the heavenly bodies, the atmospheric and elemental currents of the world in which we dwell, right down to the atomic and genetic fabric and structure of life itself. All of life is immersed in a sea of natural law that controls every aspect of creation. The very prediction of the atomic bomb as theorized by Einstein, is proof that once man is able to envision the laws that control every aspect of Creation, he is able to successfully foresee the eventual results.

The underlying principle of the scriptures that is confirmed by the people of the New Covenant -- whether Jewish or Gentile -- prior to the institutionalization of the church in the fourth century, is that our deeds and accomplishments in life remain with us -- and because of our interaction with the natural laws that control this world, it is our own deeds, caused by our own actions, that is returned to us in the future -- which future can be in our present life, or a future life when we again re-enter this world.

The person who is in touch with their soul and spiritual natures knew instinctively that this carnal and barbaric perception of God, which has been portrayed by the church, is defective. In fact, many Atheists and non-believers reject God because of the outlandish image which the church promotes. Innately, they knew that the Supreme Creator of the Universe could not be the irrational God portrayed by the Christian Church. Though they did not always comprehend the reason why, they knew that life as we know it is the result of a Supreme Intelligence at work, and every event in the life of all people are brought about for a purpose. Those who possessed the desire to search for the Truth, were always rewarded -- and what they learned was that every event in life is caused by a pre-existent reason -- and these events which are brought about by the Laws which control all of Creation, are in fact based upon our own deeds and actions.

Heed the words of the Apostle when he warned: **“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows”** (Gal 6:7 NIV). If a soul, then, enters this world as a **“vessel of wrath prepared for destruction”** (Rom 9:22), that soul is responsible for their lot in life that was brought about by virtue of his own pre-existent deeds and actions. If a soul enters this life as a **“vessel for honor”** (Rom 9:21 NKJ), this good that has been inherited is the result of that soul’s efforts to **“cleanse himself”** from the defilements of this world, in order that **“he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work”** (2 Tim 2:21 NKJ).



That our deeds and the desires of our heart -- whether good, bad or indifferent -- remain with us as we interact with the Laws of Creation that God invoked when this realm came into existence, is the understanding that we must possess in order for us to even begin to comprehend the biblical doctrine of predestination -- and ultimately the Bible and Life itself. That the reformers of the Middle Ages did not possess this understanding, and they were unable to explain the great void that existed in their thinking and understanding, resulted in their reactionary position condemning the very use of the mind and the exercise of reason among Christians. Politically, they had no other choice. How were they to maintain their position of authority among the body of believers, when they were unable to explain to the people the reason that God moves in the manner that He does. They could not!

If we ask the question as to why the Middle-age Reformers were forced by the void in their perception of the Word to take an anti-Gnostic view of the Gospel, and condemn the very use of reason among Christians? Their error was the result of their own Darwinist mindset that was in direct opposition to the spiritual mindset that was the foundation of the teachings of the New Covenant. Moreover, our only fault today is that we have failed to re-evaluate the doctrines we have inherited from previous generations of Christians in light of the new-found knowledge that God has placed in our hands -- and the fact that we have not sufficiently cleansed ourselves in order to learn through the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

There is no reason to believe the doctrines of men with regard to the Mysteries of God. In like manner, there is no reason to believe a word that I write. The promise of the New Covenant is that when we begin to open our eyes and perception to these truths of a spiritual nature -- truths that were possessed by the early church and thrown away when Christianity became institutionalized in the fourth century -- we will be able to begin to embrace the Mysteries of God that Jesus taught to his disciples. With regard to the events of this life: Only when we begin to realize that we are immersed in a sea of natural law -- that by virtue of this law we come into this life in accordance with our own past deeds -- can we even begin to bring together the two lines within the body of the scripture which the Rev. Charles Spurgeon wrote about: *“The system of truth revealed in the Scriptures is not simply one straight line, but two; and no man will ever get a right view of the gospel until he knows how to look at the two lines at once... That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory, but they are not. The fault is in our weak judgment. Two truths cannot be contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is fore-ordained, that is true; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other”* (Charles H. Spurgeon, Autobiography Vol. 1: The Early Years. pp. 173, 174).

What I have demonstrated beyond a doubt is the existence of numerous voids and black holes in our understanding about the most essential elements of our religion -- elements that each of us should desire to examine and learn more about with respect to what we believe. One of the great promises of the scriptures is this: *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make*



you free" (John 8:31-32 NKJ). The Bible does not say that you will believe the truth -- have faith in the truth -- belong to a church that professes to know the truth -- and neither does it say you will be appraised of the truth. In fact, the promise of the scriptures is so profoundly personal, that the word "*know*", in this verse, has the same meaning as that where Adam "*knew*" Eve, and had sexual intercourse. The word "*know*", as used in this promise, is not theoretical, philosophical or doctrinal -- but rather, experiential -- to the degree that the promise to the disciple is that they will become intimately conjoined with the truth and God's Divine Plan for mankind.

Moreover, in the same way that when Adam knew Eve a child was conceived -- when the genuine Christian opens his heart and mind to the Lord to the degree that he/she becomes a holy and consecrated abode for the Light, then it is the Child of Truth that is conceived within the disciple. The knowledge that Jesus spoke of then, was the result of the disciple's intercourse with God. This is the essence of the Hebrew Gnosticism that we now know is the true foundation of the genuine Christian faith.

The message that is conveyed in the scriptures is that the disciples of the Christ will not only hear the truth -- but rather, see the truth, taste the truth, and be totally immersed in the truth, as a fish is in the water. The disciples of Christ will understand the natural laws that control this realm, and they will understand that each person's lot in life is the result of their own deeds and desires of the heart materialized by virtue of the laws that manifest one's own past in their present life.

The pattern of religion that was preached by Paul is indicative of that condition when the disciples of Christ are released from their own past sins and inequity through the grace they inherit as children of The Way. They understand that man is not saved by dead works and rituals, but through the grace that has been given to them by virtue of their spiritual cleansing from the defilements of this world. It is from the perspective of this total immersion and cleansing that the Disciple John wrote: "*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God*" (1 Jn 3:8-9).

Yes, it is true that all have sinned -- but the genuine Christian no longer sins -- as seen in the Apostle of faith's own words: "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin... Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?*" (Rom 6:1-16 NKJ).

Because we no longer possess the same spiritual vision and mindset which was the foundation upon which the Apostle Paul wrote his epistles, we cannot even conceive of



man's true potential as the prodigal sons of our Eternal Father. It is therefore beyond our ability to even envision the concept expressed by Paul that the followers of Christ are expected to live a holy life that is free from the constraints of sin. It is true when the Apostle writes: *“As it is written: There is no one righteous, not even one... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Rom 3:10;23 NIV) -- but as the prodigal sons of our Heavenly Father, we have been forced into lives of toiling and trials by God Himself -- i.e., *“For God has consigned all men to disobedience...”* (Rom 11:1-32 RSV) -- because *“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son”* (Rev 21:7 NIV). From a biblical perspective, once a disciple of the Lord has been cleansed and made whole, they are to *“sin no more”* (John 5:14; 8:11) -- and, *“Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him”* (1 Jn 3:6 NKJ).

The believers at Corinth of whom Paul said they had been taught *“all utterance and all knowledge”* concerning the *“testimony of Christ”*, had not yet received the great profound truths of the Spirit (1 Cor 1:5-6 NKJ), as seen in the words of the Apostle: *“I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal”* (1 Cor 3:2-3 NKJ).

Paul even went as far as explaining to the believers at Corinth that the *“natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Cor 2:14 KJV), and informs them that they are too *“carnal, and walk as men”* (1 Cor 3:3 KJV) -- and though they have been baptized, and had received the Good News of the Gospel of Christ, and possessed all the knowledge of the testimony of Christ, because they were yet carnal, they could not comprehend the true Mysteries and Revelations of God.

Again to frame the problem in the exact message which the scriptures reveal to the people of the simple faith -- i.e., those who have received *“all utterance and all knowledge”* concerning the (historical) *“testimony of Christ”* -- are not yet able to understand the paradoxes of the Bible, because not being spiritual, they are not yet intimate with God's Enlightening Spirit. It is of paramount importance for us to recognize the exact message that Paul very clearly stated with respect to the fact that what he wrote in his epistles was not the higher knowledge that could only be imparted to the spiritually mature -- but rather, the milk of the gospel that was intended for the edification of the Gentile converts who were too carnal to perceive the Mysteries of God through their own indwelling spiritual nature. What Paul very plainly writes is that it is only the disciple -- he who is intimate and totally immersed in the life of the Lord -- who can understand the Divine Plan for mankind. It was for this reason that the Gentile followers of Paul were historically known as Gnostic Christians -- i.e., those who possessed the Knowledge derived directly from Spiritual Sources.

One of the paramount warnings of Jesus was that a genuine follower cannot be divided between an allegiance to this world, and attempt to become a disciple of the Light. Why would he say this? Why can't we just believe -- live a good life -- and inherit the promise of the scriptures? Why? It is not a matter of being taught. In order to comprehend spiritual truths and man's spiritual reality, it is absolutely necessary to develop those parts of our mind that relate to our soul and spiritual natures. The mysteries, then, belong only to those who are themselves spiritual. This great truth is

confirmed in the words of Jesus to his disciples: *“The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding”* (Mark 4:11-12 NIV).

Jesus spoke in parables because the mysteries and secrets of God cannot be preached and taught in the manner that we do today -- but rather, must be revealed *“precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little, and there a little”* (Isa 28:10 KJV) -- as the disciple is transformed from a carnal believer, into a disciple in search of the Kingdom, and eventually into a true Child of God. The prodigal son cannot return to his father philosophically! He must raise himself up, leave the far country behind him, and commence to walk in The Way which leads him on his journey home to the Kingdom from which he originally emerged. Yet, we must never forget that it is necessary to return in steps. In the same way that we cannot take a child of tender years and enroll him in graduate studies, it is impossible to convey to the natural mind of carnal man the Mysteries of God that can only be perceived by the mature spiritual mind of the prodigal son who has returned home to the Kingdom from which he originated.

Having become manifest in this life through the process of physical birth, in order to inherit the promise of the scriptures whereby we enter into Life, we must complete the process by embracing and bringing about the next stages of soul and spiritual birth. Our soul which is that part of us which has developed as the result of all of our experiences since the dawn of time as we understand it, is the essence of our mental self. Understanding this, the Hebrew and Gentile Gnostics placed great importance on the acquisition of knowledge -- experiential knowledge gained through direct contact with our indwelling soul and spiritual natures -- because the next stage of (soul) birth is that of Mind. Thus, where the original teachings of The Way provided a means for physical man to transcend the three-dimensional limitations of this world in the endeavor to embrace the Anointing (Christ/Messiah) of the Light -- which Light reveals the Knowledge of all aspects of Creation to the mind of the disciple -- but the essence and purpose of New Covenant teachings became lost when Christianity was converted to the religion of Pagan Rome.

The very word Christ or Messiah indicates one whose mind has been Anointed by the Light. When Paul wrote to the Hebrews: *“But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings...”* (Heb 10:32 NKJ), the word illumination is totally inconsistent with terms such as faith and belief which is the focal point of Christianity today, and indicates the enlightenment and anointing/illumination of the mind. This process of illumination of mind through the Anointing of the Light, is perhaps best portrayed by the Apostle Paul when he speaks of the mission which he was ordained to perform, as seen in the words: *“...to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me”* (Acts 26:18 NKJ).

The first element of the equation is for the believer to *“...open their eyes”*. The second is for the believer to *“...turn from darkness to light”*. This is accomplished through the act of genuine worship, which is the Imitation of Christ in every aspect of the disciple's life. This total consecration and embracing of the Light, brings about a



release *“...from the power of Satan to God”*. And as the disciple begins to live their life as a citizen of the Heavenly Kingdom, only then are they able to *“...receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith...”* in the Lord. Thus, the religion of Martin Luther and the Protestant Middle-age Reformers was an anti-Gnostic church which being fundamentally quasi-Darwinist in its self-imposed three-dimensional limitations of expression, attempted to make the literal and historical interpretation of the scriptures as the focal point of the new religion, and thereby severed itself from the spiritual realm which Jesus called the Kingdom that each of us must return to in order to enter into Life. Where Martin Luther condemned the use of the mind, the essence of New Covenant thought embraced the development of mind through the illumination of the Anointed Mind of the disciple.

The whole of the New Testament is a continual theme where the disciple is taught the Sacred Secrets and Mysteries of God from the One True Source of all Knowledge -- the indwelling Light which is called the Son of God. As the disciple moves closer to the Light, they begin to see and comprehend all things with respect to the workings, pattern and purpose of Creation. Through the illumination of the mind, the disciple learns how all things came into existence -- why the events that are presently taking place are manifest -- and how the past and present will bring about the future in accordance with God's Divine Plan that envelopes every aspect of Creation. Thus, the very term Christian, which denotes one who has received the Anointing of the Light, has nothing to do with a people who call themselves by that name and continue to dwell in darkness under the power of the god of this world. Because the religion of Martin Luther in effect severed the congregation from the illumination of the indwelling Light, and instead focused the mind of the believer on the historical personage of Jesus, the new church became a body of wannabe Christians -- rather than Genuine Spiritual Christians. Being severed from the spiritual essence of New Covenant thought, they therefore worshiped in temples made with hands, rather than the One True Spiritual Temple that must be accessed as the disciple enters through the *“strait gate”* along the narrow path that leads to Life.

Martin Luther, who championed the gospel of Paul by rejecting the testimony of the disciples of Jesus, undermined the whole essence of what Paul taught when he ignored the words of the Apostle when he wrote: *“Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer”* (2 Cor 5:16 NKJ). That the true Christian must transcend the flesh, and become a spiritual being, is further seen in the words of Paul when he wrote: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit... He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God”* (Rom 8:1-8 NKJ).



From a modern perspective, Christians today cannot even begin the process of the next stage of birth and spiritual transformation, because they do not possess the knowledge necessary to comprehend the Divine Plan of Creation. In clinging to faith in the historical personage of Jesus, and in failing to prepare themselves physically and mentally to permit the entrance of the Light into their life, they alienate themselves from the Living Word that is attempting to enlighten and illumine their understanding. In their failure to look beyond the flesh, they neither perceive the pre-existent conditions that have brought about the events of life, or the results that these events are intended to manifest -- and not knowing or understanding the basic premises of life itself, they become entangled in their own judgment of events which they very clearly do not possess the ability to comprehend. The result is that they violate the Royal Law of God -- a Law that the Bible continually warns the believer not to ignore -- and they make themselves apostates to the New Covenant when they judge what they do not understand. Ultimately, in their parochial viewpoints, judgments and condemnations of things they do not possess the wherewithal to comprehend, in their blindness they in fact judge God. Thus, it is impossible for Christians today to move beyond the *“elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity”* (Heb 6:1 NIV), because in their judgment of God and the events of life that they do not understand, they become entangled in the very Laws that keep mankind from comprehending the Divine Will. Moreover, it is impossible for them to know the truth, until they are first able to understand God's plan for mankind.

In order for you to mature and perfect your walk with the Lord, it is absolutely imperative that you possess the knowledge of the sacred truths that Jesus taught his faithful disciples -- truths that are referred to as being revealed only to those who were with Jesus *“in the house”*. In view of the fact that it has already been demonstrated that your own physical body is the house which the scriptures speak of, then you must first embrace the milk, and then the meat of the Gospel in order to learn directly from the Lord.

The Bible is neither a chronicle of history, or a declaration of what to believe -- but rather, it is a handbook that directs the prodigal sons on their return trip home. In order to begin the journey, you must recognize that neither the church of this world, science, nor the philosophy of men, can provide you with the answers to the many paradoxes of life that can only be overcome by expanding one's vision and understanding of life and ones own self. If the church, science, or philosophy assists you in opening the door to the Kingdom within you -- then it is beneficial. If the church, science, or philosophy focuses your attention of the things created, instead of the Source of Creation, then it is not good -- and this is the message of Paul in the first chapter to the Epistle to the Romans.

The philosophy of Darwin conveys to us that man had his genesis in the slime of the earth. While it is true that man's physical body is comprised of the elements of the earth, his soul and spirit is not of this world. In view of this fact the Essenes and earliest of Christians viewed the physical body as a prison from which the soul and spirit of man must overcome the limitations of. This perception of the physical body is especially taken note of by the first century Jewish historian Josephus who writes of the doctrines of the Essenes: *“For their doctrine is this, that bodies are corruptible, and*

that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal, and continue for ever: and that they come out of the most subtile air, and are united to their bodies as to prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but when they are set free from the bonds of flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward...”

In order to comprehend the higher reality which is revealed in the scriptures, we must begin to understand that man is born from the essence of two worlds -- i.e., the body that is his vessel in this realm is very much of the earth; but his mind which is an embryonic image of his pre-existent soul, is a reflective expression of its source that originates in spiritual realms. If, then, you desire to increase your conscious awareness of your true self, you must begin to open your mind to the reality that, like the prodigal son, you originated from another world -- that you are positioned in your present station of life in accordance with your own past accomplishments -- which past has triangulated in the present with your future -- whereby your past is presently working in conjunction with the direction you are moving to bring about the process of your arrival at your eventual destiny -- which destiny is the return of the prodigal son to the Kingdom of his Father.

In bringing your past and future together into the moment of the present time, you must become consciously aware that you are the person you are today, because of the Hand of God acting upon your mind and being to bring about your maturity and destiny in accordance with your soul's own past actions and accomplishments? While the Apostle's words are true when he wrote: *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God...”* (Rom 3:23 KJV), it is also true that the old world of sin passes away for those who have been born in Christ: *“...knowing this, that our old self was crucified... that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin”* (Rom 6:6-7 NAS).

This total transformation of the carnal self is perhaps best captured in the words of Paul where he wrote: *“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator”* (Col 3:5-10 NIV).

The key, then, to putting away the old self who was of the flesh, is seen in the words of Paul when he states that we must be *“...renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator”* -- which is our indwelling spiritual nature that is not of this world.

We make progress when we take what God gives us, and make the most of the opportunity. What this means is that you are predestined to your present station in life because of your own past -- and the exercise of your freewill is the determining factor with regard to your future. Simply put, if you have used your freewill in the past to bring you into the jungles and ghettos of life, why do you attempt to place the blame on anyone other than yourself?

What the Bible states with regard to predestination is that as you progress from life to life in the journey of the soul, you will reap exactly what you have sown in your own





past. That the church while under the control of Pagan Rome had thrown away the keys of knowledge, and no longer understood the process by which the soul of man is perfected, is not a fault which can be attributed to God. That the Lord's Anointed -- His Christ/Messiah -- has come and demonstrated with his own life the manner in which we must live in order to change our direction in our quest to return to the Kingdom -- and that we instead remain attached to this realm and refuse to follow in his footsteps -- is not the fault of our Heavenly Father. That this process of perfection will continue -- indefinitely -- until we do follow the pattern of return, is a reality that we must come to terms with.

There are no accidents -- and you have been predestined into the life you are living based upon your past in conjunction with the requirements that must be met in order to embrace your future destiny. It is therefore paramount to ask the question: What are you presently accomplishing with your gift of life? If you are a religious person and go to church, then you must ask yourself the question: If it is the Hand of God that has brought you into the church, does it mean anything that you are not there on your own accord, but of God's direct influence? If you are a non-believer, and like many modern non-believers today, you see yourself as being enlightened, and you feel that you are intellectually superior to the believer because you are able to recognize the many flaws in church doctrine -- unless you recognize that it is the Hand of God that has enabled you to see these flaws, your limited knowledge is meaningless. The question that you must ask yourself is this: Does it mean anything that you possess this insight to see either the merits or the fallacies of modern religious doctrine, only because God wanted you to see certain facts more clearly than the other person? Moreover, in our very limited understanding of Creation, doesn't each person's individual perception also contain a germ of truth?

In the parable in the twenty second chapter of Matthew where the king invites those called to the wedding feast of his son, and those invited do not come because of the cares of this world, and others are instead invited, what we must understand is that all roads in life lead to the Kingdom -- whether in the church or out -- but the Hand of God can only bring us so far before the journey becomes a mutual endeavor where the Lord directs and we must follow.

If you will accept that the scriptures are correct, and the Hand and Will of God impacts every aspect of your life -- regardless of the fact of whether you are a believer, a non-believer, or even a confirmed Atheist -- what is important to each of us is to begin to understand to what degree you are responsible for the result of your choices? That God desires you to see and experience life from a certain perspective -- as the scriptures affirm -- is responsible for your present station in life. Now that you have arrived at the starting point of your journey, we must then pose the next question: Do you know what is expected of you?

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